

**Ethos, Personal, Social and Health Education and
Self-esteem: perceptions of teachers and
students in Catholic and common secondary
schools**

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Abstract

This research sets out to explore the perceptions of school Ethos, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) including self-esteem, of teachers and students in Catholic and common secondary schools. These form important aspects of education that are often marginalised but potentially play a vital role in preparing young people for adult life. One aspect of PSHE is self-esteem which makes a significant contribution to personal development.

In order to gain an understanding of their perceptions, eight schools, four common and four Catholic schools, were involved in a longitudinal study. A mixed methods approach was adopted in order to increase the credibility and validity of the results. Therefore, I employed interviews, questionnaires and focus group interviews as methods of collecting data. Interviews were undertaken with 32 teachers in phase 1 and in phase 2 in Catholic and common schools. Two thousand, one hundred and forty-six students in two cohorts (Years 7 and 9, Years 9 and 11) completed questionnaires and 16 focus group interviews were undertaken in the first phase of research. One thousand, nine hundred and seventy students completed questionnaires in the second phase and 16 focus group interviews were undertaken. The questionnaires and the interviews with students explored their perceptions of the ethos of their schools, their progress and attainment, the implementation of PSHE, and its impact on their personal development.

It was evident from the data that was gathered that teachers in both sectors appreciated the importance of enhancing personal development in order to help students gain the most from the opportunities that were available to them. Where teachers encouraged students to identify their needs and to participate fully in a wide range of opportunities that were provided by their schools, they were able to enhance

their personal development. Encouragement and praise from teachers supported personal development and enhanced and ensured the best outcomes for students.

Significant differences were detected from the responses of students to the questionnaires that indicated different perspectives between students in common and Catholic schools. There was evidence of different values. For example, students in Catholic schools appeared to place more value on gaining better academic results compared with students in common schools, who placed greater emphasis on trying to improve the standard of their work. Achievement in sport was emphasised more by students in common schools, whereas students in Catholic schools placed greater prominence on helping others and gaining rewards in lessons. In Year 9 students in common schools appreciated the opportunity to learn about drug education and bullying while students from Catholic schools appreciated developing confidence and learning to be well organised.

Findings from this research indicated that both students and teachers valued the contribution that PSHE made to the curriculum in spite of the current emphasis in the UK on academic results. The findings provided evidence that students appreciated the support they gained from PSHE as it aided them in developing skills that would potentially ensure they could cope with the different situations they experienced in life. They valued the focus the subject gave them in preparing for their futures. Evidence from the research also indicated that schools were prepared to find ways to include PSHE in their curriculum offer even though this was difficult within a crowded timetable. Students valued what they learned in this subject as it was directly applicable to their lives. Student comments and answers on the questionnaires indicated their support for retaining and improving such provision.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
LIST OF TABLES.....	14
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	16
DECLARATION.....	17
CHAPTER ONE.....	18
CHAPTER 1:1 INTRODUCTION	18
1.2 CONTEXT	20
1.3 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	23
1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH	25
1.5 SUMMARY.....	26
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	28
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	28
2.2 THE AIMS OF EDUCATION.....	29
2.2.1 THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION	30
2.2.2 MEETING THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.....	33
2.3 IMPACT OF ETHOS.....	36
2.4. THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION	42
2.4.1 DEVELOPING SPIRITUALITY	43
2.4.2 COMPARISONS BETWEEN COMMON AND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE PERSON	46
2.5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PASTORAL CARE	52

2.5.1 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PSHE	59
2.5.2 THE CALL TO MAKE PSHE STATUTORY	62
2.6 SELF-ESTEEM	63
2.7 SUMMARY	67
CHAPTER 3: CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY	69
3.1 INTRODUCTION	69
3.2 RESEARCH METHODS	70
3.3 OTHER APPROACHES CONSIDERED	72
3.4 LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH	73
3.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE APPROACH USED	75
3.6 QUANTITATIVE METHODS	76
3.7 QUALITATIVE METHODS	77
3.8 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH	78
3.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY	79
3.10 RESEARCH DESIGN	81
3.10.1 QUESTIONNAIRES	82
3.10.2 INTERVIEWS	83
3.10.3 FOCUS GROUPS	86
3.11 THE SAMPLE	88
3.12 SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOLS	90
3.12.1 THE STUDENT SAMPLE	93
3.13 SUMMARY	94
CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH	96
4.1 INTRODUCTION	96

4.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS	96
4.2.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES	97
4.2.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED SENIOR TEACHER INTERVIEWS	101
4.2.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THOSE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING PSHE.....	104
4.2.4 STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	105
4.3 ETHICS	108
4.4 PILOT WORK	111
4.4.1 PILOTING OF THE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE	111
4.4.2 CHANGES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AFTER PILOTING.....	112
4.4.3 PILOTING OF THE TEACHER INTERVIEWS.....	114
4.4.4 PILOTING OF THE FOCUS GROUP	114
4.5 ARRANGING THE VISITS TO THE SCHOOLS.....	115
4.6 PROCEDURES.....	116
4.6.1 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES	116
4.6.2 STAFF INTERVIEWS	117
4.6.3 STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	119
4.7 DATA ANALYSIS	120
4.8 TRANSCRIPTIONS	120
4.9 SUMMARY.....	128
CHAPTER 5: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS.....	130
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	130
5.2 SCHOOL AIMS.....	131
5.2.1 ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL.....	131

5.2.2 BEING A GOOD CITIZEN	133
5.3 SCHOOL ETHOS	134
5.3.1 THE PROVISION OF CONSTANT SUPPORT	136
5.3.2 ENSURING THAT STUDENTS FELT VALUED	137
5.3.3 ESTABLISHING A CARING COMMUNITY	139
5.3.4 THE USE OF PRAISE	142
5.4 DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	143
5.4.1 PASTORAL ETHOS	144
5.4.2 CHAPLAINCY SUPPORT	145
5.5 PSHE	146
5.5.1 TIME ALLOCATION	146
5.5.2 PSHE PROGRAMME	149
5.5.3 SEX EDUCATION AS A PART OF PSHE.....	156
5.6 TECHNOLOGICAL IMPACT	158
5.7 TEACHER TRAINING FOR PSHE	160
5.8 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	162
5.8.1 PSHE PROGRAMME – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	162
5.8.2 EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES.....	164
5.9 SUMMARY.....	166
CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS: COHORT 1 PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES RELATING TO ETHOS, THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL, PSHE AND PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT.....	169
6.1. INTRODUCTION.....	169
6.2 SCHOOL ETHOS	170
6.2.1 YEAR 7 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL ETHOS.....	170

6.2.2 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL ETHOS	171
6.2.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND 9 IN TERMS OF SCHOOL ETHOS	172
6.3 DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	173
6.3.1 YEAR 7 DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	173
6.3.2 YEAR 9 DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	175
6.3.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND 9 STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	176
6.4 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	177
6.4.1 YEAR 7 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	177
6.4.2 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	182
6.4.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND 9 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	186
6.5 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	187
6.5.1 YEAR 7 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	187
6.5.2 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	191
6.5.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND 9 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT.....	198
6.6 SUMMARY.....	199
CHAPTER 7 FINDINGS: COHORT 1 PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES RELATING TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	201
7.1 INTRODUCTION.....	201
7.2.1 YEAR 7 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	201
7.2.2 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	205
7.2.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM	211
7.3 EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM	212

7.3.1 YEAR 7 EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM .	212
7.3.2 YEAR 9 EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM .	217
7.3.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 7 AND YEAR 9 OF THE EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM	224
7.4 THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM	225
7.4.1 YEAR 7 THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM	225
7.4.2 YEAR 9 THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM	227
7.4.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM YEAR 7 AND 9	229
7.5 SUMMARY	229
CHAPTER 8 FINDINGS: COHORT 2 PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES RELATING TO ETHOS, THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL, PSHE AND PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	232
8.1. INTRODUCTION	232
8.2 SCHOOL ETHOS	233
8.2.1 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL ETHOS	233
8.2.2 YEAR 11 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL ETHOS	235
8.2.3 COMPARISON OF YEAR 9 AND YEAR 11 STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL ETHOS	236
8.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL	237
8.3.1 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL	237
8.3.2 YEAR 11 PERCEPTIONS OF THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL	239
8.3.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 9 AND 11 OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL	241

8.4 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	243
8.4.1 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	243
8.4.2 YEAR 11 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	248
8.4.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 9 AND 11 PERCEPTIONS OF PSHE.....	253
8.5 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	254
8.5.1 YEAR 9 PERCEPTION OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT.....	254
8.5.2 YEAR 11 PERCEPTION OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT.....	259
8.5.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 9 AND 11 PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT.....	266
8.6 SUMMARY.....	268
CHAPTER 9 FINDINGS: COHORT 2 PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES RELATING TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	271
9.1 INTRODUCTION TO PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES RELATING TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	271
9.2 YEAR 9 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	272
9.2.1 YEAR 11 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	276
9.2.2 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 9 AND YEAR 11 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	279
9.3. YEAR 9 EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM ...	280
9.3.1 YEAR 11 EXPLORATION OF FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM	285
9.3.2 COMPARISON BETWEEN YEAR 9 AND YEAR 11 FACTORS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT SELF-ESTEEM.....	292
9.4 MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM	292
9.4.1 COHORT 2 YEAR 9 THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM.....	292
9.4.2 YEAR 11 MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM	294

9.4.3 COMPARISON OF THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM YEAR 9 AND YEAR 11	296
.....	
9.5 SUMMARY	297
CHAPTER 10: DISCUSSION	301
10.1 INTRODUCTION	301
10.2 SCHOOL ETHOS	302
10.3 PSHE	306
10.4 PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT	313
10.5 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-ESTEEM	317
10.6 ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE RESEARCH	324
10.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	331
10.8 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE	333
10.9 IMPLICATIONS	335
10.10 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	337
10.11 SUMMARY	338
REFERENCES	345
APPENDICES	372
APPENDIX 1	372
APPENDIX 2	374
APPENDIX 3	375
APPENDIX 4	377
APPENDIX 5	379
APPENDIX 6	380
APPENDIX 7	381

APPENDIX 8.....	384
APPENDIX 9.....	386
APPENDIX 10.....	388
APPENDIX 11.....	390
APPENDIX 12.....	393
APPENDIX 13.....	395
APPENDIX 14.....	396
APPENDIX 15.....	398
APPENDIX 16.....	400

List of Tables

Chapter	Title	Page
3.1	Approaches adopted.....	81
3.2	Distribution of schools within the sample.....	88
3.3	Comparison of student No's and A*/C GCSEs.....	91
4.1	Numbers of students completing questionnaires.....	117
4.2	Examples of Initial Student comments.....	122
4.3	Student coding.....	124
4.4	From codes to themes.....	126
4.5	Example of Coding.....	127
5.1	Year One Allocation of time for PSHE.....	146
5.2	Year Two Allocation of time for PSHE.....	148
6.1	Year 7, What things have you found useful in PSHE?.....	179
6.2	Year 7, How has PSHE helped you make decisions?.....	181
6.3	Year 7, If you have concerns about life, who do you get support from?.....	182
6.4	Year 7, Where do you get most rewards in school?.....	189
6.5	Year 7, What good things have given you satisfaction?.....	191
6.6	Year 9, Year 2, Where do you get most rewards?.....	193
6.7	Year 9, Year 2, How well are you doing in school?.....	194
6.8	Year 9, Year 2, How would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?..	196
6.9	Year 9, Year 2, What things have you done that have given you satisfaction?.....	197
7.1	Year 7, Responses to the meaning of Self-esteem.....	205
7.2	Year 9, Year 2, Responses to the meaning of self-esteem.....	210
7.3	Year 9, Year 2, Responses to How important do you think self-esteem is?.....	211
7.4	Year 7, What is the most positive thing you have been told?.....	213
7.5	Year 7, Where do you get most compliments?.....	214
7.6	Year 7, How do you compare yourself to others?	215
7.7	Year 7, Responses to the application of self-esteem.....	217
7.8	Year 9, Year 2, How can self-esteem be improved?.....	218
7.9	Year 9, Year 2, Where do you get most compliments?.....	220
7.10	Year 9, How do you compare yourself to others?	221
7.11	Year 9, Year 2, Responses to the application of self-esteem.....	222
7.12	Year 9, Year 2, What is the most positive thing you have been told?.....	223
7.13	Year 7, Responses to the Rosenberg Self-esteem scale.....	226
7.14	Year 7, Rosenberg Results, above 15.....	227
7.15	Year 9, Year 2, Responses to the Rosenberg self-esteem scale.....	228

7.16	Year 9, Year 2, Rosenberg Results, above 15.....	229
8.1	Year 9, Year 1, If you have concerns about life where do you get support from?....	245
8.2	Year 9, Year 1, Have you enjoyed PSHE?.....	245
8.3	Year 9, Year 1, What have you enjoyed and found useful in PSHE?.....	246
8.4	Year 9, Year 1, Has PSHE helped you?.....	247
8.5	Year 9, Year 1, How has PSHE helped you make decisions?.....	248
8.6	Year 11, What have you enjoyed and found useful in PSHE?	252
8.7	Year 9, Year 1 Would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?.....	255
8.8	Year 9, Year 1 How would you like school to help you achieve more?.....	256
8.9	Year 9, Year 1 Where do you get most rewards?	257
8.10	Year 9, Year 1 What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?.....	258
8.11	Year 9, Year 1 What good things have given you satisfaction?.....	259
8.12	Year 11, Would you like school to help you achieve more in life?.....	261
8.13	Year 11, How would you like school to help you achieve more in life?.....	262
8.14	Year 11, Where do you get most rewards in school?.....	263
8.15	Year 11, How do you expect to do in GCSEs this year?.....	264
8.16	Year 11, What do you hope to do after GCSEs?.....	264
8.17	Year 11, What good things have given you satisfaction?.....	265
8.18	Year 11, What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?	266
9.1	Year 9, Year 1 Responses to statements regarding self-esteem means	275
9.2	Year 11, Responses to what self-esteem means.....	278
9.3	Year 11, How important do you think self-esteem is?.....	279
9.4	Year 9, Year 1, Where do you get most compliments?.....	282
9.5	Year 9, Year 1, Responses to applications of self-esteem.....	284
9.6	Year 9, Year1, Do you compare yourself to others?.....	284
9.7	Year 9, Year 1, How do you compare yourself to others?.....	285
9.8	Year 11, Where do you get most compliments?.....	289
9.9	Year 11, Responses to applications of self-esteem	290
9.10	Year 11, How can self-esteem be improved?.....	291
9.11	Year 9, Year 1, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale results.....	293
9.12	Year 9, Year 1, Results of Rosenberg Scale above 15.....	294
9.13	Year 11, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale results.....	295
9.14	Year 11, Results of Rosenberg Scale above 15.....	296
9.15	Year 9 and Year 11 Results of Rosenberg compared.....	296

List of Appendices

1. Research questions for senior leaders
2. Research questions for PSHE teachers
3. Student questions for focus group interviews Version 2
4. Initial school contact letter for Headteacher
5. Letter for Parents
6. Student participation in Focus Group consent agreement form
7. Student draft questionnaire
8. Student questionnaire
9. Year 11 student questionnaire
10. Cohort 1 Year 9 Questionnaire
11. Student questions for focus group interviews Version 1
12. Tutor letter
13. Staff interview letter
14. PSHCE Year plan from St. Mary's School
15. PSHE and Citizenship overview from Townhead School
16. St Olaf's School Curriculum map

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Chapter One

Chapter 1:1 Introduction

Having taught in both common and Catholic schools, I was interested in looking at the extent to which there was any difference taken in the approach to the development of self-esteem through Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) in the different sectors of schools with particular reference to the personal development of the students. Catholic education purports to take a specific stance in its approach to education and has a distinctive rationale for its very existence (e.g. Sullivan, 2001). I wondered whether this distinctive perspective would affect the development of self-esteem as defined by the PSHE programmes of study set out in the 2007 National Curriculum. The government programmes of study outlined the aims and areas of study that should be provided for students in order to promote skills and attitudes. These included developing personal well-being, sex and relationships education and drug education, as well as economic well-being. The debate about the value of faith schools has not abated (e.g., Gardner et al., 2005). State funding of faith schools has long been a controversial issue and clearly the State has a vested interest in assessing their impact on education. My intention was to research the effect, if any, of Catholic schooling on the experience of PSHE and to see if there were different outcomes for students in common schools. This also influenced my choice of participating schools.

I have spent my entire working career in education; initially in primary schools, but predominantly in secondary schools. Increasingly I have felt that there has been an emphasis on academic education and not enough recognition given to the importance of the need for PSHE. Many students require support in developing skills that aid them across the curriculum, for example, developing study skills that help

them to approach independent learning. In the 1980s I joined an organisation called NAPCE (National Association of Pastoral Care in Education) as it was a body that supported this area of development. At that time, I was a classroom teacher involved in teaching not only my subject, but also in delivering the pastoral curriculum as part of Personal and Social Education (PSE), as the subject was known at that time. NAPCE was concerned with the general achievement of students across the curriculum and supported teachers in the field of PSE by disseminating good practice and promoting training for teachers.

In my experience pastoral education has rarely been prioritised by successive governments. Few teachers have been trained to deliver PSHE and a unified programme of study has yet to be made statutory. Some teachers are excellent at delivering this aspect of education, while others struggle without training or time to develop their ideas (Glover, 2017). A programme cannot be as good as it could be without both time for planning and space on an overcrowded timetable. While teacher training places a great emphasis on planning, ensuring student teachers know the learning objectives and success criteria for lessons; the training for delivering PSHE has not developed at the same pace.

When teachers are able to plan together as a team and discuss how to implement a programme, it is likely to be much more successful (Pratt, Imbody, Wolf, and Patterson, 2017). Teachers who are tutors for a particular year group are often in a team together, but frequently a programme is devised by someone else, for example a head of year, who with the best intentions provides material to support their work. However, in such a situation there is a danger that teachers would be unable to own the material and would therefore be less committed than they could be to the delivery of the programme (McWhirter, Boddington, and Barksfield, 2017). Time is a limited resource and schools often have to find ways to provide the best programme within

the resources they have, but PSHE or Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), as it is can also be referred to, is a subject that can enhance and support the whole curriculum if it is given a focus by a school. A teacher can come to believe that they are a teacher of a specific subject and not a teacher of children. Without training and support, as was shown through the data collected, teachers can be reluctant to deliver PSHE.

This research investigated student and teacher perceptions of PSHE in order to gauge how the subject is viewed. The development of skills that support students in managing inter-personal situations, such as group work and dealing with issues such as bullying, are important life skills. These skills are vital if all students are to grow up into capable adults. PSHE as a subject has a vital role in helping to enhance student skills in such areas. With the appropriate support and time allocation PSHE is a subject students can enjoy, as well as gain benefit from. This research also investigates whether schools were able to facilitate the necessary resources to make it as successful as possible.

1.2 Context

My career in teaching was spent in both Catholic schools and State schools and when I began this research I wanted to include representatives of both types of schools. In order to differentiate between the two sectors, Catholic and non-denominational schools, I shall refer to the latter as common schools. During my teaching career I was aware of the continuing debate surrounding whether or not society should support Catholic schools. I questioned whether there were any differences in the ethos of the two types of schools that might impact upon the personal development of students. I wanted to investigate if there were any differences in the way each sector dealt with the delivery of PSHE and whether this had an impact on students' development. Ostensibly, Catholic schools aim to give a

greater focus to community involvement and I wanted to explore whether their students consequently had a greater sense of shared values. This led me to want to examine whether, if at all, Catholic schools differed in the way they helped student development through PSHE.

During the final years of my career I taught in a Pupil Referral Unit. It was clear in this context that PSHE was crucial for the personal development and general progress of students. Unless students believe in themselves and develop inter-personal skills it is difficult for them to start to engage with the educational process. My experience of working with students in the Pupil Referral Unit highlighted the fact that poor social skills and low self-esteem in students could inhibit their ability to participate in classroom activities. This aspect of my work inspired me to embark on this study.

In the mid-1980s, I was chairperson of the Centre South branch of the National Association of Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE). I became chairperson of the committee which served five of the Home Counties. This coincided with my role as a Head of House where I had responsibility for a quarter of the school for both their pastoral care and curriculum. I was asked by the advisory teacher for pastoral care to become a member of a small group of teachers who met regularly to receive and deliver training across the county in order to enhance the development of the pastoral curriculum. We went into schools in pairs to deliver In-service Development (INSED) to help teachers develop skills, often focusing on the process rather than the delivery of the content. We worked to help teachers to look at pedagogy, such as getting students to work in pairs, then fours and then larger groups, rather than just focusing work on whole classes. By enabling students to work together and support each other, the intention was that they would enhance the way they thought about issues, develop interpersonal skills, encourage more independent learning and as a result, promote student self-esteem.

I furthered my career by taking up a deputy head position in a Catholic school in Inner London, which catered for a large ethnic mix of students and where I had charge of curriculum issues. I was therefore able to devote less time specifically to develop PSHE, except through encouraging other teachers to participate in training and integrating it into the school's curriculum. Having taught English, I have been in a privileged position to be able to use literature to help enhance students' understanding of inter-personal skills. In many respects, this subject lends itself more than some others to the use of active learning methods, where students are able to work in small groups, analysing characters' motives and hot seating, where they take on the role of a character. When an emphasis was put on interactive learning and the teacher became more of a facilitator, these methods of engagement helped students to be involved in a wider range of learning styles.

At a later date, having taken the opportunity of a part-time post as a tutor in a sixth form college, I was able to devote more of my time to PSHE. At the same time, I was given the chance to be a Subject Regional Advisor (SRA) for the newly established Association of PSHE. This involved working with colleagues in the South East of England at any level as the need arose, supporting them in developing materials or supporting training. This post was developed to support the embedding of the new programmes of study that the Labour government introduced in September 2007. Within the personal wellbeing programmes of study, the development of self-esteem was specifically referred to as an aspect of development that facilitates students' ability to make the most of their talents.

Throughout my career it seemed to me that children needed to be taught interpersonal skills just as much as academic ones. Interpersonal skills such as being able to work with others in a team and developing positive attitudes towards work are

important attributes that need to be developed. There is no dispute about the need for good academic qualifications, especially as we compete in a growing global community (with regard for example to Programme for International Student Assessment statistics provided by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). However, I was in no doubt that students need to be skilled in other areas such as personal and social education. In a world that is becoming more threatening, where, for example, terrorism and the possibility of the presence of knife crime is prevalent, students need the skills to be able to assess a situation and to know how to react to get the best out of it. Without such skills, students are at a severe disadvantage, not only in the world of work, but also in the world generally. In many disciplines some children know themselves to be very adept and successful, but many lack an understanding of the importance of how to connect successfully with others and make the most of situations in which they find themselves. As my teaching career developed, I became more convinced that the need for developing good interpersonal skills had increased rather than decreased. I have also noticed that the behaviour of children had become more egotistical over the years, perhaps owing to the increasing technical media world in which they find themselves and I therefore believe that the development of interpersonal skills is essential.

1.3 Personal development

An important element in the teaching of PSHE that I have become increasingly aware of is that of understanding how students feel about themselves. This has the potential either to enhance or to stifle their ability to access fully educational opportunities. A focus on personal development supports students in understanding how they feel about themselves. An important element of personal development is the enhancement of self-esteem, the way someone feels about themselves and how this is affected by feedback from others and the way this is interpreted. Self-perceptions

can play an important role in determining success or failure for a student (Suls, 2014).

During their teenage years students are finding out who they are and who they wish to be and it is a time when their levels of self-esteem can be fragile (Erikson, 1968). It is especially important during this period of their lives that they are supported in a positive way so that they can achieve to their maximum potential. Therefore, I felt it was important to study the way schools influence the development of self-esteem through their PSHE programmes. This was seen as especially important as levels of self-esteem can be seen to decline as children progress towards adolescence but increase as they develop towards adulthood (Ziegler-Hill, 2013).

At the outset of this study, I intended to investigate the delivery of PSHE over a two-year period as part of a longitudinal study. Initially in the light of the proposal to make PSHE a statutory subject in the National Curriculum (MacDonald, 2008), I had intended to investigate the delivery of PSHE in schools before its introduction and then to return to the schools to assess the impact of the implementation of statutory measures.

However, in 2011 under the coalition government the previous government's proposal to introduce statutory PSHE was abandoned. Schools, then, had to decide on their own local implementation of the subject. Mr Gove, the then Education Minister, taking the stance that education was in need of reform, emphasised the importance of developing skills in science, literacy and maths and consequently marginalised personal and social education. Despite the change of government policy, I was still able to sustain my investigation into the provision and perceptions of PSHE by returning to schools in 2012, two years after my first visit in 2010. In 2013,

the Department of Education issued guidance on PSHE as a result of which schools were allowed to determine how they delivered this subject.

PSHE promotes personal social and emotional development as well as health and wellbeing. Essentially, in this study, PSHE is defined as all those areas within the curriculum that enable students to prepare for their life so that they can 'thrive in a complex and challenging world' Rowland (2018: 9). The name can be confusing as it can be described as PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education) or, for example as, PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education). In 2007 when QCA introduced initial guidance for schools concerning PSHE, twin programmes of study were introduced for personal well-being and economic well-being. PSHE has since then been referred to in different ways; sometimes just as Personal, Social and Health Education or as Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, but it still embraces both aspects of well-being.

Although Brown et al (2011: 118) indicate a move towards PSHE including economic awareness and then being referred to as PSHEE, in my experience it is commonly shortened to PSHE and I have therefore referred to it by this term within this study. While economic awareness was part of the programme delivery (as can be seen in Appendix 14-16) the extra 'E' in the title was not included. There are many ways that schools refer to the programme they deliver in schools as can be seen in Appendix 14-16 and some schools offer Citizenship Education as a separate subject in the curriculum.

1.4 Aims of the research

The aim of the research was to investigate whether there were any differences in the perceptions of teachers and students in common and Catholic schools towards PSHE and personal development. In order to understand perceptions, it was

important to understand the processes that informed PSHE within each school. I set out to investigate what factors contributed to any differences. I was interested to find out whether the ethos of the school impacted on the perceptions of PSHE.

This study represents a major investigation into teacher and student perceptions of PSHE and personal development, which set out to explore whether there were any differences between common and Catholic schools. This was the main research focus. However, in order to investigate these perceptions, it was important to understand the wider context within which PSHE was presented. The themes that were identified following the interviews were ethos, PSHE, progress and attainment and self-esteem as part of personal development.

Another aspect of understanding the context of PSHE within a school was being able to understand the subject provision in terms of time. This will be outlined in Chapter 5. As part of the context, the themes that arose from the teacher interviews included, for example, student support, any training teachers had received and the impact of technology. Similarly, by considering progress and attainment, a context was provided in which students could consider their personal development and self-esteem. As this study was longitudinal, it was also possible to consider whether these aspects changed over time.

1.5 Summary

In this chapter I explained my interest in this particular research and the context for it. I set out the aim of the research, to explore teachers and students' perceptions of PSHE and its impact in Catholic and common schools. I have introduced the subject of PSHE and identified and explored various definitions as a basis for developing my ideas. Whilst there are various perspectives that could be considered within a PSHE

programme, this study will focus on personal development as a key aspect of the research. This will be investigated in more detail in the following chapters.

This thesis is divided into ten chapters, the first of which has provided a rationale for the research. In Chapter 2 I present the literature review and in Chapter 3 I discuss research design and methodology, while in Chapter 4 I present the research procedures adopted. Findings from teacher interviews are presented in Chapter 5 and findings from both focus group interviews and responses to questionnaires submitted from the student cohorts in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. Discussions of the findings from the five chapters including interviews and responses to questionnaires are discussed in Chapter 10 in the light of the literature examined.

This research provides an original contribution and insight into teacher and student perceptions of PSHE in secondary education. It highlights the importance of the role of PSHE in supporting students to develop skills that help them cope with adult life. There is a paucity of research in this field of study, not only in terms of PSHE but also - significantly – with regard to comparative perspectives between Catholic and common schools.

In the next chapter I will examine the literature in relation to the key terms including ethos, PSHE, self-esteem, common schools, spirituality, and spiritual education. I will explore the literature in respect of how ethos impacts on PSHE and the relationship between PSHE the development of self-esteem.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this investigation is the perception of teachers and students of PSHE in Catholic and common secondary schools in England. When referring to common schools Pring (2007: 503) says that the idea of a common school originated in the writings of John Dewey. By 1977, according to Pring, 80% of young people in England and Wales were 'being educated within the comprehensive system.' These schools did not select on entry and students were offered a common experience of education. Comprehensive schools, according to Pring, aimed to be a 'common school'. Comprehensive schools offered young people an education in a local area. Before this, students had been segregated according to the results of the eleven plus exam. However, Pring (2007: 504) also states that there was a political and moral driving force for a common school in order to provide greater social justice and equality as well as 'respect for persons and reparation for citizenship.' Creating a common school was seen as facilitating a common culture and reducing divisions. In this study the term common school is defined as local government maintained non-denominational schools.

Before reflecting on the nature and development of PSHE, however, and in order to contextualise its significance, at the outset of this literature review I shall discuss the aims of education, with particular reference to education in secondary schools. I shall also consider the importance of school ethos, as it may, arguably, have a bearing on the development of perceptions and the programme of delivery for PSHE.

There are many aspects to PSHE that could have been examined as part of this research. However, in this study I am focusing on PSHE from the Personal well-

being perspective and an aspect that I particularly focus on as part of the PSHE provision is self-esteem. I am interested in this aspect as I feel it enables students to access more fully the opportunities that schools provide. When discussing self-esteem in this study, it is defined as the individual's feeling of self-worth. I am interested also to consider the extent to which the literature indicates that there are any differences between PSHE within Catholic and common secondary schools. To begin, I shall consider the aims of education, what the purpose of education is and why it is so important.

2.2 The aims of education

Before I investigate the literature with regard to PSHE, a fundamental understanding about the aims of education is required. What do we believe education should aim to achieve? The debate about the aims of education and the curriculum has long been debated. Aristotle, from a theoretical basis, for example argued that education helped an individual to develop good habits in life and do no wrong (Thompson, 1970). In essence he emphasised the moral implications of education.

Eleanor Roosevelt (1930) argued that education involved acquiring knowledge through reading books and absorbing facts. Would this be sufficient in the modern world? Her analysis seems to adopt a rather simplistic perspective of what is required from education. I agree with Aristotle that education should consist of more than a narrow emphasis on the retention and recall of knowledge. Davies (2008) suggests that the role of education can be seen in terms of developing each child individually and helping them cope with competition. Education is not only about gaining knowledge; it is also about experience. Consequently, it needs to take account of the way subjects are taught as well as the content.

The aims of education are subjective. One way to consider them is as activities that society deems to be worthwhile (Pring, 2005). It is a means by which human development can be enhanced, which enables participants to deal with situations in which they find themselves and helps them to develop as people. Jones and Barrie argue that education is about helping young to prepare for adult life and therefore we must question what human life is all about (Jones and Barrie, 2015). The National Curriculum (2004) stated its aims included ensuring that learning should encourage and stimulate students so they could make the best progress and gain their highest attainment. This could be regarded as a positive approach from which students were able to progress. It aimed to support them to grow in confidence to learn and help them to be able to work independently and collaboratively. Developing an enquiring mind and being able to think rationally were to be encouraged. The promotion of being able to distinguish between right and wrong and developing an understanding of different beliefs and cultures was to be sought. The curriculum aimed to promote the development of self-esteem and well-being.

Within this exploration the aims of education I have identified include two strands for consideration for the purposes of discussion. One is that educational systems are motivated by the need to provide a workforce that is capable of competing in the global economy. The second concerns meeting the needs of young people. There will be explored in the next section the influence of meeting the needs of competing in the global economy. I will continue the debate about the purpose of education below.

2.2.1 The purpose of education

Should education focus on ensuring continued economic success? The global economic system demands greater technological skills from the workforce than ever before, (Warhurst, et al., 2017). This may not however, justify the focus of education

being to simply to supply an appropriately educated workforce. Hamish McRae (2001) states theoretically that education should be able to be enjoyed for its own sake. He suggested that individuals should be able to study subjects and develop skills that they find stimulating and help to make them a more interesting person. The significance here is that education is seen to have intrinsic as well as extrinsic value.

Education can help to prepare young people for the future and can help them to be more responsible for the world that they live in. Young people need to have an understanding, for example, of the importance of issues like voting in elections, being part of society, healthcare and self-esteem (Goble and Bye-Brooks, 2016). As the theoretical study of Bassnett (2007) indicates, education is also about teaching children how to think and question all they see and hear.

According to Boshel (2011), the Coalition government (2010-15) policy in school education was based on a belief that underachievement and poverty could be addressed by developing personal responsibility. Whether or not this is the case is open to debate, but this approach drove educational policy. The government believed that, by giving schools more autonomy and providing more diversity, educational standards would improve. It has been announced that all schools are expected to achieve Academy status by 2022, though this intention has more recently been revised (Morgan, 2016). This means that all schools would be controlled by a sponsor often as part of a federation of schools.

The pressure from government on secondary schools in the UK is to ensure the improvement and rigour of GCSE results (Torrance, 2017). Academy schools are funded directly from the government and under the control of their sponsor who determines the curriculum. Some sponsors see their sponsorship as a route to provide future employees for the workplace (Gunter, 2010). With the introduction of

measures such as the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and Progress 8, there has occurred a narrowing of the focus of the curriculum, especially with the marginalisation of creative arts and, more specifically, with regard to faith schools, Religious Education. Such sponsors call into focus the purpose of education. It could be argued that academies, including some faith schools, place greater emphasis on a utilitarian interpretation of education. I would argue that education is wider than this and that this focus on education can affect the stress levels of students (ATL, 2014). This is supported by students in the UK who have been identified in the Index of Child Wellbeing in Europe as being 21st out of 28 for their well-being (Stratham and Chase, 2010). The Children's Society report (Rees, Main and Bradshaw, 2015), indicated that children in England ranked 14 out of 15 for life satisfaction and some students were reported in this article as experiencing a narrow curriculum and being tested at all stages of their education leading to stress. There has been increasing pressure to raise standards in UK schools through OFSTED inspections. This, it can be argued, has had an impact on teachers' creative delivery of the curriculum and motivation of students. This has affected student attitudes and their liking for school (Galton and MacBeath, 2008).

Of course, it can be argued that it is important that children are encouraged to learn and develop their knowledge of the world that they are growing up in and that they are able to learn skills that would help them to be able to take their place in society where they are able to make a positive contribution. This premise was supported by Gibb (2015) at the Education Reform Summit. He argued that the purpose of education could be defined in three ways; the first was the drive behind the country's economy; the second concerned the country's culture; and the third was the preparation of young people for adult life. According to Gibb (ibid), getting this balance right is the challenge that educators face. He pointed out that education could instill a desire for knowledge and culture 'for its own sake', but at the same time

had to help young people obtain work in the future. He further argued that it was important for education to instill resilience and character so that young people could cope with the challenges of life. I would argue that, if young people are to be successful, a vital element of education is their personal development.

2.2.2 Meeting the needs of young people

Education should partly be concerned with meeting the needs of young people so that they can function successfully in life. Nevertheless, at the same time, education could guide them in a way of thinking that enables them to shape their views in line with the values that their parents and society would wish them to adopt (Arthur, 2010).

Schools in the UK are under great pressure to provide society with young people who are able to cope with the increasingly competitive world of work. This is sometimes achieved at the cost of the development of more personal and social skills, especially in terms of young people being more aware of themselves as responsible adults (Arthur, Harding and Godfrey, 2009).

Another way of perceiving the educational process is to see it as a way of helping individuals to become more autonomous as learners and to be able to develop their own beliefs as they are exposed to a range of experiences and arguments. In this context one aim of education is concerned with helping young people to learn to think and be able to develop their minds through questioning and enquiring (Pring, 2006).

Swartz (1994) argued that helping students to develop enquiring minds and be able to make their own judgements is a skill that students are expected to develop as they mature. Students need to develop skills to solve problems and to be able to assess what is presented to them in a critical and analytical way, if they are to develop a

reasoning mind of their own. Schoenfeld (2009:27) says that the purpose of teaching children is to help them become 'open-minded and inquisitive thinkers.' The way children are taught and learn plays a role in the way they develop attitudes, rather than the type of school they attend. It is impossible for education to be completely value free. A variety of perspectives can be presented in order to explain the different ways of perceiving any ideas or information. Education is bound up with values whatever stance is taken. This needs to be recognised and identified if true learning is to take place. Values can be regarded as concepts that describe our desires, the factors that motivate behaviour. These guide what we select in terms of behaviour and guiding principles (Schwartz, 1994).

Whilst Pring (2000) theoretically, emphasises that education is not just about learning, but learning what is believed to be important, the question remains as to who decides what is important. In the UK, successive governments have demanded higher levels of achievement from students. This may have been to the detriment of their personal development. The update of the national curriculum in 2014 in which new programmes of study were provided for most subjects, did not include an update for PSHE and Religious Education (DfE, 2014). The new assessment process no longer focused on levels at Key Stage 4 and instead of assessment of coursework, terminal examinations in subjects like English were introduced, which put a different emphasis on learning for students in schools. The end of key stage assessments may impact negatively on some students leading them to question the value of education and their ability to be successful (Wentzel and Ramani, 2016).

Are the aims of education just to support a system that provides the state with a suitable workforce? Arguably the education system needs to do more than this. It needs to provide individuals with the skills that would help them throughout their lives, so that they may grow into healthy, fulfilled individuals who can adapt to

different stages in their lives and grow to their maximum potential (Maslow, 1943), whatever that means to each individual.

Such an approach brings rights, but at the same time responsibilities. The revisions to the National Curriculum 2007 stated that its aims were to ensure that students could be learners who enjoyed what they did, understood their progress and achievement and became confident in their learning. Therefore, they could live safely and have fulfilling lives (Walters, National Curriculum, 2007). PSHE can play a vital role in helping young people to enhance this aspect of their education.

These aims embody a desire not only to help the individual student, but also to make a positive contribution in general to society as a whole. Student social development can be supported through PSHE where students are enabled to develop social skills which may support their active participation in society (Arthur, Davison and Stow, 2014). Students develop through experience ways of behaving in a socially acceptable way and become aware of others through belonging to communities. PSHE can be instrumental in supporting this development. Arthur (in Arthur, Davison and Stow, 2000) argues that such social skills are marginalized by the National Curriculum, as it does not emphasize the skills needed for daily life. However, he recognized that although the curriculum reflected the 'political and social context within which it was written' (Arthur, in Arthur, Davidson and Stowe, 2014: 4), there is a need for social development, effective relationships and the development of self-esteem. Whilst it can be argued that young people need to be prepared to contribute to the workforce, Arthur (ibid) also asserts that students need to develop skills so that they can participate in a confident and active way.

Education as argued by Bigger (1999) and Cogan and Derricott (2012) is about students' experience which leads to their learning and how they grow as individuals

and develop their own set of values. Education helps shape these views. Education he explains can provide young people with valuable skills such as how to be responsible citizens who can help their communities. More recently the growth of globalization has had an impact upon the education of young people (Mundy, Green, Lingard and Verger, 2016). Competition across countries and standardized schooling has put an emphasis on standards, the productivity of schools and produced greater emphasis on accountability. This may not produce the desired results, as improving the quality and relevance of education may not result in better outcomes for young people. Young people are affected by the increased accountability driven by competitiveness as identified by Mundy et al and this has resulted in 'suspicion, distrust, anxiety and fear in schools and classrooms' (2016: 134). This suggests that the education system needs to support personal development including the enhancement of self-esteem.

Developing self-esteem is also concerned with character building and involves students knowing who they are and who they can become (Arthur, 2002). Education is more than just providing children the opportunity to acquire knowledge; they need to get on with others and adapt to various situations, as well as develop their character. For example, Jones and Barrie argue that education should be concerned with the development of moral virtues (Jones and Barrie, 2015).

2.3 Impact of ethos

Before considering the significance of the development of PSHE in secondary schools it would be pertinent to acknowledge that an important element in the delivery of the curriculum and young people's opportunities to develop their personal and social skills is the ethos of the school. Ethos is a difficult term to define. In this study I have considered the importance of school ethos, because each school has its own ethos and that ethos has an impact on the value and place of PSHE within each

school. School ethos impacts on all aspects of the school both formally in connection with issues such as the timetable and the place of PSHE within it, but also informally through the way different subjects are valued. Ethos has an impact on the way things are organized in a school. Therefore, it was felt important to include it as part of the study. As Brown et al (2011: 117-118) indicate, ethos is not only a 'key determinate of both the perception and delivery of PSHE', but '*ethos* is central to the development and delivery of effective PSHE'.

Monahan (in Furlong and Monahan, 2000, xix) defines school ethos as a 'means of articulating core values'. He sees this as impacting on areas such as relationships, staff development, collaboration and curriculum provision. Williams (in Furlong and Monahan, 2000: 74) refers to ethos as the 'pervading spirit or character that finds expression in the habits and behaviours of those who are part of it'. Another definition is provided by Solvason (2005:87) who reminds us that ethos concerns feelings and is experienced. Ethos expresses the 'wishes of those who command authority within the organization'. Moreover, McLaughlin argues that ethos facilitates the influence which teachers can exert (2005:307). In this study; ethos is regarded and defined as the values and attitudes that lie behind the actions that are undertaken within the school. As such it has a vital impact on the provision and delivery of PSHE within a school.

In addition, Donnelly (2000) defines ethos theoretically in two ways: she says it can be described from a positivist or anti-positivist perspective. The positivist perspective views ethos as social reality where it exists apart from people and social situations. From this perspective ethos can be seen as an expression of the aims and objectives of the organisation where people act and think in a way that conforms to the ethos. However, the anti-positivist perspective views ethos as emerging from social interactions. This perspective sees ethos as a product of interaction. Ethos embraces

both the formal and informal behaviours of the members of the organisation. Hyland (2000) believes ethos is revealed through the social processes, activities, moral perspectives and structures of an organisation. Ethos embraces the spirit, tone and beliefs of those within an organisation. Ethos can be considered as being concerned with specific objectives in relation to values and behaviour (Torrington and Weightman, 1989).

Many authors, for instance, Alder, (1993); Norman (2003); Solvason (2005); Stern (2009); and Smith (2003) theoretically argue that ethos can be seen, in general terms, as being part of the 'atmosphere or mood of the organisation' (Solvason, 2005). Norman (ibid) also draws comparisons with Bourdieu's descriptions of community socialisation and ethos that can be regarded as the habits or 'Habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977) that the community practises. Schools in particular are places where these terms are continually being reconstructed through individual actions. Another way to describe ethos would be in terms of the feeling or character of the school. It can be seen as the product of the culture of the school, but can also be affected by external influence (Solvason, 2005). The ethos of any school is important because it impacts on the way students perceive what issues are important and significant.

All schools have their own specific set of values that are imparted as part of their process of being. In the Eire Irish White Paper, *Charting Our Education Future*, ethos is not only defined as the attitudes of individual schools, collective beliefs and values, but also their traditions and the goals and aspirations that they hold (Eire White Paper, 1995). In other words, as Monahan (in Furlong and Monahan 2000) says, it is the reality of the lived-out values of the school which is understood through the experience and the procedures that are adopted. McLaughlin (2006) adds that ethos can also embrace the influence that a teacher could have in the sphere of learning.

This influence can be regarded as part of a manifestation of ethos, where ethos is defined as the character of the school expressed through agreed values either formally or informally (Brown, Busfield, O'Shea and Sibthorpe, 2011).

Ethos is often expressed explicitly in the school mission statement, but as Grace (2002) empirically indicates it can also include subconscious habits which he describes as the 'internal dynamic' of the school (Grace, 2002: 37). Glover and Coleman stress that ethos is the 'way people work together'(2005:257). This view is supported by Jones and Barrie (2015) who stress that while schools may have a mission statement that tries to encapsulate their ethos, it is the beliefs and behaviours of those within the school that really shape the ethos. It is important that all those within the school share a common understanding of the mission of the school. If a school is not successful in implementing the ethos outlined in the mission statement, a counter-cultural ethos could develop through the behaviour and attitudes of individuals of the school community.

There is no such thing as a neutral approach towards education (Burn, McQuoid, 1997) as education transmits values. Values are transmitted through beliefs (Keast, 2005). Ethos can have a positive or negative effect and can enrich the lives of young people or impoverish them. Education theoretically can help a person either to grow or it can diminish a young person's life (Pope Francis, 2014). Individual beliefs can have an impact on the school as a whole and therefore it is beneficial for school leaders to take a positive stance in developing a cohesive school ethos.

Whatever national agreements exist, individual schools develop their own ethos and mode of operation. The ethos of a school influences how it operates and each school has an individual set of beliefs and traditions which help shape its ethos. These are

developed through the core values promoted and embraced by all connected with the school and through the daily practices that display the way that values are embodied. Therefore, it is important that individuals working within a school understand its purpose and values so that they can support the ethos and culture (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015).

All schools have their own ethos (Nucci and Narvaez, 2008) and work towards being distinctive in their own way, with a particular history arising from when they opened and how they have developed in order to fulfill the needs of the community that they are serving. However, it can be argued that schools are places of formation¹ for young people where they develop values and skills. It can be argued that ethos is about the ethics behind the principles and policies within a school that it uses as a basis for all its activities (Rowe, 2000).

Ethos can also be considered to be the atmosphere derived from the behaviours of all members of the school community including teachers, ancillary staff, parents and pupils. Everyone in the school community has a responsibility towards fulfilling the school's mission statement (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015). Ethos has a significant impact on the perspectives of all those in the school. This will incorporate how they regard their role and contribution to the school community including PSHE.

At the heart of the educational agenda are values and beliefs. The nature and purpose of education is affected by different perspectives of what is considered to be worthwhile. What it means to be human and how humans function need to be considered when trying to evaluate the educational process. The kind of education

¹ Formation can be regarded as the integration of life in the 'culture of the community, its relationships and educational practices.' www.qcec.catholic.edu.au

that society provides for its young people affects the kind of society it is. Schools are part of the society and are influenced by its values as well as developing their own. Ethos emerges from the integral way a school functions,' a conscious ethos is an oxymoron' (Murray, 2000:16).

A school states its aims in its mission statement, but the ethos of a school is where school values are manifested through patterns of behaviour. Ethos is not represented just by the rhetoric, but it is expressed through the day-to-day practice of individuals within the school. The ethos is understood through experience of the way that the school uses its structures and what is seen as its purpose as well as the values that are encompassed. It incorporates the rights and responsibilities it engenders in young people and how and what it celebrates. Through relationships and the level of pastoral care offered to students, key values such as respect offered to students and the development of their self-esteem can be enhanced. Murray (2000) identified four elements in which ethos is shared; through being clear about what the mission of the school is, having a consensus of support, commitment to the work and an understanding that the developments that are part of the long-term aims of the school.

Bragg and Manchester (2011) from their empirical evidence define ethos as being crucial to the effectiveness of the organization. Ethos embraces the character, mood and customs of the school and is defined by the morals, values and beliefs behind the way things are done. I argue that ethos is affected by the values held both by the school and the families of the individuals within that institution. So, in a sense those attending the school have to be in sympathy with the ethos of the school if they are to feel in alignment with the values being upheld.

2.4. The distinctiveness of Catholic education

Having considered ethos in the previous section, I shall reflect on the extent to which, if at all, the ethos of Catholic education is distinctive from that of common schools. In this section, therefore, I will be looking at what is distinctive about Catholic education and ethos (Brick, 1999) and in part drawing on my experiences having worked in both Catholic and common schools. I will in this research be concerned with investigating differences between what Catholic and common schools purport to provide. While both Catholic schools and common schools are concerned with helping young people to develop into fully rounded adults, it could be argued that common schools are not necessarily as concerned as Catholic schools in developing a lifelong spiritual journey for their students (Arthur, 1995). Nevertheless, a common school, which is required by the state to follow national curriculum, must include Religious Education. Gallagher (2001) theoretically argues both Catholic and common schools work with young people to help them develop an awareness of all aspects of who they are and who they can become, starting with what motivates them now and what gives them hope for the future. Society is forever changing and schools aim to help students to be able to respond to the demands of this changing world (Gallagher, 2001).

Young people have to cope with different situations and need to be empowered to develop their self-belief and have hope for the future. In a time when many young people live in a world where there is a great deal of instability due to family break up or economic hardship, they often feel insecure (Bradshaw, 2016). Some young people have poor family relationships leading them to feel unloved and lonely. Often students are caught in damaged relationships where their self-esteem is adversely affected (Griggs and Walker, 2008). There is empirical evidence that young people are more depressed today than in the past, which may signify poorer family

relationships, and it can be difficult for schools to help them see 'value in their lives' (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988). However, a Catholic school aims to provide an education illuminated by faith and permeated by Gospel values of love, with Jesus as the role model (Vatican Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997). This differs from common schools. However supportive of students the staff in a common school are, PSHE will not be underpinned by specific spiritual beliefs.

Students can often feel insecure and can lack self-esteem and self-worth especially in an increasingly changing world (Arthur, 2009). In situations like these where students feel isolated and lonely, they can turn to drugs, alcohol or sexual abuse in order to find support or comfort (Carr, 2016). One role of the Catholic school is to help young people develop their faith, hope for a better future and see in themselves something of value. The worries young people have about wars and the destruction of the planet have to be met with love and understanding (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988). Common schools also support young people in developing their skills for their future and support them in finding their place in society. It could therefore be argued that the differences between the two types of school are minimal, but it is the rationale behind the ethos where the difference lies with Catholic schools emphasising the spiritual in a specific religious context.

2.4.1 Developing Spirituality

While both common and Catholic schools arguably develop young people's personal and social skills through the development of their values, morality and sense of community, a Catholic school is also committed to religious values (Burn, Marks, Pilkington, Thompson, 2001). Altbach (2015) indicates that schools, as well as providing an understanding of the culture and values of society, prepares students for a society that can be economically successful. This encompasses only part of the

rationale for a Catholic school, which is inspired by the values of the faith and the lead given by the Church.

Ideally, students have opportunities to grow in belief. In both Catholic and common schools. It is student relationships with teachers, the way they are treated and the way that they feel valued as members of the school community which add to their understanding of the school ethos (Wenzel, 2012). The values expressed within the school help shape the development of both the spirituality of the individual and the perceptions that the individual develops about their self-worth. Rowling (2008: 242) describes spirituality as the way students make sense of the purpose of life and their connectedness to people and places. Banke et al (2012: 238), on the other hand, when looking at definitions of spirituality, contend that spirituality is an internal construct that can be seen through outward actions. Another view is that spirituality is a desire to be connected to the 'largeness of life' (Palmer; 1998: 5). In this study, spirituality can be seen to encompass an inner journey to something more than the everyday and the desire to connect with the divine.

Spiritual education on the other hand Spiritual education can be both 'inside and outside religion' (Flanagan et al; 2015: 63). Spiritual education needs to start 'from the capacity for spirituality in every individual' (ibid). This could be characterized as an approach that facilitates the use of sensory awareness, the use of art and nature, as well as reflective experiences. By deploying 'mindfulness' techniques, students would be enabled to expand their sensory awareness and to engage more with nature. In addition, they could attune their responses to the internal rhythms of their bodies and calm their internal stress. This would provide opportunities to develop ways to regulate their emotions and be more self-reflective; be able to engage in meditative thinking. Spiritual education can bring together both intellectual and emotional elements of human development (Radford, 2010: 23). We have a need to

understand our lives and seek meaning for the purpose of existence. Spiritual education in this study can be seen as a specific process of induction through activities which are designed to develop spiritual awareness; these could include devotional and meditative processes through which a student could communicate with God.

Spiritual education, on the other hand, can be both 'inside and outside religion' (Flanagan et al; 2015: 63). Spiritual education needs to start 'from the capacity for spirituality in every individual' (ibid). This could be characterized as an approach that facilitates the use of sensory awareness, the use of art and nature, as well as reflective experiences. By deploying 'mindfulness' techniques, students would be enabled to expand their sensory awareness and to engage more with nature. In addition, they could attune their responses to the internal rhythms of their bodies and calm their internal stress. This would provide opportunities to develop ways to regulate their emotions and be more self-reflective, to be able to engage in meditative thinking. Spiritual education can bring together both intellectual and emotional elements of human development (Radford, 2010: 23). We have a need to understand our lives and seek meaning for the purpose of existence. Spiritual education in this study can be seen as a specific process of induction through activities which are designed to develop spiritual awareness; these could include devotional and meditative processes through which a student could communicate with God.

With the exception of free schools and academies, schools have to work within the parameters of National Curriculum, which promotes a "moral" or 'ethical' or 'spiritual' perspective of education (Arthur, 2010). Citizenship Education, in particular, as part of PSHE, pursues ways of addressing the moral dilemmas of society. Moral education can, therefore, be seen as a key element for many UK schools within

present day society. In a Catholic school, however, the ethos is informed by the value system that contributes to young people's understanding of the religious underpinning of the curriculum. This is reinforced by elements of the religious life of prayer and devotion, Christian values and practices that are supported by the school and the shared understanding of how to conduct oneself in a school community (Pring, 2005). Pearce (2017: 3) describes this as being a 'strong confessional education...delivered in order to nurture belief in a specific doctrine'. This may be contrasted with the approach taken by common schools which are described by Pearce (ibid) whereby they should be preparing students for spirituality, rather than initiating them into spirituality.

In Catholic schools, ethical principles are based on Gospel values and Jesus Christ is seen as the role model. Nurturing students in the Christian faith leads to a particular moral perspective on life. Stories and symbols from the Gospel are used to illustrate respect and the worth of individuals within the community (O'Malley, 2007). An understanding of what it means to be human and how lives should be led is founded on the spiritual tradition of the Church. This is where fundamental differences lie between common and Catholic schools.

2.4.2 Comparisons between common and Catholic Schools in the development of the whole person

Gallagher (2001) describes from a theoretical basis how faith in God who became man through the life of Jesus is a fundamental belief in Catholic schools. From this point of view, a faith in God and how He came to live in each individual is a central belief. In the Catholic school, spirituality is about opening up an understanding of the meaning and purpose of life through Christian faith. Common schools will adopt a secular perspective in which the experiences of daily life are seen as part of the

growth and understanding of the purpose and meaning of existence. For Catholic schools however, education in faith is understood through a process which encourages young people to react openly and freely to God as communicated through Christ as the source of spiritual life (Gallagher, 2001). Common schools provide students with Religious Education lessons, though parents have a right to withdraw students from such lessons. A report published by Paton in 2013 indicated that few common schools adhered to a full commitment to providing Religious Education lessons. The Ofsted Report 2013 on Religious Education found that six out of ten schools 'failed to realise the subject's full potential' (Ofsted, 2013: 5). This report was based on visits to 185 schools including four primary Church of England schools. No other faith schools were included and no specific reference was made concerning any type of faith school. So, while it can be claimed that both common and Catholic schools provide for the spiritual welfare and Religious Education of students, Catholic schools are more fully committed to its provision.

Gallagher suggests that in Catholic schools' everyday experience is not only shaped by the understanding of who individual students feel they are, but also through the experience of liturgy and prayer. To help students understand their experiences in a positive light is part of helping them understand who they are, who they can become, and what they can contribute to the community (Gallagher, 2001). The nature of relationships is one way in which students are able to understand the distinctive ethos and values of the Catholic school (McGettrick, 2005). By building a strong sense of community, students are able to appreciate a greater sense of social responsibility which benefits society at large (Morris, 2008). Common schools develop personal responsibility through the opportunities they provide and through curriculum subject areas.

Currently, in the UK education system there is an emphasis on measuring progress and valuing achievement, and the development of PSHE would appear to be less important than other aspects of the curriculum. This raises the question as to how far schools value, the individual student for who and what they are. However, Grace (2002) from an empirical stance maintains that, in order to achieve their mission, Catholic schools need to work in a counter-cultural way. In these terms it is not just academic success that is important, but also the development of spiritual values (CES, 2014). For example, in Catholic schools' worship is experienced both individually and collectively (Sullivan, 2001). In all schools, however, it has to be acknowledged that the inclusion of collective worship in schools, according to the empirical study by Cumper and Mawhinney (2015), as required under the 1944 Education Act, has been challenged.

All schools aim to develop students' characters through both the moral and spiritual life of the school. The relationships between teachers and students are vital and teachers' model respect for each individual. Students need to develop positive relationships and to feel included, gain a sense of belonging and community (Bryk, Lee and Holland 1993, Lickona, 2013). The building a sense of belonging to a community is mutual to both common and Catholic schools.

However, Groome (1996) identified three theoretical basic areas that help distinguish the role of a Catholic school. These are an understanding of the goodness of each student within a faith context by showing them respect and helping them to develop to their full potential, a realisation of the person they can become and educating students to 'live responsibly' giving them an understanding that their lives are worthwhile and that they have significance. Life and creation are seen as good, but humans can misuse and corrupt them. Life has a sacramental perspective and liturgy and prayer play a part in the education of students. In comparison, whilst common

schools aim to develop the full potential of students and encourage them to live a responsible life, through developing character and moral teaching (Lickona 2015), the emphasis on religious education is less pronounced.

Goble and Bye-Brooks (2016) argue that there is a theoretical expectation that student should be able to grow, change and achieve in a safe environment. The curriculum should help each individual to understand that they are valued and that the rules and codes of conduct of the school should help them address issues that may occur such as bullying and negative peer pressure. Through PSHE students are encouraged to explore their sense of self through relationships within school and develop a positive self-concept in order to ensure their health and well-being (Goble and Bye-Brooks, 2016). This would apply equally to students in both Catholic and common schools.

Ideally, to support personal development, teachers help students to see themselves in a positive light and treat each other in a respectful way. For example, classrooms and corridors should be decorated as a sign that students are respected. This is a basic premise of all schools where the establishment of a good classroom environment encourages mutual respect (Bucholz and Sheffler, 2009). If teachers make students feel supported and valued as members of the community, where clear boundaries help them to participate with confidence, students know what is expected (Gallagher, 2001). Students will thus gain a greater appreciation as themselves and their place in the school community and society at large. The increase in separation of culture and politics from religion and where people hold diverse views has affected student self-identity. This has resulted in a cultural shift and students need to be able to think issues through and come to their own conclusions (Watson, 2016).

Within any school the quality of relationships is important. The uses of student voice and school councils help students to be listened to and heard and improve all relationships (Fletcher, Fitzgerald-Yau, Wiggins, Viner and Bonell, 2015). Students have both internal and external needs; their external needs could be met through supportive adult relationships with clear boundaries and enthusiastic peer support, while internal needs require commitment to learning, self-control, self-esteem and a positive view of their future (O'Malley, 2007). PSHE is a vehicle through which all these elements can be discussed and issues such as anxiety can be resolved. If issues such as anxieties arise and are not examined some students may not participate in activities (Skryabina, Morris, Byrne, Harkin, Rook, and Stallard, 2016).

In this respect there is little tangible difference between Catholic and common schools. However, a Catholic school would be more consciously aware of the need to make explicit the principles of Jesus' teaching and that relationships and respect for others is drawn from their religious conviction.

Every school reflects its own purpose and understanding about life and the view of individuals can develop with the regard given to their potential. Catholic schools instil values that are modelled on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, which are conveyed by their teachers in order to develop positive attitudes (Oldfield, Hartnett and Bailey, 2013). In Catholic schools the basic understanding concerning the need to be positive about all students is derived from the notion that they are regarded as being loved by God (Groome, 2014).

Students are encouraged to develop positive habits, which according to Claxton and Lucas (2016), are learnt through responses to events while Groome (2014: 115) sees an important part of their education as needing to be holistic and embrace 'the head, heart and hands'. There are implications for such education, for example getting

involved in supporting charities. All schools support charities, but Catholic schools do not do this from a moral stance but rather as a religious duty.

Using encouragement is a way all schools affirm students and give them space to grow and develop. This helps to motivate students to learn and acquire the skills they need that help them develop (Grigg, 2016). On the other hand, Gallagher (2001) indicates that students need to experience a sense of belonging, of being understood and of compassion when they do not get things right. Although both common and Catholic schools behave in similar ways, the difference lies in the rationale between what they do.

Life can be very stressful for teenagers; some have to deal with issues such as bullying, not only on a face to face basis, but from their mobile phones and over the internet (Kyriacou, and Zuin, 2016). Some young people find comfort in binge drinking and the use of illegal substances, especially if their 'circumstances or behaviour already make them the focus of concern' (Fuller and Hawkins, 2013: 23). The influence of the media is strong and peer pressure can have a negative effect on teenagers. But providing students with hope for their future can help counteract poor behaviour (Brooks, McCauley, Marshal, and Miller, 2015). The school should provide a safe haven with clear, secure boundaries for students, where they have a sense of belonging and a means to cope with the stresses of modern life, because, as Fincham (2012) empirically indicates, if young people are happy and do not have to cope with personal, social and emotional difficulties, they are more likely to be able to make better educational progress. Both common and Catholic schools strive to ensure this support for their students.

The idea of service to others is important and being able to strive towards social justice is one that Catholic schools try to help students to appreciate and understand

as a value. The sense of community is the way that faith is lived as a reality and links Christ with personal education (Grace, 1995). Common schools emphasise social justice from a moral perspective.

Having looked at education from both a Catholic and common school perspective, both sectors appear to provide a similar education for students. However, Catholic schools have a distinctive rationale from that of common schools. The Catholic school, parents and parish are more in alignment as far as understanding and supporting the ethos of the school arising out of the rationale of the school being based on Gospel values. One aim of the current research was to explore whether there were any identifiable differences in the personal development of students between those attending Catholic and common schools.

2.5 The development of Pastoral Care

This section of the literature review examines the origins and developments in pastoral care and PSE that later developed into Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education (PSHCE). Essentially the notion of pastoral care arises from a Christian perspective. Pastoral care maybe regarded as a comparatively recent innovation. However, there has been a long history of the notion of pastoral care dating back to St. John's Gospel Chapter 10 in which Jesus refers to Himself as the 'good shepherd'. According to the Oxford Dictionary the word 'pastoral' originates from the Latin 'pastoralis' and relates to a shepherd being the pastor of the sheep. Pope Gregory the Great, as early as the year 590, wrote 'The Book of Pastoral Rule' (Demacopoulos, 2007). The public schools of the nineteenth century drew on a Christian ethic and developed the notion of pastoral care through a house system. This divided students into smaller groups within which they could be cared for.

When compulsory education was introduced in 1870, grammar schools increasingly adopted the model of the house system which was prevalent in the public schools. The 1944 Education Act extended the school leaving age and introduced a tripartite system. The 1950s saw the introduction of some comprehensive schools (Pedley, 1963) in which the three classes of schools; grammar, technical and secondary modern were combined. Consequently, for the purposes of behaviour, organisation and care, these schools divided the students into smaller units which were designated year or house groups. Currently there is no data indicating percentage of schools adopting house systems or year systems.

In the 1960s the government issued circular 10/65 (DES, 1965) in which local education authorities were encouraged to introduce comprehensive schools. This led to the widespread introduction of large comprehensive schools across the country. Within these schools there was a need to organise students into smaller and manageable groups often based on the house system (Stephens, 1987). However, some comprehensive schools experimented with a horizontal system of organising students. When the term 'pastoral care' was originally used is unclear, although Lang (1995: 273) observed from an empirical position that the term had been used in schools as early as 1954. Its application became more widespread in response to meeting the needs of students in comprehensive schools (Purdy, 2013).

During the 1970s there was a huge increase in interest in pastoral care and an increase in the number of publications on the subject. Marland (1974) argued from a theoretical perspective that pastoral care was needed to provide for the welfare and support of students. Pure academic teaching was not enough to answer the needs of students in preparing them for life and the world of work.

A need was identified for the curriculum to be divided into areas with separate aims in order to help students prepare for the choices they had in education and to cope with issues in their personal life. This offered them support in making their own decisions and aided academic subjects in their teaching. Calvert and Henderson, (1998) stress the integration of pastoral support and academic achievement.

In the 1970s pastoral care was seen as fulfilling various aims such as dealing with discipline, vocation and personal guidance (Marland, 1974). This is a relatively narrow perspective. A more progressive view sees pastoral care as support for students in order to help them to succeed. In my view, pastoral care should be seen as enabling students to participate in school life and their learning in a positive way. Some subject teachers would see themselves as teachers of subjects rather than embracing a wider view of their role. But as Laletas and Reupert (2015) argue, the care role can be regarded as a central component of the role of a teacher. The pastoral curriculum has been developed to address themes such as counselling, health education, and the support of academic subjects, in terms of study skills, moral education, careers, and environmental issues.

The development of PSE emerged as an important aspect of education during the 1970s and 1980s based on the empirical work of writers such as Hamblin (1987), Best, Jarvis, Ribbins and Marland (1980). Hamblin's (1987) contribution in identifying critical incidents in the experience that adolescents passed through helped to identify a focus for pastoral care. During the first year of secondary school some young people identified difficulties in adjusting to a larger school than that to which they had been accustomed. Young people had to work with a variety of teachers rather than just one, as in the primary school. They had to cope with the demands of a larger campus and had to travel to specific subject areas. Induction was seen to be needed to support this transition. As young people progressed through their second and third

years in school, specific study skills were needed. Some young people experienced an increase in peer pressure, bullying and required support to deal with the realities of sex and temptations of drugs. By the third and fourth year, young people had to address concerns about their future direction in terms of the world of work or further education options choices. Work experience needed to be organised, followed by preparation for final exams at 16 plus. Schools also had to take into account the body changes that young people experienced during puberty. At that time some emphasis was given to pastoral care and personal and social education, but with the introduction of the National Curriculum (1988) it was evident that a greater focus was to be placed on academic achievement. Many of the theoretical issues raised during the 1970s and 1980s still pertain today and the need to address them continues (Tucker, 2015).

The need for pastoral care to be considered as a separate entity within school organisations did not occur without problems. The development of pastoral care as a subject was not always regarded as having equity with traditional academic subjects. Tucker (2015: 4) argues that this continues as 'rigid boundaries are constructed between the academic and pastoral aspects of school life'. However the importance of delivering high quality PSHE has been recognised for the positive contribution it can make to individual development (Cotton, 2016).

The development of PSHE had not always been clearly defined and many schools developed their curriculum in a way that they saw as appropriate for the needs of their students. PSHE has become to some extent an umbrella subject. For example, Alistair MacDonald had in his review (2009: 7) said that PSHE aims to 'help children and young people deal with real life issues they face as they grow up'. He explained that PSE was first identified as a cross curricular theme in the 1990 National Curriculum and was 'underpinned' (2009: 10) by the five cross curricular themes:

economic and industrial understanding, careers education and guidance, health education, education for citizenship and environmental education. It was seen to promote personal and social development across the whole curriculum and educational experience. PSHE can be defined as the planned provision for educating students in order that they can promote their Personal, Social, and Health Education (QCA, 2007).

Formby and Wolstenholme (2012: 6) describe PSHE as consisting of different aspects of personal and economic well-being. Elements include: diet, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, drugs, alcohol and tobacco (DAT) education; emotional health and well-being; safety education; sex and relationships education (SRE); enterprise education; personal finance/financial capability and careers education and work-related learning.

The PSHE Association (online, 2018) describes PSHE as an

...education that gives pupils the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

And a planned programme of learning through which children and young people can acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives, now and in the future.

PSHE contributes to the whole curriculum. For example QCA (2007) state:

Personal development in school is the means by which all young people are supported in their spiritual, moral, physical, emotional, cultural and intellectual development according to their needs.

This needs to be planned and coherent. Crowe (2008: 47), in addition, identifies that this cannot take place without 'a supporting ethos in school.'

Consequently, in this study, PSHE is used as a global term embracing all aspects of PSHE described above, even if the individual components are not examined discretely.

With the introduction of the Education Act of 1988 a greater emphasis was put on assessment. This resulted in many schools valuing PSHE less. The emphasis on attainment caused stress for students, as more prominence was given to gaining good exam results; this resulted in a greater need for pastoral care and development of skills in PSHE lessons (Putwain, 2009; Owen-Yeates, 2005).

In response to the developments arising from the introduction of the National Curriculum, Watkins (1995) argued empirically that the pastoral curriculum was important in order to ensure students were respected and given dignity in schools. Students were encouraged to develop self-reliance through skills, knowledge and understanding in order to help them to communicate, cooperate and enhance their ability to review and reflect on their progress. Schools needed to help students to be able to understand themselves, their opportunities, and choices as well as understand the importance of maintaining a healthy body and good relationships; all issues dealt with within the pastoral curriculum (Watkins, in Best, Lang, Lodge and Watkins 1995).

The pastoral curriculum was perceived as important in helping students develop skills and attitudes that would serve them through life, helping them look at their own values and attitudes and develop their own structure of beliefs in discovering who they were. Best, Lang, Lodge and Watkins (1995) justified the importance of this curriculum, claiming it made a direct contribution to an individual's personal and social ability to grow in these aspects of their life.

The pastoral curriculum was usually delivered by teams of form tutors, through the provision of, for example, group activities (Calvert, 2009). Further to this the pastoral curriculum was seen as a means for delivering National Curriculum agreed topics. Each school however, was free to organise and manage the structure of provision as appropriate. Given that the provision of the pastoral curriculum was not statutory, there was no consistent approach and in some schools there was a growing importance placed on the engagement of outside agencies to provide support (Calvert, 2009).

The development of PSHE is described as the planned programme of learning that helps students gain the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to manage their lives, not only for the present, but also for future, which helps them thrive both as individuals and as members of society (PSHE Association, 2016). PSHE supports the ethos of the school through the values and attitudes it helped students to assimilate. An effective school ethos demands effective relationships, students to be actively engaged in decision making and policies to be reflected in what is taught (PSHE Association, 2015).

PSHE can be regarded in secondary schools as helping young people to deal with issues that may occur in their lives and help them to build and manage relationships (Willis, Clague, and Coldwell, 2013). PSHE can be identified as important for developing positive attitudes in students and helping them to be successful. It was seen as important so that all students could benefit from the educational opportunities that were available in schools. The activities that teachers managed outside delivering their subject knowledge, including guiding, talking, interviewing, and disciplining, could be considered part of the pastoral curriculum. The more they involved students in the process, the greater the chance was of the programme being successful (Fletcher, Fitzgerald-Yau, Wiggins, Viner, and Bonell, 2015). The attitudes

and values that the teacher passed on to students through the way they dealt with issues also formed part of the pastoral curriculum.

2.5.1 The historical development of PSHE

PSE grew out of the development of a pastoral curriculum in schools and became a vehicle for the teaching of life skills (Hale, Coleman and Layard, 2011). During the 1990s the National Curriculum was embedded in schools and whilst teachers were given guidance on what was to be taught, the teaching methodology was left up to them to decide.

Whilst PSE was not established as a National Curriculum foundation subject, it was acknowledged as a dimension (National Curriculum Council, 1989) through the introduction of the five cross-curricular themes. These included Education for Economic and Industrial Understanding, Health Education, Careers Education and Guidance, Environmental Education and Education for Citizenship. Best et al. (1995) empirically identified the responsibility for the delivery as the obligation of all teachers.

Schools used the cross curricular themes to develop PSE programmes delivered by form tutors. According to Whitty, Rowe and Aggleton's empirical study this was because they saw the need for students to 'synthesise learning from a range of different subjects and apply this to life beyond school' (1994:34). However, they identified that PSE was not given due status and was not regarded as a 'proper' subject (ibid, 1994:37). The cross curricular themes could be described as being 'marginalised' (ibid: 40). Proper subjects in this sense would involve 'homework and is a body of opinion that would support formal assessment as a way of enhancing the status of the subject' (Formby, Coldwell, Steill, Demack, Stevens, Shipton, Wolstenholme and Willis, 2011). However, the role of PSE could be seen to be one

of inclusion (Blake and Plant, 2005) rather than labelling young people through grading them. From May 1998, under the Labour government of Tony Blair, a National Advisory group for PSHE was set up under the guidance of the then Education Secretary, Estelle Morris, and Minister of State in the Department of Health, Tessa Jowell, and from then on PSE was referred to as PSHE. It could be seen as an entitlement for young people and an area which helped meet their needs. Professor Mick Waters, former QCA Director of Curriculum, addressing the PSHE Association Annual National Conference in 2011, questioned how PSHE could be measured as he argued it was not until later on in life that the impact of PSHE could be felt.

PSHE as a subject gained more prominence after the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', when schools were given the responsibility to ensure they promoted the well-being of the young people in their care. Following the death of Victoria Climbié in 2000, the government passed the Children Act in November 2004. The purpose was to provide children and young people with five areas to help ensure their well-being: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. This focus was designed to give shared responsibility, integrate services and support early intervention. PSHE was able to support these developments through the promotion of personal development and an understanding of self (Brewer and Hewstone, 2005). This underpinned other subject learning and enhanced skill development. Students were able to build their understanding of personal identity, confidence, and self-esteem, important aspects of self-development (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger and Vohs, 2003) through the subject of PSHE. The Children's Act 2004 recognised the importance of helping young people to build positive relationships, of helping them to motivate themselves and of feeling valued through the use of praise and recognition.

The government set up and funded in 2006 the National PSHE Association that provided support in terms of materials and training for teachers to raise the quality of PSHE and its status across the curriculum in all phases. Teachers with a particular interest in this subject area could undertake the Chartered Teacher of PSHE programme, but there was no statutory requirement for teaching PSHE. Teachers of various subjects who were appointed to schools were often required to undertake the teaching of PSHE as a form tutor. PSHE co-ordinators were not always given the status they deserved and owing to the sensitive nature of the subject they could experience a high level of stress which could result in a substantial turnover of staff in these positions (Alldred, David and Smith, 2003).

New guidelines were published by the government (PSHE, 2013). Sex and relationship education was made compulsory for students aged 11 upwards but Ofsted reported in 2013 that the provision for sex and relationship education needed improving in over a third of schools (Ofsted, 2013). This report also indicated that the provision of PSHE was unsatisfactory in forty percent of schools and learning was weak in two out of five schools. They identified a number of teachers to be lacking in the expertise for the delivery of PSHE, often owing to a lack of subject-specific training.

PSHE is currently a non-statutory subject. However, it is inspected by Ofsted and schools are required to deliver drug education (DFE, 2012) and deliver sex and relationships guidance (DfEE, 2000) as well as provide education on financial matters and ensure students understand the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle. New guidelines for PSHE were published by the government in 2013 (Long, 2016). PSHE involves not only knowledge about personal finance, safety, relationships and healthy lifestyles, but also helps students to develop skills such as self-management, empathy, critical thinking, teamwork, and resilience

(PSHE Association, 2015). A purposeful approach can be taken to support students to enhance their positive thinking through specific curriculum development (Pepping, Davis, and O'Donovan, 2016)

2.5.2 The call to make PSHE Statutory

By October 2008 the government announced that it intended to make PSHE statutory and in 2009 Sir Alasdair MacDonald wrote an empirical review of PSHE in order to establish how best this could be achieved. This was seen as an important step in enhancing the priority given to the subject, raising its status and improving the time and resources allocated to its provision. With the defeat of the Labour government in May 2010 the implementation of PSHE as a statutory subject was not implemented. Ever since, organisations such as the Association of PSHE and YoungMinds have campaigned for it to be made statutory so that it could be recognised as a distinct subject with its own unique body of knowledge and skills. Whilst PSHE is not a statutory subject its status can be questioned. Despite the fact that PSHE can be seen to be important and relevant to young people, according to Crowe (2008:43) it is 'without a driving educational imperative'. The campaign continues and in January 2016 MPs were urging the government to make PSHE statutory (Busby, 2016).

Although the Commons Education Committee asked the government to make PSHE statutory (2015) this decision was postponed. 'Academies, free schools and independent schools are not bound by national curriculum' (PSHE Association), but have a statutory duty to ensure that they provide a balanced and broad based curriculum which would include PSHE (Academies Act, 2010). The Labour opposition has announced that if it should be returned to power, they are committed to making PSHE compulsory (Labour Press, 2016). It is a vital vehicle for helping young people understand and appreciate themselves and it provides space on the school curriculum for the development of personal and social understanding.

In 2015, Weare empirically pointed out that 10% of children in the UK had been clinically diagnosed with a mental health disorder and one in seven children had a problem that stopped them developing and learning to their full potential. There was a rise in the number of suicides and problems of self-harm and eating disorders were growing (ibid). This indicates the need for a focus on social and emotional well-being in schools of which PSHE is a part.

Although the present government has made Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in secondary schools compulsory from September 2020 (DfE, 2017), the case for statutory PSHE is still under consideration. The Secretary of State has the power to make PSHE statutory via regulations. Whilst making the subject compulsory, it is envisaged that schools would be given the flexibility to plan their own programmes and to be able to integrate them into a broad and balanced curriculum (DfE, 2017). The government envisages this as a way of ensuring an entitlement for all students and in order to improve the quality of the subject. The reason the government is introducing these new requirements is because they recognise the need for greater support for students to cope with growing up 'in an increasingly complex and digital world' (DfE, 2017: 7). The findings from this study would support the enquiry that the government is undertaking in order to confirm the need for statutory PSHE.

2.6 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem can be viewed in many ways. In this section I present several views that have developed over time and have direct impact on how students in schools may develop a personal understanding of themselves. One feature which was given a focus in this study is self-esteem, because it was felt that this plays a vital role in enabling students to both access and engage with not only the academic curriculum,

but all opportunities offered within a school. Self-esteem was identified as one of the key concepts as it underpinned the PSHE well-being programme of study for Key Stage 3 and 4 (QCA, 2007: 254). Having an understanding of self-esteem and knowing that it could 'change with personal circumstances' (ibid) was highlighted in that document. In this study self-esteem is defined as the confidence an individual has in their abilities and belief about their self-worth.

In our ever-changing world, Branden (1994: xi) explains that theoretically we need to have a clear sense of identity, competence and worth to be able to cope with the demands that are made upon us and that these are aided by self-esteem. William James (1890) was the one of the first writers to examine self-esteem and he defined it as the difference between the ideal self and the actual self. Mruk (1999: 15) describes this as being 'the lived feeling or emotion,' which depends on how effective an individual's actions are and the extent to which they are open to change. Mruk (2006: 28) defines self-esteem as the individual's competence at dealing with life's challenges.

On the other hand, Tafarodi and Swann (2001: 654) define self-esteem as two-dimensional. Self-esteem they explain is an evaluative process involving assessing what an individual can do and what qualities about them are considered to be good: 'the duality is reflected in personal competence on the one hand, and appearance, character and social identity on the other hand'.

Basically, the two areas reflect what an individual can do as well as how they appear to others, in terms of the respect they are given, and how much they are liked. An individual recognises their worth by their experience of success and failure and, according to Tafarodi and Swann (2001), the value they place on this represents the level of self-liking they have. They see self-competence and self-liking as aspects of

global self-esteem. It is their experience of the school community that helps to prepare students for later life. Young people need to learn to develop positive relationships, understand their rights and responsibilities as well as having respect for others (OFSTED, 2012). According to Wentzel and Ramani (2016) students who develop positive relationships, particularly with their peers are more likely to enjoy greater well-being, have positive beliefs about themselves and develop greater self-esteem.

Self-esteem can be considered as the value people place on themselves and the evaluation of their self-knowledge and it involves their perceptions rather than reality (Baumeister et al, 2003: 2). Zigler-Hill (2013: 2) emphasises that, in order to maintain their levels of self-esteem, individuals engage in a variety of strategies to keep themselves feeling good.

Emler (2001:4) identifies the theory of William James (1890), as providing the original description of self-esteem as the difference between the ideal self and the actual self. This is lived as a feeling or emotion which depends on how effective an individual's actions are and is open to change. James was a social scientist, who, among other theorists, such as Cooley (1902) and G.H. Mead (1934), helped develop an understanding of how social interaction helped individuals to see themselves in the context of their immediate environment.

Trzesniewski, Donnellan and Robins (in Zielger–Hill 2013; 69) describe how the theoretical position of Cooley (1902) introduced a perspective that he termed 'through the looking glass'. He initiated the idea that people came to an understanding of themselves through how they interpreted the way others saw them and this determined their self-esteem. It is this imagined judgement that he believed individuals felt was important. Mruk (1999:35) explains the theoretical perspective of

how Mead (1934) looked at the ways individuals saw themselves as social beings and saw themselves reflected through attitudes expressed by significant others such as parents and, later, teachers and peers. He found that if individuals were treated with respect and concern, they would consider themselves to be important. Self-esteem developed from the approval of others is expressed in social situations but the development of self-esteem through self-efficacy is developed by engaging in activities that enhance self-approval (Mruk, 1999: 34).

Rogers' (1998) theory explained self-esteem as being concerned with achievements and what an individual believes they can do. Personal behaviour is affected by how individuals interpret what is going on and the experience an individual has is dependent on their feelings and perceptions. Each person's thoughts drive their behaviour. Mruk (1999:27) describes self-esteem as involving approval from others and it is made possible by the desire to be connected affectively with others. However, he points out that the person coming to these conclusions is also the person making the assumptions. Self-esteem, Branden (1994:30), believes is developed both internally and externally; this means that how we shape our thoughts has a direct impact upon our self-esteem. However, the messages we interpret from the environment also have a part to play.

The empirical work of Tafarodi and Swann echo the premise of self-esteem being two dimensional. Self-esteem is an evaluative process involving assessing what an individual can do and what qualities about them are considered to be good:

'the duality is reflected in personal competence, on the one hand, and appearance, character and social identity on the other hand'
(Tafarodi and Swann, 2001; 654).

Therefore, the two areas reflect what an individual can do, as well as how they appear to others, in terms of the respect they are given, and how much they are liked. An individual recognises their worth by their experience of success and failure.

At its core, self-esteem is one's subjective appraisal of how one is faring with regard to being a valuable, viable and sought-after member of the groups and relationships to which one belongs or aspires to belong.'

(Leary and Baumeister; 2000: 2)

To be accepted by groups and individuals with whom one interacts is important to an individual as humans are social animals with a need to be able to integrate. The empirical work of Weare (2000) indicates that one of the most fundamental tasks of a human being is to do with the development of a sense of self and this is affected by relating to others. This 'self-concept is made up of thousands of beliefs about self, and is formed through interactions, particularly with 'significant others', initially parents or other carers, and later teachers and peers (Weare; 2000: 63). Recently Baumeister and Vohs (2018) have revisited their empirical work of 2003 and have suggested that having high self-esteem may not have been as helpful as they first anticipated in helping students to be successful and now believe that young people need to develop more self-control.

These definitions give an important insight into the experiences of students in school and provide an understanding of the importance of the development of self-esteem.

2.7 Summary

The importance of PSHE in schools cannot be under-estimated in ensuring that young people receive a broad and balanced curriculum and theoretically Jersild (1952) indicates schools have a responsibility in helping students to understand themselves. The successful delivery of the programme depends on the skills and sensitivity of teachers to respond to the needs of those they are teaching. Hale, Coleman and Layard (2011) indicate that the delivery of a coherent programme could

improve the delivery of the subject. Teacher perceptions about the subject are of vital importance and this thesis investigates their views. The way the subject is received by students is a key element of effective learning and student views were also investigated as part of this thesis.

This study is located within an area of education which is under-researched and often under-valued. There is a compelling need for empirical evidence to provide a basis upon which policy-makers can formulate initiatives that would raise the profile and encourage the development of PSHE in secondary schools. This chapter has provided a context within which the research will be conducted. The literature reviewed in this chapter has therefore considered various components that contribute to the subject of PSHE, including school ethos and the development of self-esteem.

This study had as its broad overarching aim the investigation of teacher and student perceptions of PSHE and personal development and to explore whether there were any differences between common and Catholic schools. Within this chapter the implications of different perspectives of developing spirituality within the curriculum was considered. The specific research sub-questions are set out below:

- How do teachers and students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?
- Do teachers and students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

In the next chapter I shall consider the methodologies available and consider the most appropriate methodologies for these research questions.

Chapter 3: Choice of methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I consider the research methods that were available for use in order to answer the research questions which were set out at the end of the previous chapter. These include a focus on both teachers and students in order to provide a cross section of views on the provision of PSHE in common and Catholic schools. Eight schools were included in the study. The schools all came from the south east of England and were state-run educational establishments and represented an equal number of common and Catholic schools. Representatives from both mixed and single sex schools were included.

Although there is a plethora of research on ethos and student's personal development with particular reference to self-esteem, there is little recent documented research on the development of PSHE in Catholic schools compared to common schools (Bagley, 1997). One of the aims of this research was to explore differences in perceptions of PSHE between teachers and students in Catholic and common schools.

This research is exploratory and, as Stebbins (2001) describes, flexible and pragmatic. Exploratory research facilitates discovery. In this chapter I set out the rationale for the selection of the methods I adopted. I identify appropriate procedures for conducting this enquiry and argue the case for the use of mixed methods i.e. using both quantitative and qualitative methods, in order to support the triangulation of the data.

3.2 Research methods

Research is a systematic approach to finding answers to questions posed (Tuckman and Harper, 2012; Newby, 2009). However, there are many ways in which to operationalise research. As I developed the research project, I needed to make decisions about the methods I was going to use. Bryman (2004) indicates two broad paradigms; quantitative and qualitative. He explains that these can be seen as rigid disciplines, but in terms of practical application the two are often interlinked.

Within each paradigm different concepts or positions can be adopted as a way of understanding reality. From an ontological perspective, quantitative research takes the position that there is one reality that can be measured using statistics and numerical data. Quantitative research, presents a positivist picture of the world which is reductionist. The relationship between quantitative theory and research is described by Bryman as being 'deductive' (2004:62). In terms of adopting qualitative methodology the ontological assumption is that there are multiple realities; Bryman describes this as 'constructionist' (2004:266), because everyone constructs their own reality. From an epistemological position a qualitative approach recognises that there are different ways of knowing, which are open to interpretation and are not fixed or standardised.

Mixed methods research has been described by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), for example, as the 'third methodological movement', providing an alternative to the perceived dichotomy between the traditional methods of quantitative and qualitative research. I decided to adopt a mixed methods approach in order to provide a wider perspective in this study and facilitate triangulation. By employing quantitative and qualitative methods I was able by means of triangulation to test the validity of the results and gain an understanding of their reliability.

In order to explore what staff and students thought about PSHE I made the decision to adopt a strategy that was based on an empirical and systematic method as Black (1999:3) stated:

‘...information, knowledge and understanding are gathered through experience and direct data collection.’

In developing the ‘research strategy’ as defined by Robson (1993:40) it was important to employ appropriate methods. These methods were determined by the research questions and I was concerned with exploring a situation, rather than, for example, having a hypothesis which I wanted to prove or disprove.

According to Robson (ibid), the purposes of enquiry can be classified into three areas: ‘exploratory’, ‘descriptive’, and ‘explanatory’. Exploratory is intended to examine what is occurring in order to gain a deeper understanding through asking questions. This type of research aims to assess situations in a new way and often focuses on the use of qualitative data. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are appropriate for exploratory research. The second area is ‘descriptive’. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are appropriate for this type of enquiry. Finally, research can be ‘explanatory,’ where the researcher aims to find an explanation for the research undertaken. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are appropriate for exploratory research.

When addressing certain types of research questions, different research strategies can be appropriate. These may include quantitative and qualitative methods. By using at least two approaches to research, it is possible to triangulate findings, thereby making them more robust (Brown and Dowling, 1998).

In this chapter I set out the rationale for the epistemological framework which established the choice of research method adopted and schools chosen. Within this research I set out to examine the perceptions of teachers and students concerning PSHE and self-esteem. This entailed interpreting the reality of their experiences within schools. The phenomenological approach taken provided insights into how individuals ascribed meaning to their experiences of PSHE and self-esteem from their own unique perspectives.

3.3 Other Approaches considered

Other ways of researching perceptions could have entailed undertaking an ethnographic study whereby I approached the study by trying to understand the culture within each school. In order for this to be successful I would have needed to spend considerable time in the different schools and have become part of the establishments in order to assimilate the culture. However, this would have entailed a commitment in terms of time that was not available to me and would therefore have been impractical.

As a comparison between schools was being undertaken, it was felt that a case study would not provide a wide enough range of views. A detailed account relating to a specific school would have provided data that was too individual.

A grounded theory approach would have provided an inductive type of research through observations, which would have provided in-depth information from an experiential perspective. However, whilst this could have been 'systematically gathered and inductively analysed' (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009:25), this would have been too specific for my purposes and would have provided too much detail in terms of data gathering.

Having decided to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, I could have conducted interviews via the telephone but I felt that these would not have been as successful as those carried out with teachers in one to one situations. When conducting one-to-one interviews the researcher is able to communicate with the interviewee in a variety of ways, for example using facial communication and non-verbal prompts, which are much more difficult to use if one is not physically present in a room with the interviewee. With the introduction of 'Skype' it would have been possible to see an interview over the internet, but it would have been still more difficult to build rapport than when you were actually with the participants. Building rapport is important if the interviewer is to gain the trust of the interviewee and enable them to contribute freely and truthfully during the interview.

3.4 Longitudinal research

I decided to adopt a longitudinal study in which it would be possible to compare perceptions of teachers and students in common and Catholic schools towards PSHE and personal development. A longitudinal study would lend itself to providing a deeper and more extensive understanding of the perceptions of PSHE over time. I intended originally to investigate what impact, if any, the introduction of statutory PSHE might have on perceptions by examining the situation before it was statutory and then after it had been established as compulsory. I started by looking at the situation before implementation and then returned after two years. Even though there was a change in government and consequently PSHE did not become statutory, I felt that by returning to schools to examine the situation two years later, I had an opportunity to examine the effects of adolescent development on the perceptions of the subject across the secondary age span. This gave me an overview of how PSHE was received by students from the beginning of their secondary education until they

completed it. I was also able to study the effects on personal development during this period of growth in students.

By completing a longitudinal study, I was in a position to scrutinise how the PSHE programme developed over time and assess how teachers adapted the programme to the needs of students at different stages in their development. I was able to examine changes that occurred in the delivery of the programme and of its reception by students. This I felt was a worthwhile study, even though statutory changes to PSHE did not occur, as it provided me with an opportunity to gain an overview of the delivery of the PSHE programme over a period of two years in the schools which took part in the study. As I had identified two cohorts for research purposes, effectively it enabled me to evaluate the delivery of PSHE across a period of five years.

By undertaking a longitudinal study, I was able to study the effects of adolescent development on perceptions of PSHE by comparing earlier and later stages. I was able to study the differences between the stages and see where in later stages greater maturity could be detected. This study allowed for the complexity of comparisons between these different elements.

A longitudinal study can be helpful when looking at patterns of results over time i.e. that of PSHE and the way it is delivered by teachers and received by participants. Longitudinal methods involve sampling views across time. It facilitates the possibility of identifying factors in a developmental process through observation of the sample population at different points in time. Characteristics within groups may be identified and when these are combined as in the current study with a cross section of a school population, it is possible to identify patterns across year groups through reflection

(Bolton, 2010). This was the case in my study where I investigated whether any patterns could be detected across year groups.

Robinson, Schmidt and Teti (2005) identify the advantages of longitudinal studies as a process by which significant links can be found; for example, in my study, the age of students and their interest in PSHE. Longitudinal studies allow for a focus on sequences of development. It is possible to look at the start and later progress of initiatives; for example, in my study I was able to investigate students' perspectives of the beginning and end experience of the PSHE programme. However, longitudinal studies are time consuming and those involved in the process need to be carefully chosen in order that they are representative of groups from which generalisations can be made. There is also a need for the same population to remain consistent over the time period. These were important factors to consider in planning my research. I was also aware, as indicated by Ployhart and Vandenberg (2010) that things may change over time rather than because of time. A longitudinal study does not necessarily consider the cause of any changes. There were, for example, over time changes in priorities that affect the provision of the PSHE programme.

3.5 Limitations of the approach used

By undertaking a longitudinal study with a cross-section of schools, it would not be possible to provide a detailed analysis of complex social situations (Denscombe, 2010: 49). It was not intended to provide a snapshot of an individual school but to provide an overview of perceptions which could be subject to comparison. These perceptions allowed for individual views to be presented, though they would not necessarily be open to generalisations. Any qualitative research is subject to the vagaries of interpreting the evidence provided by individual respondents and, whilst every precaution was taken to ensure objectivity in the interpretation of the results, it cannot be claimed that all explanations are accurate.

One of the disadvantages of undertaking a longitudinal study is the fact that you cannot guarantee exactly the same makeup of participants over time. By definition a longitudinal study requires a greater commitment of time on the part of the researcher in conducting the investigation. Another limitation with regard to schools is that it cannot be guaranteed that on the second visit the cohort of students will be exactly the same. Undertaking a longitudinal study requires a great deal amount of time and produces a large amount of data which needs to be carefully analysed. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009; 215) suggest in longitudinal studies that responses can be affected by maturation and can also be influenced by the change in context. Comparability of data can be affected by inconsistency in variables. However, Denscombe (2010: 302) highlights the impact that the researcher has on this type of research which however would be applicable to other studies as well as he states that the researcher themselves play a vital role in both the production and interpretation of the qualitative aspects of this type of research as

‘The teacher’s identity, values and beliefs cannot be entirely eliminated from the process.’

3.6 Quantitative methods

As part of a mixed methods approach I decided that the use of quantitative methods would enable me to gain an understanding of perceptions based on statistical evidence as well as through the interpretation of interview data. The analysis of quantitative data would facilitate me being able to present statistical analysis and identify patterns of responses as emphasised by Connolly, (2007). I would also be able to gather a great deal of data from a wide range of students across the eight schools involved in the study. Quantitative data would provide a range of measurable data that could be interpreted in a relatively detached manner. I would be able to collect a large set of data to be analysed in a statically rigorous way to provide findings.

Statistical information provided me with data to make comparisons. The main advantages included being able to gather information fairly quickly from a wide range of participants. Data could also be displayed in a variety of ways. Results from quantitative data can be general and it can be difficult to assess underlining reasons for perceptions of PSHE. Quantitative data can provide a comprehensive range of data but may not provide the desired detail. In order to gain a greater depth of understanding of the attitudes and values of students other data would need to be taken into consideration, i.e. qualitative methods.

3.7 Qualitative methods

Qualitative research focuses on how and why people make sense of their experience and how and why they manage the situations in which they find themselves (Willig 2001). Qualitative research focuses on an interpretive approach to analysing data. It is holistic in the way it interprets the data collected and aims to understand how the meanings that those involved in the research attach to their experiences. Following exploratory research, generalisations drawn from findings are interpretative and inductive. Within qualitative research there are different approaches to collecting data. Of relevance to the current research were interviews and focus groups.

Interviews, for example, involve a process that can be used to help a researcher understand the individual and personal perceptions of the interviewee. The aim of the research in this study was to seek an understanding of teacher and student perceptions of PSHE and ascertain to what extent there were differences between those working in or attending Catholic or common schools. The aim of this research was to understand the different perspectives and views that qualitative analysis could facilitate (Cresswell, 1998 and Dey, 1998). The objective would be to gain an understanding of differences, if any, between schools. I felt that using qualitative

research methods such as interviews would enable me to access experiences and interactions expressed by the interviewees (Kvale, 2007). I believed that through careful reflection of the data produced during interviews I would be able to gain an understanding from the interviewees of how they viewed situations related to PSHE. Within qualitative research there are different approaches to collecting data.

3.8 Mixed methods research

To interrogate my research questions, I adopted a mixed methods approach, because I felt that this would provide a more accurate overall picture of perceptions of PSHE in both common and Catholic school contexts. Crucially, the use of mixed methods facilitates the triangulation of results by which evidence elicited through one method of data collection can be compared with that collected by other methods (Cohen and Manion 1994: 233). This approach linking use of both qualitative and quantitative data would provide greater understanding (Creswell and Garrett, 2008). I made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods as a way of gaining a comprehensive understanding of teacher involvement in the design and delivery of PSHE and how it was received by students. Mixed methods research, as identified by Gidding (2006) is said to combine the best of quantitative and qualitative research.

The combination of quantitative positivistic methods with qualitative data that involves constructive and interpretive analysis is useful and important (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). I was able to use data gained from both these types of methods to look at students' responses not only to the questionnaires but also to what they said in the focus group interviews. Teacher comments could be taken into consideration as well.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods use safeguards to minimise bias as much as possible and to present results with validity and reliability. The combination of both

qualitative and quantitative methods through mixed methods research offers the best possible opportunity to interrogate the subject under investigation thoroughly and rigorously (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). I was very aware of the need therefore to ensure I was as objective as possible when analysing data. Mixed methods facilitate the use of pragmatic and philosophical approaches with inductive discovery of patterns and abductive uncovering of explanations of results using multiple approaches to answer research questions in a creative way (Collins and O’Caitlin (2009). Using different strategies to collect data enables the researcher to corroborate findings and have more confidence in the results. In my research I wanted to be as flexible as possible in order to be open to results and findings, but at the same time ensure reliability and validity of results.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are concerned with ensuring that the findings of the research are consistent and trustworthy and establishing that the research can be reproduced, if repeated by another researcher. I wanted to ensure that this study was conducted in such a way that the results were valid. I wanted to examine data that would provide information to help me understand both teacher and perceptions of teachers and students in common and Catholic schools concerning PSHE and personal development and to see if I could detect any differences between them. I also aimed to ensure that the results were reliable by ensuring that the process undertaken could be replicated.

Having confidence in the trustworthiness of my results and findings is part of ensuring validity. Dey (1998: 228) describes validity in terms of how sound the research is. Where results can be defended and are well grounded ‘conceptually and empirically’. If my research questions can be justified then my study is valid. In other words, my research makes sense and the instruments I used enable objective and

valid interpretations of the findings. This ensures that reasonable conclusions can be attained.

Validity is concerned with the truthfulness of what the students and teachers may say and the extent to which their responses were genuine (Oppenheim, 2000; Utwin, 1995). Another important element in ensuring the validity of my research was to reduce any likelihood of bias (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 281). I had to be aware of my own prejudices and try to ensure that they were not reproduced in the way I would interpret the results of my research. This meant I had to be open-minded and appreciate all the contributions made by teachers and students. I had to be aware when analysing and coding that I regarded all answers with equal consideration.

Utwin points out that

‘When collecting data, it is important to minimise errors so that the data can provide an accurate reflection of the truth’ (Utwin, 1995:5).

This would be important for me to consider when collecting data in terms of both interviews and questionnaires; that I would take time to record things correctly and would need to check that I entered data into databases correctly to ensure truthful reflection of what was collected. Validity could be supported by the process of triangulation. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009: 141), triangulation can be defined as

‘the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour.’

Whilst I could have collected data just from questionnaires and this could have provided a valuable perspective, it would have been limiting. I felt it was important to enhance validity by employing mixed methods, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This would support the triangulation of my findings and therefore

enhance the reliability and validity of my study as emphasised by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005).

Being able to replicate similar results from respondents in this study in similar situations would be a measure of its reliability (Oppenheim, 2000). The rigour and quality of the work provides an element of its reliability and includes what Silverman describes its 'authenticity' (Silverman, 1995:10). Assessing reliability can be difficult, although using commercial methods such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale may represent a more objective measure (Golafshani, 2003). Miles and Huberman (1994) indicate that coding of findings is one way that reliability can be exemplified and I will discuss my coding process in the next chapter.

3.10 Research Design

Having looked in general at research method paradigms with which research is conducted I decided that a mixed method approach would be most appropriate. In the next section I identify the most appropriate tools with which to gather data to investigate my study. Questionnaires and interviews would appear to be the most readily conducive for the purposes of this research. Having identified various research instruments as appropriate for gathering data for this investigation I set out the methods to be adopted, see Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Approaches adopted

Method	Common and Catholic schools
Questionnaires for students	Questionnaires to assess perceptions of PSHE, school ethos and personal development. Administered twice at a two-year interval
Semi - structured interviews with senior staff	Interviews with senior staff about PSHE and school ethos
Semi - structured interviews with PSHE teachers	Interviews with those responsible for PSHE including: experienced and less experienced teachers
Focus group interviews with students	Focus group interviews with students undertaken twice at a two-year interval

3.10.1 Questionnaires

Having considered approaches for gathering data I decided the most appropriate method for eliciting data in the first place was to distribute a questionnaire to students within the identified schools. I decided to use questionnaires with students as these would not only allow me to collect data from a large sample, but also to engage with a wider range of students from a more extensive geographical area than those which could be contacted on a personal basis (Cohen and Manion, 1994). This could be done relatively quickly using questionnaires rather than interviews. Questionnaires would allow me to communicate with a wide variety of potential participants, including a range of ages. As I intended to have a longitudinal component in the research questionnaires also had the advantage of being able to be repeated fairly easily.

In using questionnaires, I could collect demographic data about students as well as questions about their views of PSHE, the ethos of the school, and their personal development. A questionnaire would enable the use of multiple-choice questions, rating scales and open questions. Rating scales would provide me with objective assessments, of the respondents' values, and their own traits and attitudes in connection to their perceptions of PSHE and personal development. I had to ensure that questions were formulated thoughtfully, were not leading and did not skew responses. Combinations of open and closed questions were used to exploit the advantages of each. The questionnaire began by collecting demographic information, such as name, date, and school. Open questions were used to provide an opportunity to probe issues more deeply and required more time for respondents to answer. Open questions are also more demanding in terms of analysis than closed questions and more time consuming to analyse through the coding process (Oppenheim, 2000), but the quality of the data which can be collected made this time investment worthwhile. Care would need to be taken to ensure that the

questionnaires were designed carefully to ensure validity and reliability (Oppenheim, 2000).

One of the disadvantages of questionnaires is that the response rates or their return can be unpredictable. Having considered whether to send questionnaires to participants either by post or electronically, I decided to deliver them by hand to the schools to ensure the best possible return rate. As an incentive to encourage involvement, I also decided to offer to provide schools with a report of the results of the enquiry.

3.10.2 Interviews

One of the main reasons for carrying out interviews is to find out what interviewees think about the reality of the nature and provision of PSHE and for the researcher to develop ideas (Oppenheim, 2000). The rationale for using interviews in the current study was to gain a greater understanding of the views of individuals who were engaged with PSHE, such as senior staff and teachers of PSHE. As Ribbins (in Briggs and Coleman 2007:209) explains:

‘the fundamental objective of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their views in their own terms.’

The interviews with both staff and students enabled me to discuss topics and explore attitudes. Brown and Dowling (1998) suggest that interviews enable the exploration of complex issues, allowing the interviewer to engage with the interviewee and to probe and prompt to clarify issue as necessary.

I decided to adopt semi-structured interviews as Bryman describes (2004), because they follow a structure which ensures given topics are covered and allow the

interviewer to probe more deeply or ask additional questions as appropriate during an interview. This process enables the researcher to follow lines of enquiry that are pertinent to the research, but may not have been applicable in every interview. For the purposes of specific types of research this style of interviewing can be most appropriate, as it combines the advantage of providing a framework within which to guide the direction of the questioning, whilst allowing the interviewees some scope to elaborate their responses. I felt that it would be beneficial to use semi-structured interviews, because questions could then be asked in as open a way as possible so that interviewees could be encouraged to express their own ideas as honestly as possible. The interactive nature of the semi-structured interview would enable me to focus on the issues with sufficient flexibility for other important issues to be raised. I would be able to follow up points made by asking more probing questions and provide clarification if a question was not understood by the interviewee. Having taken account of all the issues, the most appropriate method for gathering data from senior staff and teachers of PSHE seemed to be a semi-structured approach.

Interviews can be undertaken in a variety of different ways, face-to-face or by telephone or by video call. Face-to-face interviews involve those that take place with both interviewer and interviewee being in the same place together and this can facilitate good responses from participants as they are invited to respond in a personal way. They also enable the researcher to observe non-verbal behaviour. This is not possible with telephone interviews. Taking this into consideration, I decided that for the purpose of this study, it would be advantageous to undertake face-to-face interviews, because I would be able to interact directly with interviewees and, if necessary, take account of non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, hesitations, and tone of voice.

When interviews are to be undertaken, arrangements have to be made prior to the interview taking place. Therefore, contact must have already occurred prior to the meeting. I hoped that by giving prior knowledge to the interviewee of both the interview and the subject being researched, a rapport would have been established before the interview started. Successful interviewing depends on rapport being established between the interviewer and interviewee. This would be most important in my research in order to help those being interviewed to relax and provide worthwhile data. This involves explaining the purpose and confidentiality of the process and reinforcing the rapport with appropriate body language and good eye contact (Drever, 1995). The interviewee needs to feel relaxed and confident with the interviewer, in order to provide the best possible response (Drever, 1995). I wanted to ensure that the interviewee would respond openly and honestly and not just try to respond in ways that they thought would be expected. Macaulay (1996) states that in some cases the interviewer may have to ask the same question in different ways in order to ascertain what the interviewee really thinks about certain issues. At the same time, bias must be avoided and so I needed to remain as objective as possible throughout (Silverman, 1995). As an interviewer I had to be well prepared and clear about my objectives and to focus fully on the interviews in order to ensure that those being interviewed could contribute fully.

Analysis of data according to Patton (2002) ensures that data is transformed into findings. However, when analysing data derived from interviews, it can be difficult to assess how far interviewees are expressing themselves candidly and how far they have moderated their responses by trying to either please the researcher or provide answers that they feel their own organisation would expect or approve of (Miller and Glassner in Silverman, 1997). This can be overcome by explaining at the beginning of the interview that everything said will be confidential encouraging the interviewees to express themselves freely and openly.

3.10.3 Focus groups

According to Krueger (1994:6) focus groups are a particular way to elicit information by investigating a group made up of a particular size, following certain procedures. I used focus groups with students because they help to provide an understanding of why people think in the way they do. I thought the group situation would help students involved share greater wisdom about issues discussed. The focus group would provide an efficient way of gaining sufficient quantity and quality of data for analysis. It was important to be well prepared and to be able to engage with the students in order to elicit interesting and relevant information (Carey, Asbury, 2016). I hoped students would be able to share views, and be able to think more deeply about the topics under discussion before forming their own personal viewpoint. Focus groups would enable me to be able to ask questions in order to clarify issues that may arise, probe in more depth and be in a position to be responsive to the needs of those involved.

A limitation of the focus group could be that some students may feel intimidated by the fact that others are present. Some students may feel embarrassed expressing their views in front of others (Krueger, 1994). I would need to set up focus group rules before beginning, stressing that there are no right or wrong answers. A further limitation could be that it could be difficult to control the group and keep participants on track during discussions. In a focus group interview, the power balance between me and the focus group would be more equal than in a one-to-one interview, (Carey and Asbury, 2016). When conducting focus group interviews, I had to maintain a balance between facilitating discussion without being dominant in the group and allowing students the space to debate the topics under discussion. I selected to use focus groups with the students in the research rather than individual interviews as this was felt to be more likely to generate relevant insights and the students were

more likely to feel more confident with others being present. Kreuger (1994; 34) identifies focus groups as being socially orientated and young people appear to enjoy the social interaction with their peers. Another reason why I felt that focus groups would be a good method of collecting data was because they are flexible and it would be possible to examine issues that may have arisen unexpectedly. A focus group interview would allow me to meet more students face to face, without a large cost implication, than if I had conducted individual interviews.

I intended that focus groups should consist of six members because I felt a larger group may have meant that some students could be overshadowed by more vociferous members of the group and might therefore be reluctant to contribute (Bryman, 2004). In a focus group, the researcher aims to create an environment that is non-threatening and 'permissive' (Kreuger, 1994:6). The discussion needs to be carefully planned in order to obtain perceptions in a comfortable way where participants can share ideas through responding to comments made by other group members. The interviews need to take place in an environment that the researcher has ensured will make it possible for the participants to share their views without pressure (Kreuger and Casey, 2000). In order to meet these needs, I intended each focus group to consist of six students from across the ability range, and, in the co-educational schools to include boys and girls. I believed this would ensure the widest possible mix of interviewees so that a representative range of views could be gathered (Bloor et al. 2001:21). I decided that having six students in each group was large enough to allow for students to provide a diversity of opinion, but small enough to ensure that all students from the six members of the focus group could contribute.

It was intended to use the comments from focus group interviews to elucidate comments given in response to the questionnaires. This would also serve to triangulate findings. The focus group interviews allowed ideas to be probed more

deeply than could be achieved through questionnaires and provided further data on group perceptions (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson, 2001).

3.11 The Sample

Eight schools were selected for the purposes of data-gathering. The first consideration was to achieve a balance between common and Catholic schools. A further consideration was to ensure representation from a variety of co-educational and single sex schools. It was intended to include four common and four Catholic schools as a basis for comparison. Two of each of the common schools and Catholic schools were single sex, one of each gender and two were co-educational. All the schools that were identified to participate in the investigation were accessible to the researcher in terms of location. All the schools were located in London and the Home Counties. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the areas from which the schools that participated in the investigation originated from.

Table 3.2 Distribution of schools within the sample

	Common	Catholic
Essex	0	1 Girls' school 1 Boys' school
Hampshire	Co-educational	Co-educational
Kent	Boys' school	0
London	Girls' school	Co-educational
Surrey	Co-educational	0

In order to implement the research, I had to make decisions about how to select the sample. I considered a variety of ways in which to identify a sample of participants. This included the use of a random sample, selection from a list, or a list of identified participants, or a cluster sample, where a number of participants from a given situation would be invited.

Whilst considering these options, I identified a number of criteria with which to select appropriate schools for this investigation. In the first place I decided to select an equal number of representative Catholic and common schools. The reason why I chose to compare schools across these sectors was because, having worked in both sectors, I wanted to investigate the extent to which there may have been any differences in the way that PSHE was perceived.

Another criterion in selecting schools for this sample was that the schools that participated in the survey had to be as far as possible of similar social backgrounds. I wanted to ensure that the schools had a wide range of A*- C grades at GCSE. In order to obtain a reliable and valid set of results, both single sex and co-educational schools were included in the sample. The purpose of this study was to investigate how teachers and students perceived ethos of their schools impacting on PSHE and to what extent they believed PSHE helped the development of student self-esteem in both Catholic and common schools. In order to undertake this it was necessary to identify schools that would be appropriate to participate in the study. It was intended to ensure that there was a range of common schools that would be similar in context to the Catholic schools so that comparisons could be made. The schools were chosen in order to ensure a balance in terms of types of schools within a range of ability; two mixed gender common schools and two single sex common schools. One boys' common school and one girls' common school were matched with a Catholic boys' school and a Catholic girls' school. It was not possible to obtain a perfect match when identifying schools to participate in the study as often it was only possible to recruit schools who were willing to engage in the research. All schools were based in the South East of England, including two in London boroughs.

3.12 Selection and recruitment of schools

Data was to be collected from eight schools in order to ensure a spread of views and also to be manageable. The schools selected included

- four comprehensive schools, two mixed Catholic and two mixed common schools;
- two girls' schools, one common and one Catholic;
- two boys' schools, one common and one Catholic.

Four mixed comprehensive schools were selected as these were representative of the most typical type of secondary schools in the country. As single sex schools, either male or female are not uncommon, these were also included in the research. While it would have been ideal to have a spread of geographical locations, for practical reasons most schools were in the South of England.

To recruit the schools, I initially approached either someone I knew at the school, usually the head or a deputy, or someone who had been recommended to me, who would be willing to help. Permission was then sought from the head of the school.

Each school was identified as having a similar pupil number and similar 5 A*-C GCSE results, as identified through data available in DFE tables of results. This was considered important to ensure that the schools in both sectors were being matched, in terms of being local comprehensive schools. While it was recognised that each participating school had individual characteristics, the study aimed to make comparisons between those in each group so it was important to attempt to match them through similar characteristics. Table 3.3 sets out key information for each participating school at the beginning of the research, as taken from the League tables

published by the government in 2009. Names of schools have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

Table 3.3: Comparison of School Student numbers and Five A*/C GCSE

School	N. of students	Mixed/single sex	Common/domination	5A-Cs %	Vlth form	SEN Supported at School Action %
St Mary's	1198	Mixed	RC	81	Y	15
St Olaf's	1267	mixed	RC	71	Y	9
St Angela's	1011	Girls	RC	70	Y	3.4
St Christopher's	1057	Boys	RC	75	Y	2.4
Heatherside	1583	Mixed	Common	71	Y	7
Yester	1500	mixed	Common	68	Y	15
Beechwood	1643	Girls	Common	65	Y	30
Townhead	1197	Boys	Common	97	Y	2

According to the Ofsted Dashboard reports (2014) all the schools involved in the research gained above the national average for 5*A-C GCSEs including English and Maths and most fell well below the national average of 28% of students eligible for free school meals. Most of the schools also fell below the national average figure of 7.3% for students supported by school action plus or having a statement with regards to special educational needs. All schools in the research had sixth forms. Overall absence rates for the Year 2013/14 were reported nationally as having fallen to 4.5% (DfE, 2015). Details of absence rates for each school are set out below in the descriptions of each school.

The first school in my study St Mary's was a Catholic mixed comprehensive in one of the London boroughs. The number on roll was over 1100 and the percentage of students getting 5*A-C results at GCSE including English and Maths was 86%. Seven per cent of students were supported either by school action plus or had a statement. Attendance at this school was 96% and 12.6% were eligible for free school meals.

The second school in my research had, since the beginning of my study, become an Academy. This was a mixed Catholic school, St Olaf's, in one of the shire counties. There were 1300 students in this school and 3.4 % were supported either by school action plus or had a statement. Sixty-four percent of students gained 5*A-C results at GCSE including English and Maths. Attendance at this school 95.9% and 10% of the school population was eligible for free school meals.

St Angela's school became an Academy during my data collection. This was a Catholic girls' school, in a London borough, with just over 1000 students. 69% of students gained 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths, while 7.4% were eligible for free school meals. Those supported either by school action plus or had a statement were 2.1% of students. The attendance figure of 95.4% narrowly fell below the national average.

The Catholic boys' school in my study, St Christopher's, was a voluntary aided Catholic school with over 1000 boys. This school was in another London borough with 8% of boys eligible for free school meals. 75% of the boys gained 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths and 3.6% were supported either by school action plus or had a statement. The attendance figure for the school was 95.7%.

Heatherside, another school that had become an Academy, was situated in one of the Home Counties. Over 1500 students attended this mixed comprehensive school. The percentage of students gaining 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths was 74%. The percentage supported either by school action plus or having a statement was 6.1%, while 8.6% of students were eligible for free school meals. Attendance was 95.6%.

Yester School was in one of the shires and was a mixed comprehensive with more than 1600 students. Over 10% of students were eligible for free school meals, while 55% gained 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths. Attendance rates at the school were 95.2%, again slightly under the national average of 95.5%. 4% of students were supported either by school action plus or had a statement.

A school in a different London Borough was Beechwood; a girls' school that had also become an Academy. This was a large school of over 1700 students with a large proportion of girls eligible for free school meals, 46.7%. Attendance rates were 94.8% which fell slightly below the national average. Students who were supported either by school action plus or had a statement amounted to 8.3%, which was above the national average of 7.3%, while those gaining 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths was 65%.

The final school in my research was in yet another Home County; Townhead School. This was a selective boys' school with 1300 boys. Six per cent of the boys were eligible for free school meals. The percentage gaining 5*A-Cs at GCSE including English and Maths was 93%. The attendance rate at the school was 95.6%, while only 1% were supported either by school action plus or had a statement.

3.12.1 The student sample

In each school all students from Years 7 and 9 were invited via the school to participate in the completion of the questionnaires. I liaised with a member of staff such as the head of year who was responsible for PSHE in each of the schools in the sample. They identified groups of students who would participate in the survey and would best represent student opinions. A total of 2,146 students from Years 7 and 9 participated in the completion of the first questionnaire. During the second stage of the questionnaire 416 new students participated, equating to almost 20% of the

original cohort. Some of these may have been immigrant students newly arrived in the country. Overall, 70% of the number of students who completed the first questionnaire completed the second one. The reasons for the sample differing may be that some students were absent, some may have moved away from the school, or there may have been a number of students who did not wish to participate in the questionnaire a second time. It is likely that there was a combination of factors. The difference between the cohorts implied there was possibly a mobile population in student numbers across time.

3.13 Summary

This chapter set out the process in which a systematic approach would be implemented in this research. It explains how decisions were made about the adoption of appropriate methodology. By assuming a mixed methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative strategies, the intention was to ensure that a full understanding of the issues in connection with perceptions of PSHE and personal development would be developed.

I explored a range of methods that were available for my research. I have discussed alternative approaches that were considered and the limitations of each approach used as well as discussing the key choices about the types of schools, i.e., common schools and Catholic schools, involved in the research.

Specifically, I identified and justified the use of semi-structured interviews with individual teachers and the use of focus group interviews and questionnaires with students as appropriate methods of collecting data for the purposes of this study. The use of semi-structured interviews with teachers and focus groups with students would allow me to be flexible in investigating perceptions and discovering views that were

held. This approach would not only enable me to see if I could identify any trends or patterns in perceptions held by teachers and students towards ethos, PSHE and self-esteem within their respective schools but also to examine the extent to which they feel that PSHE helps in developing student self-esteem. One advantage of using semi-structured interviews as a means of eliciting information is that it enabled me to explore the views of the participants in greater depth. In addition, I have explained how I would use questionnaires to collect data from a large number of students. These would also help me to understand perceptions held by students and see what attitudes were held in regard to the impact of school ethos on PSHE and the extent to which students and teachers believe that PSHE has helped to develop self-esteem. In the next chapter I shall present in more detail the various methods adopted in realising the research.

Chapter 4: Implementation of the research

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the research was to explore perceptions of teachers and students in common and Catholic schools concerning PSHE and personal development. Specifically, it set out whether there are any differences in perceptions of PSHE and to find out to what extent there were any differences in perception of PSHE in Catholic schools and common schools. In addition, I was interested to examine the impact of school ethos and PSHE on the students' personal development.

Having established in the previous chapter the rationale for the selection of the methods adopted, in this chapter I will explore the practical application of the research. This will include details of the research instruments, piloting, collection of data, the sample, transcription of interviews and the design of the questionnaires and interview schedules. Combining both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data was seen by Poggenpoel, Myburgh and Van Der Linde (2001) as a complementary way of searching for truth, which was the purpose of my enquiry. This enabled me to triangulate the results from different perspectives. As stated in the previous chapter, questionnaires, semi-structured individual interviews and focus group interviews were adopted. These were designed to provide insights into the direct experiences of those involved in the study.

4.2 Research instruments

The approaches adopted will be discussed in further detail in the following sections.

4.2.1 The development of the questionnaires

The information that I intended to gather from the questionnaire included finding basic information about the students including their age and gender before gathering data about their views, opinions and perceptions concerning PSHE and personal development. The questionnaire was divided into six sections:

- a) The first section of the questionnaire was a table, comprising the ten Rosenberg self-esteem scale statements. This was designed to give me some measurable data from which to draw comparisons. The Rosenberg scale enabled me to look explicitly at self-esteem (Zigler-Hill: 2013).
- b) The next section dealt with concerns about life and people to whom students could turn for help. This was designed to give an indication of where students turned for assistance. As Harter (1999) explained, an understanding of provision of support enables students to gain sources of self-evaluation and I wanted to gain a perspective of areas of help in order to appreciate their developmental process in terms of self-esteem.
- c) The PSHE Association (2015) pointed out that PSHE supported student development of individual skills. I formulated the following two questions; how useful was PSHE and has it helped with decision making.
- d) Another two questions looked at school in general and where rewards were gained. This helped me to understand where schools were providing students with positive feedback which aided motivation. This provided information about student perceptions of school and its ethos. As indicated by Furlong and Monahan (2000: 90), the ethos of the school contributes to a sense of 'belonging' and indicates where students' 'dignity' is respected and recognised.
- e) On the second page of the questionnaire a table was provided with six statements using a Likert scale response. This question focused on how

students thought about themselves. This was then developed in the following questions which looked in greater depth at student perceptions of personal development; for example, regarding what had given students satisfaction and where they had gained positive comments and compliments. This enabled me to gather data about what areas helped to contribute to personal development. This gave an indication of what Kirkpatrick and Ellis (2005) described as self-esteem being understood through perceptions of how students think others view them. It also provided a view of how students understood themselves in relation to their self and their identity (Oyserman, 2005).

- f) The final part of the questionnaire was the presentation of a list of comments. This broke up the questions on the questionnaire and helped students to see the end of the process. The list consisted of a variety of statements with regard to self-esteem and was presented with a Likert scale. The aim of this part of the questionnaire was to gather data on student views on self-esteem as part of their personal development.

Questions were selected so that information could be collected about attitudes and beliefs; for example, '*Who do you turn to for support?*' This question was designed to see how valuable students considered the support from the various people available to help them. Two questions focused on perceptions of PSHE, two enquired about ethos in terms of school supporting life aims. A further section examined students' views and opinions about PSHE and what support they would appreciate. They were asked what they found useful about PSHE, whether it had helped them with making decisions about life, what other help they would like from school and where they gained most rewards in school. Sources of reward were investigated as a way of enquiring about influences on their personal development.

The second page of the questionnaire started with a box of six questions looking at what might impact on personal development as assessed through self-esteem. A four-point Likert scale was used as it provided a measurable set of data which could be presented in the form of a chart or table, making results more accessible for the reader. A four-point Likert scale was used rather than a five point scale to avoid any likelihood of students opting for a non-committal response. Data gathered from Likert scales also lend themselves to quantitative analysis. This was followed by four open questions about issues that impacted on personal development. The next four questions probed applications of self-esteem by looking at how students compared themselves to others. The final part of the questionnaire involved a four-point Likert scale asking students to indicate their beliefs about self-esteem. Oppenheim (2000) would describe this as a method of funnelling by ordering questions to lead up to the most pertinent ideas. Careful consideration was given to the wording of questions in order to avoid misunderstanding or bias, as well as trying to avoid complex statements that included conjecture such as '*Where do you get most rewards?*'

One of the key elements of the research was to assess students' personal development. One way of assessing this is through the assessment of self-esteem. A lack of self-esteem can result in aggressive behaviour, depression and bullying (Muris, Meesters, Pierik, de Bok 2016; Garofalo, Holden, Ziegler-Hill and Velotti 2015; Trezesniewski, Moffitt, Poulton, Donnellan, Robins and Caspu 2006). Intervention to ensure adolescent mental health should be implemented (Shackleton, Jamal, Viner, Dickson, Patton, and Bonell, 2016). The way students think about themselves, can positively or negatively affect their levels of achievement (Swann, Chang-Schnieder and McLarty, 2007). Student self-efficacy describes the self-belief that students have in achieving their goals. Schunk and Pajares (2001) argue that student self-efficacy is an aspect of self-esteem which influences motivation to achieve and can play a vital role in individual success.

Significantly, understanding an individual's self-esteem helps us to understand behaviour (Mruk, 1999). PSHE lessons can help promote well-being (Capel, Leask and Younie, 2016). This research examines self-esteem as an aspect of the PSHE personal and well-being concept outlined in the 2007 Key Stage 3 and 4 Programmes of Study. The curriculum aims of this programme outlined the need to support young people to become 'successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens' by, among other things, building their confidence and self-esteem (QCA, 2007:253) so that they are able to make full use of their capabilities.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was incorporated into the questionnaire, as it would provide a reliable and valid quantitative measure of self-esteem (Schmitt and Alik, 2005). This scale was designed by Rosenberg in the 1960s, is widely used in social science research, it is free and easy to administer. It was designed for adolescents and consisted of ten statements for students to indicate the extent of their agreement on a four-point Likert scale. The coefficient of reproducibility of .92 indicated high stability and reliability (Heatherton and Polivy, 1991).

The questionnaires were collected at two specific points in time in order to enable comparisons to be made as the students progressed through school. As explained and justified in the previous chapter, I decided to adopt a longitudinal approach to gathering data for my investigation partly because, when I started my research, I had intended to collect data before and after the implementation of the anticipated statutory provision of PSHE. In the event, though, PSHE was not included as a statutory subject within the National Curriculum in the final version of the legislation. However, I considered that it would still be beneficial to continue the enquiry as initially planned, because it would potentially provide insights into changes in the

perceptions of those engaged with the provision of PSHE and enable me to gain an overview of student and staff perspectives over a period of time.

The second set of questionnaires was adapted to take account of the increasing age of the students. The second questionnaire was adapted to probe more deeply into student perceptions of their progress while retaining most of the previous sets of questions. For example, students were asked in Year 11 what their intentions were after completing GCSEs, while those in Year 9 were asked to say how they felt they were progressing in school. Instead of asking students to complete the Likert scale at the end of the questionnaire relating to self-esteem they were asked an open question about their conceptions of self-esteem, so that they could express their views freely.

4.2.2 Semi-structured senior teacher interviews

Questions used with both senior staff and teachers are set out in the Appendices (Appendix 1 and 2). Questions were organised to elicit views about school aims, ethos, the organisation of PSHE and the personal development of the students in the school with particular reference to self-esteem.

My intention was to investigate what was happening in schools and what could be learnt from those in positions of responsibility for PSHE. The interviews were designed to gain an understanding of thoughts and feelings regarding the teaching and delivery of the PSHE programme in a selection of Catholic and common schools. The research was looking to find out how schools, if at all, developed student skills and self-esteem through PSHE. Individual interviews with senior members of staff were designed to include questions that gave the interviewee opportunities to express their views on how PSHE, and personal development, with particular

reference to self-esteem, were developed. In order to be able to understand this process I needed to establish:

- how PSHE was being delivered the school;
- the reason for this approach being taken;
- how far PSHE supported the aims of the school
- to what extent the programmes of study were followed.

Senior staff were asked about their role within the school initially as a way of helping them feel comfortable in the interview process.

In designing the interview schedule for both senior staff and teachers, questions about the aims of the school were included to assess how PSHE fitted into them (see Appendix 1 and 2). Questions then focused on how PSHE was implemented as a way of looking at the way the school put its policy into practice. These were followed by questions asking about the implementation of the PSHE National Curriculum Orders as a way of assessing their impact. The interview questions also asked how parents were informed about PSHE developments. This was included as an indication of the extent to which parents were involved in the activities of the school and how seriously the school took the personal development of students. I also enquired about staff motivation in delivering PSHE in order to explore the extent to which the school valued PSHE.

These questions arose from the literature review in respect of developments in PSHE. Further questions were asked in relation to the practical application of PSHE and potential parental concerns in respect to the delivery of PSHE. Another set of questions focused on continuing professional development.

A further area of investigation focused on the nature of the school's PSHE programme. This included the practical issues that had to be taken into account and how the history of practice impacted upon present policy. Issues raised as part of the research included looking at how progress was assessed, whether there were specific issues of concern which had to deal with in PSHE and how the school felt they supported teachers through training. The schedule asked how senior staff felt school ethos impacted upon PSHE and the personal development of the students. Senior staff with different areas of responsibility were interviewed to investigate if those working at this level shared a common understanding and similar levels of commitment in relation to PSHE and students' personal development.

The second part of the interview schedule focused on student personal development, particularly self-esteem and what the school did in order to develop and enhance it. Senior staff were asked about what they believed impacted on self-esteem in their school. In order to understand the background influences on students and the impact of PSHE on the personal development they were asked what emphasis was put on developing self-esteem. The interview schedule for those in Catholic schools included questions about whether being a Catholic school had a specific impact on the delivery of PSHE. Those in common schools were asked if their personal values impacted on the delivery of PSHE. Senior staff were asked questions that were designed to elicit how policy was put into action and, how they dealt with government directives and the impact these had upon practice. A question was asked about as to whether they believed that school ethos impacted on student self-esteem. Staff were also asked if there was anything else they wished to communicate.

4.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews with those with responsibility for teaching PSHE

The views of PSHE teachers in the research schools were sought with regard to the development of PSHE and its impact on the students' personal development with a specific focus on self-esteem. The interviewees selected, included experienced PSHE teachers and teachers new to teaching PSHE in each school. The schedule included questions about PSHE and students' personal development. Teachers delivering PSHE were asked similar questions to those in the senior teachers' interviews, but the questions focused more on their practice and delivery of the subject rather than the development of the overall policy. Staff were contacted prior to the interview and the purpose and focus of the interview explained.

The initial interview questions for PSHE teachers were designed to establish how long interviewees had been teaching PSHE and how they became involved in teaching it. These questions were designed to help the interviewee settle into the interview. These questions were designed to give me some insight into their experience and assess their level of commitment to PSHE. Questions then focused on their aims when teaching PSHE, what was stipulated in the programme, whether they covered the set programme or deviated from this and how much of the programme was actually covered. The interview schedule also enquired into what ensured a positive student response in PSHE and the extent to which they believed that the programme had an impact on students (see Appendix 2).

Questions explored what teachers thought about the personal development of the students with particular reference to self-esteem, how it was enhanced in their school and to what extent it was monitored and assessed, what other factors were used to help develop self-esteem and whether or not staff had received any training to

support them in their delivery of PSHE. The interview schedule ended with staff being asked if they wished to raise any other issues and being thanked for their participation.

4.2.4 Student focus group interviews

A focus group was conducted in each research school with students from each year group representing upper, middle and lower abilities and where appropriate gender. The size of the focus group, with six students in each group, was decided to allow for diversity of views and enable all students to be able to contribute and express ideas freely.

In each school, to explore the responses from the student questionnaire in greater depth, focus group interviews were set up with a selection of students from the two year groups being surveyed, initially when they were in Year 7 and Year 9

The aim of the focus group interviews was to investigate the nature and quality of developments in PSHE over a two-year period and to examine personal development in that time within a school context. The focus group interviews were to be repeated after an interval of two years in order to give a longitudinal perspective and discover whether student perceptions had changed over time. It also provided an opportunity to see if any patterns that could be detected.

Each focus group was made up of students in the same year group and therefore they were similar in age. The group comprised, as Kreuger (1994:14) suggests, a group of students with common interests rather than being a diverse group. Each group was invited to share ideas and explore topics in an informal setting. Every group participated and interacted together which helped me gain insights into their

views and opinions. The groups were encouraged to relax. Prior planning of the format of the interview encouraged the maximisation of information gathered. Each group was conducted on school premises that were familiar to students which helped them to feel at ease. The topics raised had been carefully planned in order to follow a logical progression. Groups were made up of students from various tutor groups in the year group and it was important to ensure that all students had a chance to express their views and were not dominated by one or two members of the group. I had to take into account the management of the groups in order to allow a balance of contributions (Bloor et al.2001).

The focus group interview schedule (Appendix 3) began with a question which asked them to elaborate on the purpose of PSHE. Follow-up questions were designed to encourage more in-depth discussion and reflection on PSHE including whether they enjoyed PSHE and found it useful. Questions then focused on personal development. They were asked if there were any subjects that helped them improve their self-esteem or if other people could help them feel good about themselves, developing the theme of how self-esteem could be enhanced and when or where this could occur. The questions then concentrated on how the school celebrated individual achievement, and how students perceived their personal development in the context of school ethos. Other questions centred on ascertaining students' understanding of the impact of PSHE on their personal development.

The questions used during the focus group interviews were designed to interrogate data derived from the questionnaires and to explore their findings in greater depth. The first set of questions focused on student views about PSHE and whether or not it was useful in life. This related to the purpose of PSHE as researched by Mead (2004). Students were asked what they enjoyed and what they would improve about the subject. I felt this would provide an insight into ways of enhancing delivery. The

next topic that questions focused on was self-esteem; discussion centred round ways of building and developing self-esteem as a way of understanding the enhancement of personal development. I felt this element of the topic was important because Brandon (1988) says self-esteem is 'the key to success or failure'. As a way of examining self-esteem, I discussed with students recognition of achievement in general by looking at how the achievements were celebrated (Palladino, 1989).

I used prompts and probes by asking after each question whether there was anything that students wanted to add to what had been said or if anyone wanted to make any further comments relating to the issues. Another way I prompted students in the focus group in a non-verbal way was to nod my head. I also reflected on what had been said and repeated it back to the group to ensure everyone had understood and I encouraged others to debate a point further. I used the phrase 'what do you mean' as a way of encouraging students to go into greater detail about a point. However, this had to be said in a positive tone so as not to sound negative but as to be seen as encouragement. Another way I used prompts was to summarise what had been discussed as a way of stimulating further debate.

The questions were designed to establish students' thoughts about the PSHE programme that they were experiencing, how students felt about themselves, in which areas they felt good about themselves, how and when they received positive feedback and where and when they received praise. The focus group questions were drawn from areas identified in the literature review. This gave an indication of how they perceived their personal development might be enhanced. A copy of the questions is included in the appendix (see Appendix 3).

4.3 Ethics

Before any research could be commenced ethical issues had to be considered. The ethical guidelines that I followed were those laid down by BERA, which stipulate that researchers should operate within an ethic of respect for individuals involved in the research and state that individuals should be treated fairly, sensitively and with dignity, without prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, faith, disability or political belief. I worked at all times to ensure that I kept within such boundaries. All questionnaires were analysed by me and I transcribed all the interviews, ensuring that I gave due regard to ethical considerations at all times. Ethical considerations are important so that the conduct during the research is morally correct (Howitt and Cramer, 2008). Procedures were followed with openness and transparency. Relations with schools were conducted in a respectful way at all times.

The rationale for the interviews was initially explained by the person in the school with whom I was liaising. Then when I visited the school I met in person with those who had agreed to participate in the interviews and I talked with individual teachers before the start of each interview. All teachers voluntarily participated and were informed they were able to withdraw from the interview at any time. None of the teachers wished to withdraw but some were constricted to time constraints owing to teaching commitments.

As I was involved in working with the students in the focus group interviews I had to be CRB checked (now known as DBS), as this is a prerequisite to working in schools with children and young people under the age of eighteen.

Initially permission to undertake the research was sought from the head of the school (Appendix 4). Once he or she had agreed to the school being involved I was given a contact person to work through. Parents were informed about the research through school/home newsletters or by information being included on the school intranet (see Appendix 5). Any parent not wishing their child to participate was asked to write to the school informing them that they wished their child to be withdrawn from the study. No incentives were offered in return for participation and no one, other than me, incurred any expenses as part of this process. Confidentiality of collected data was guaranteed and individual names were not referred to in the findings or reporting of the study. Students were initially informed about the research either by their head of year or form tutor, explanation was given concerning the focus of the research, a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity was assured. Parents were informed about the research either through the school intranet or letter, explaining that students could withdraw from participation at any point during the research process.

Students were informed before the focus groups started of their rights to withdraw at any stage during the interviews and they were told they could leave the room whenever they wished. After the interview if they decided they did not wish to be included in the research they could inform their teacher who would contact me and I would delete their contribution. General information about the purpose and procedure of the interviews was given and interviewees were de-briefed at the end of the session. It was explained that all views were valuable. A general statement about the findings from the research was sent to participating schools to inform them of the findings and conclusions once data was analysed. As part of the focus group protocol I explained that everything said would be regarded with the utmost confidentiality. Students were also asked to maintain confidentiality in relation to what had been said by the other participants. Students were reassured that there were no right or wrong

answers, that all their opinions were valued. The protocol also included the signing of a consent agreement form (see Appendix 6).

The real names of the schools and individuals have not been used in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. When writing up the findings, care was taken to ensure that individual contributions could not be identified. Participating schools were given fictitious names to protect schools and students from being recognised.

During all data collection processes, whether they were during face-to-face interviews with staff, focus group interviews with students, or the collection of data from the questionnaires, care was taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality. This was so that participants would not feel threatened in any way and encouraged to respond to questions in an authentic way. Before conducting the pilot study, letters were sent home and tear off slips were signed by both parents and students. After interviews were transcribed and the questionnaires analysed they were sent to the school as part of a report detailing findings relating to each respective school. Transcripts from individual interviews were not supplied. However, I offered to send transcripts directly by mail or email to individuals who had taken part in interviews on request and supplied my contact details so that I could be contacted. This I felt was ethical as I wanted to safeguard the confidentiality of individual contributions.

Before each process of data gathering ethical considerations were undertaken in a similar way. Ethical approval was sought. Schools were contacted in advance of visits and parents and students were contacted via the school.

Consent forms were signed before participants were involved in the focus group process. Questions at the beginning of the interview were designed to help the group relax by saying something about themselves. Students were informed that they could

leave the interview at any point and return to their class. None of the students elected to take this option, although it was made quite clear they could withdraw whenever they wished.

4.4 Pilot work

Bryman (2004) points out that pilot studies need to be completed in order to confirm that the research instruments function well. Prior to conducting field research, it is important to check that the questions and instructions included in all the instruments can be clearly understood and that there will be no misunderstandings or difficulties. It is also beneficial to assess how long the interviews and the questionnaires take to complete.

4.4.1 Piloting of the student questionnaire

Piloting of the student questionnaires was undertaken by four groups of students in four different age groups in four different schools. These schools were selected as comparable to those schools that were to be involved in final study: two co-educational Catholic schools and two common schools participated in the pilot study. Four Year 9 students from two different secondary schools, four Year 7 students from another school and four Year 11 students and a group of thirty Year 10 students from yet another school agreed to participate in the pilot study.

Relevant permission was sought and granted from headteachers and parents gave consent by letter. Following feedback from the students, I re-organised the presentation of the questionnaire, dividing it into clearer sections, simplifying the arrangement in order to reduce the amount of time spent in responding to maintain student interest. Details can be seen in Appendix 8.

4.4.2 Changes to the questionnaire after piloting

This section sets out changes made to the questionnaire following the pilot process.

The preparation of questionnaires was a demanding aspect in advance of conducting field work. The draft questionnaire (Appendix 7) underwent several drafts after piloting in order to make it more accessible to students. Some statements relating to self-esteem were subsequently re-framed into a tick box format. Some, changes of wording were made and the number of questions was reduced. The questions were re-organised to facilitate completion, re-ordered into sections and the questionnaire kept to two sides of A4. Consideration was given to ensuring that leading questions were not used, for example, instead of asking 'What have you enjoyed most in PSHE?' (Question 4); it was re-phrased as 'If you enjoyed PSHE, what did you find most useful' (Question 3). Question 6 on the pilot questionnaire asked 'What has helped you most when you have had to make decisions?' It was felt that this was too broad a question, so it was re-focused to ask about the implications for PSHE and the question became 'Has PSHE helped you when you have had to make decisions in your life and if so, how?' Question 8 'Where do you feel you have achieved in school?' was re-phrased in a different, less direct way to 'Where do you get most rewards in school?' This enabled me to look at the implications of where students were recognising they were gaining praise and encouragement, which gave an indication of the importance they placed on receiving it. The next six questions were placed in a table. This was to help the form to be more attractive to students, encouraging them to fill it in and for it to feel less onerous. Question 9 'How do you compare yourself to others?' was re-worded to 'Do you compare yourself to others?' To again ensure the students were not being led by the question. Some of the questions were cut because it was felt they were repetitious, such as question 18 'Where do you feel most valued in school?' and question 19 'Who has influenced you most in school?'. Question 2 relating to where a student gained support, to some

degree covers who may influence them and that is why it was removed. To help students complete the table, the final section of the questionnaire was re-designed into a table dealing with their thoughts on self-esteem which they could tick.

When re-thinking the design of the questionnaire for the second distribution after two years some questions were re-phrased for Year 11 students (Appendix 9). For example, question 3 on the Year 11 questionnaire initially was '*How would you like school to help you achieve more in your life*'. This was changed to '*Would you like school to help you achieve more and if so how*', as I felt this gave respondents more scope to express themselves and was less likely to lead them. On the Year 9 questionnaire I changed the order of questions. Initially I arranged '*How well are you doing*' as question 2, but re-ordered it as question 5 so that it could more easily be compared with the Year 11 questionnaire when collating the findings (see Appendix 10). The questionnaire was restricted to two sides of A4 as this was felt to be the maximum that students of this age could concentrate on. The students completed the pilot questionnaire again after it had been re-organised and commented positively on the improved layout and appearance.

Following the pilot work some changes were made. For example, instead of asking '*What do you do to assess the impact of PSHE?*' I asked '*How do you know what impact the PSHE programme has?*'

Some changes were made to the interview schedule as a result of the pilot work. It became clear that I needed to change the wording of some questions such as '*Why are you involved in PSHE?*' to '*How did you become involved in PSHE?*' I did this to make the questions less threatening and more enquiring. Starting some question with '*Do you*' rather than '*How do you?*' meant they were less presumptive.

4.4.3 Piloting of the teacher interviews

Teachers known to me, either those who were in the same educational establishment, or those who had previously worked with me, were approached to trial the interview schedules. Four teachers, who were teachers of PSHE, two with experience of teaching PSHE and two who had recently started teaching PSHE, agreed to participate in the piloting of the teacher interviews, two with experience of teaching PSHE and two who had recently started teaching PSHE. In addition, two senior teachers who were deputies in another school agreed to give up their time to be interviewed as part of the pilot.

The questions from the intended interview schedules were used in pilot interviews with senior staff. I also used the piloting process to establish the time commitment that would be required to complete the interviews. These pilot interviews gave me an understanding of how the questions would be received by the interviewees and ensured that the questions I asked were clear and concise.

4.4.4 Piloting of the Focus Group

Focus group interviews of students in Year 7 and Year 9, who volunteered to participate in a pilot focus group, arose from students I was teaching occurred after permission from school and parents was obtained. Four students from each year group volunteered. I started with an explanation of the interview and of how everything would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Students were informed that, if they wished, they could exercise the right to leave at any point. My aim was to find out student perceptions concerning PSHE. I wanted to ensure that the questions were understood. Students were given an opportunity to express themselves and say what they felt was pertinent to the topic areas.

Some changes were made to the questions following the pilot work. I re-designed the questions so that they would be asked in the abstract, so that students could respond anonymously and talk about young people in general rather than specifically focusing on individuals. For example, instead of asking '*How can someone help you build your self-esteem?*' I recognised that it would be better to ask '*How could others help someone build their self-esteem?*' This made the question general rather than personal. The order and content of questions were re-considered following the first pilot focus group interview, as I felt it was necessary to discuss personal development and self-esteem more openly and not skirt around the topic. I wanted to be direct with the students. Version 2 of the Focus Group schedule is in Appendix 3. The question regarding what we learn about being healthy was cut from Version 1 of the Focus Group questions (see Appendix 11) as I considered it was not directly relevant. The questions were organised into sections making the interview more coherent. I also split questions so that there was only one element to be answered in each question as it seemed that this was less confusing for students. The pilot also indicated that I needed to stress that students did not have to answer necessarily with reference to themselves. Encouraging students to talk in general terms, helped make them to feel more comfortable. This gave students a choice as to whether to talk about themselves or to depersonalise their comments.

4.5 Arranging the visits to the schools

In some schools (three, out of the eight), I was able to go to year group meetings and explain my research to the form tutors directly about my research, including its purpose and the process for completing the questionnaires. I was able to provide details about the focus group interviews with students and answer any questions tutors had. In the other schools I was only able to leave A4 envelopes with information about the questionnaires for tutors, who agreed to distribute them during PSHE time, with the contact person within the school.

Tutors were asked to explain the purpose of the research to the students. They were informed that they were being asked to complete the questionnaires on a voluntary basis and that they could withdraw without reason at any time. Informed consent was sought through this process. Tutors were asked to reassure students about the confidentiality of the forms. They were told that they would only be seen by the researcher, that they would only be used for research and that their names would be kept confidential at all times. Students were then free to choose to take part voluntarily. Letters, addressed to the teachers, were attached to each pack of questionnaires (see Appendix 12). The questionnaires were organised so that each form tutor was given a pack for their tutor group and I collected the completed forms from the person with whom I liaised within the school.

4.6 Procedures

In the paragraphs, above I have examined the establishment of the instruments to be used and explained the conduct of the pilot studies. In the following sections I will examine the procedures undertaken as part of the main body of research.

4.6.1 Student questionnaires

In each of the eight schools involved in the research students from Years 7 and 9 completed questionnaires. All the students in each of the year groups were invited to complete the questionnaire. Table 4.1 displays the number of students who completed the first set of questionnaires in each year group.

Table 4.1: Number of students in each school completing questionnaires

Schools	Year 7	Year 9	Total
St Mary's	170	159	329
St Olaf's	131	107	238
St Angela's	138	144	282
St Christopher's	136	137	273
Heatherside	160	177	337
Yester	104	80	184
Beechwood	92	85	177
Townhead	147	179	326
Total	1078	1068	2146

Questionnaires were delivered to the schools and meetings held with relevant heads of year. This enabled the researcher to explain the rationale behind the questionnaires. Questionnaires were organised into large A4 envelopes, for each form within the two years chosen to take part in the research as already described, with detailed instructions on the envelope to help form tutors understand the process required for completing them as previously described (see Appendix 12). All students within the year group were invited to complete the questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to the form tutors and students were asked to complete them during PSHE or form time and returned to the school co-ordinator. Students who did not wish to complete the questionnaires were requested to return the blank questionnaire or partly filled questionnaire back to the envelope to be returned to me. Although some students did not complete the questionnaire, most students in each form did voluntarily complete the questionnaires. Later in the term, in negotiation with the co-ordinator at the school, I collected the questionnaires.

4.6.2 Staff interviews

Those participating in the interviews were chosen by the school from the categories requested; two senior leaders with different areas of responsibility, two teachers of PSHE one with responsibility for the subject and one new to teaching PSHE, to be involved in the research. This may have resulted in a biased interview but I felt that

by building rapport with the teachers, an honest expression of views could be attained. According to Robson (1993:66) it was important to ensure the enquiry was 'believable and trustworthy'. Most schools were co-operative and did their best to ensure that staff with as wide a range of perspectives as possible were available for interview. Four staff interviews took place in each school; two with senior teachers, one with responsibility for PSHE and one with another responsibility. Two teachers of PSHE were interviewed; one who had experience and had been teaching PSHE for some time and another who was fairly new to teaching the subject. This was arranged in order to compare views from teachers who had different experiences within the school.

In relation to the school visits I had to liaise with the school co-ordinator who was arranging the interviews and had control of the location. These varied from school to school. Some schools provided office space and one school placed me in the head's office, as she was at a meeting that day, while other schools took me to the classrooms where the teachers were based. It is difficult to assess what impact the location had on the openness of the interviewees, although all of the interviews took place in a quiet environment within the school. Those interviewed were in a familiar place, which I believed should have helped them be as relaxed as possible.

Identified staff were contacted prior to the interview to explain the purpose and process of the interview (See Appendix 13). I helped interviewees to relax and encouraged them to respond positively by introducing myself, explaining the rationale for the interview and the process to be followed, as well as building rapport with them. I did this by taking care to present myself in a professional manner without being too formal; care was taken with regard to what to wear and how to introduce the use of the recording equipment. Teachers were made to feel at ease by the

process, starting with the interviewer explaining the process, asking for permission to record and then asking questions such as *'tell me about your role in the school'*.

There was a preamble that reminded the interviewee what the interview was about and provided a framework explaining the focus of the questions. The interviews ended with an open question so that the interviewee could include anything they wanted to add that had not already been covered. Interviews lasted from about thirty to approximately forty-five minutes depending on the information that the interviewee was prepared to share and the time they had available to speak to me.

4.6.3 Student Focus Group interviews

A sample of students from each of the two year groups was invited to attend a focus group interview. In each school two focus group interviews were held, one for each year. The mix for the focus group was organised by the person at the school co-ordinating the interviews. I requested an ability mix of students so that students from across the academic ability range could represent their views. However, I had to rely on the discretion of those selecting students to abide by the criteria provided.

In each school, I was allocated a room and given a list of the names of students who would be attending each session. Once the students arrived I introduced myself. I explained the reason for the session, asked the students to sign a permission slip and explained the confidentiality rule i.e. that everyone needed to respect the views of others and contribute to the discussion as they wished. Students were told they could leave at any point and did not have to stay. I asked permission to record the interview. I then asked the questions on the focus group interview schedule and waited for students to make comments. Students were given an opportunity to introduce themselves if they were not familiar with each other.

4.7 Data analysis

SPSS 22 was used to analyse data from the questionnaires. T tests and chi-squared tests were carried out to compare results from students in common schools and Catholic.

Responses produced during the interviews and focus groups were initially recorded and then transcribed. Although results were entered into NVIVO for analysis, it was found that the analysis was more manageable when undertaken manually.

4.8 Transcriptions

I transcribed the data I had recorded using an 'orthographic' transcription style, adopting the transcription of spoken words (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Orthographic transcription sets out the words spoken. I could have transcribed using phonetic and paralinguistic features. However, I transcribed exactly what was said as I felt this would be more valid. Every care was taken to ensure the confidentiality of the interviewees.

The analysis of the transcriptions was based on Thematic Analysis (TA) because it is a flexible method which can be used to analyse most kinds of questions conducted through research. The data can be analysed using this method according to Braun and Clarke (2013:178) in a variety of ways; for example, either to 'explore theoretical ideas' or apply a theory to the analysis. Another advantage of this method was I did not require in depth skills in data-handling to employ the method. Other systems that could have been utilised included Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) but as it focuses on cases as well as themes, I felt it would not provide me with the depth of analysis. I could also have drawn on Grounded Theory (GT) as a means of analysis, but this could have been complicated as there are so many different sets of

guidance for Grounded Theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Discourse analysis was another method I could have engaged with, but again I felt this would require a great understanding of the concepts required to employ the framework.

The process I utilised was based on the model from Braun and Clarke (2013: 202) and involved:

1. Transcribing interview recordings
2. Reading for familiarity
3. Coding
4. Searching for themes
5. Revising and reviewing themes
6. Defining themes
7. Final analysis

I followed this process by reading the recorded interviews several times and transcribed them, listening and typing and listening several times over to ensure I had transcribed the interviews accurately. This not only helped me to ensure that I had typed a copy of the recordings accurately, but it also helped me to become familiar with the text.

I then read the texts closely again before searching for codes by noting down points of interest made by those being interviewed. I then read each of the transcripts from each school comparing and adding points of interest. I coded these into tables and then checked transcripts from each school to see if I needed to add any further key words or comments which were then coded. I organised the codes into a table and then checked each school and noted whether comments made in each school could be compared to comments made in another school.

Developing insights into the meaning of my data was my aim when I recorded the phrases. See Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Examples of initial student comments

How to treat others
Can be too personal
Learn about jobs and the future
Find others in the same position
Express worries
Team building
Learning about life
Good results
Can be too personal
Learn about jobs and the future
Find others in the same position
Express worries
Team building
Learning about life
Good results
Pray
Making decisions + choices
How to solve problems
Community
Opportunities
Sports Being creative
Compliments
Study of self + way feel about self
Challenges
Find others in the same position

The analysis was not underpinned by existing theory. The themes were generated from the data and interpreted in terms of my own background and experience and based on the knowledge and understanding I gained from my literature review. This involved typing transcripts and then systematically reading them thoroughly. I took note of what the interviewees described and interpreted the information that they provided. Having read and re-read the transcripts several times in order to allow for, in the words of Braun and Clarke (2013:204) 'immersion' in the data, I was able to note words and phrases of interest. These were then coded into ideas of the same type before patterns could be identified across the codes and integrated into themes.

These were phrases drawn from comments made by students that initially struck me when they were talking about aspects of the discussion. Braun and Clarke (2013: 206) describe different ways of developing a coding process. Selective coding identifies aspects of interest and selecting them, whereas complete coding involves identifying all things of interest. Data-derived coding encompasses coding in a semantic way. I used selective coding and looked at aspects from student comments that illuminated the areas I was researching. After looking at initial comments I re-read transcripts several times until I felt I had a comprehensive list of codes that students presented. Then I checked to see if any students from each of the schools had made any comments in common across the year group. See table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Student coding

Year 9, Year2		SM	SO	SA	SC	HS	YS	BS	TS
Ethos	How to treat others	√			√				
	Community		√	√	√	√			
PSHE	Learning about life		√√			√	√	√	√
	Making decisions and choices		√√	√	√		√		
	Drugs			√		√	√		√
	Sex education	√					√	√	
	Team building				√				
	How to solve problems	√			√				
	Express worries		√			√			
	Cyber bullying/bullying				√				
	Can be too personal	√				√		√	
	Learn about jobs and the future	√	√		√	√	√	√	
	Find others in the same position						√		
	Safety		√						
	Challenges								√
	Self-esteem	Find out about own talents	√		√√			√√	
Confidence		√		√√	√√		√√		√
Study of self and way feel about self		√	√	√		√√	√		
Developing self-esteem	Praise				√√				
	Good results	√		√			√	√	√
	Rewards		√				√√	√	√
	Compliments	√√		√	√		√	√√	√√
	Achievement	√√			√	√√	√√	√	√√
	Help from others		√			√		√	√
	Sports				√				√
	Drama		√		√			√√	
	Family			√		√		√	√
	Celebrate						√		
Catholic impact	Someone with them	√	√		√				
	Charity				√				
	Community								
	Pray		√						
	Chaplain			√					

Ideas that recurred through repetition across the data were organised from codes to themes, providing something 'psychologically or socially meaningful' (Braun and Clarke, 2013:223). I looked for patterns across the data. These helped themes to emerge and identify meaning from comments about the research under investigation.

Themes provided a way of collating broader concepts. These were established through identifying parallels and connections between codes.

Once the codes were organised into headings, the main themes could be identified. These were then refined and reviewed see Table 4.4. These included Ethos, Catholicity, PSHE, and Personal Development/Self-Esteem. The transcripts were read several times to check coding and ensure the correct identification of themes. The theme of 'Celebrate' was rejected as I felt it did not stand alone strongly enough to represent a central concept.

Table 4.4: From codes to themes

	Codes	Original Themes	Final Themes
1	How to treat others	Ethos	Ethos
2	It doesn't make a difference	Catholicity	
3	Community		
4	Pray		
5	Chaplain		
6	Learning about life	PSHE	PSHE
7	Making decisions + choices		
8	Drugs		
9	Sex education		
10	Team building		
11	How to solve problems		
12	Express worries		
13	Cyber bullying/bullying		
14	Can be too personal		
15	Learn about jobs and the future		
16	Opportunities		
17	Find others in the same position		
18	Safety		
19	Role play		
20	Challenges		
21	Good results	Progress and Attainment	Progress and Attainment
22	Rewards		
23	Compliments		
24	Achievement		
25	Help from others		
26	Sports Being creative		
27	Drama		
28	Find out about own talents		
29	Confidence	Personal Development	Personal Development
30	Study of self /way feel about self		
31	Praise		
32	Family	Celebrate	
33	Someone with them		
34	Learn what you are good at		

Table 4.5 provides an example from a Cohort Two Year 9 group on my first visit.

They were discussing PSHE. The first student Callum mentions that PSHE involves learning about others, which may be seen as linking to the theme of ethos (no 1 in

Table 4.5), and talks about how it helps individuals to deal with situations that they may come across in life. This can be seen as linking to the code no 14 (learning about life) in Table 4.5. Another student comments that PSHE is important because it links to dealing with problems, code number 19. The next student, Ola, talks about PSHE as a stepping stone to adulthood. While adulthood is not a specific code, it could be interpreted that this comment links to dealing with adult life which is a connection with code number 14 (learning about life). George, the next student, comments on the importance of how to treat others, which again can be seen as a link with code number 1, ethos. Callum makes further comments about the importance of hearing what other students have to say and how they react, which is a link with code number 25, where he is appreciating other people being in the same position. Victor makes a further comment about achievement, and, possibly, the pressure he may feel about academic progress, which is linked to code number 9 (progress and achievement).

Table 4.5: Example of coding

Student: Callum	Learning about others and different situations that you deal with and come across in life.
Student: Victor	It's important because it prepares you for different things in like and to how to deal with those problems.
Student: Ola	It's like stepping stones to like adulthood.
Student: George	Like have, how to be outside of school, how to treat other people and how to be nice.
Student: Callum	And it's good to hear what other people say and think. It's just like an open discussion. You can put your own input into it and see how others react to it.
Student: Victor	The only thing I don't like, is things like, I know it's good but when they're like, 'Oh you should like. What are you going to achieve by next term?' In things like your life you can do that – What are you going to achieve with your life, I don't mind, like what's your future, but what are you going to achieve by next term. Like I suppose it's good but I'm not really going to achieve, anything major in a term like that. I'm going to do my work and do my grades but like that's, the lessons like that I don't really understand but apart from that I do like it.

It can be seen from this example that students do not always use precise words when describing their understanding of situations and I had to carefully read the transcripts to fully understand the meaning of their comments. This is one area that I felt NVIVO was not particularly useful, because the computer programme did not have the capability to interpret comments; it could help identify words but not the meaning behind the use of words. By reading and reviewing the transcripts, I listed codes and developed themes, it was then important to consider the themes and the relationship between them, looking at how they linked. By looking at how the themes fitted together I was able to see how they helped me make sense of the overall organisation and structure of the analysis. Each theme gave me a clear structure for understanding the analysis of the data. I used each theme in order to capture the essence of what students were saying. These were based upon the pattern of comments made by the students.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have described in detail the methods that were used in conducting my research. Students completed questionnaires, interviews that were undertaken with senior staff and teachers of PSHE and focus groups interviews were conducted with students. By examining the responses of the students, I intended to consider how far there was a relationship between the ethos of the school and PSHE. I have discussed how the questionnaires focused on the empirical measurement of self-esteem in order to gain a quantifiable comparison between the two school sectors. Sections in the questionnaire highlighted areas of interest so that an understanding could be achieved of where students could gain support in developing self-esteem through PSHE.

The focus of the various methods was the role of PSHE, how it was implemented and how it and the ethos of the school impacted on the students' personal development. Eight schools participated in the research. Thirty-two staff interviews and sixteen focus group interviews were undertaken. Questionnaires were completed in phase 1 by 2,146 students and 1,952 students in phase 2. Having collected the data, I used SPSS 22 to analyse the quantitative data and NVIVO 9 and manual coding to analyse the qualitative data. The analysis of the data will be presented in the following chapters.

Chapter 5: Teacher Perceptions

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present evidence of teacher perspectives concerning PSHE. I shall discuss data collected from the teacher interviews during my first and second visits to schools under the topics that emerged from those interviews. In the next chapter I shall discuss the data I collected from students.

Staff comments have been organised under the following main headings that were provided in the interviews, drawn from the questions that were pursued in the interview schedule School Aims, School Ethos, Impact of being in a Catholic School, PSHE provision and self-esteem through Personal Development. These themes correspond to those which emerged both from the literature review and the interviews.

Thirty-two teachers from four common schools and four Catholic schools were interviewed twice, amounting to a total of sixty-four interviews. In each school I interviewed two members of the senior leadership team (one with curriculum and one with pastoral responsibility), an experienced teacher of PSHE and a member of staff who was new to teaching the subject. They are referred to in this chapter as Teacher 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The intention was to gain a broad range of perspectives and investigate the extent to which PSHE was valued by curriculum leaders as well as those with pastoral responsibility.

In reporting the findings Catholic schools have been distinguished from the common schools by giving them a name beginning with 'St'. Whilst there were two rounds of interviews with teachers, there were few differences in responses between the two

visits. The analysis of results indicated that there were insufficient differences to warrant a comparison being made between the two phases. This chapter is divided into sections which reflect the themes which emerged from both the literature review and the interviews: school aims; school ethos; the impact of being in a Catholic school; PSHE; technological impact; teacher training for PSHE; and personal development.

5.2 School aims

In each school I investigated perceptions of the aims of the school to establish a context for each school. The analysis of the data revealed that teachers perceived that the aims of the school were connected to two sub-themes: achieving their full potential and helping students to become good citizens.

5.2.1 Achieving full potential

A number of teachers, during my first visit, from both Catholic and common schools commented on the importance of helping students reach their full potential. In this regard teachers help students to develop their strengths and ability to achieve in all aspects of education to their maximum. Five of the 16 teachers interviewed in common schools (31%) mentioned this as an aim in school in comparison with 11 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools (69%).

A teacher in a common school explained the school aims involved:

bringing out the best, it really is about ensuring that every child achieves to the full of their potential.

(Teacher 1: Heatherside Year 1)

A teacher in a Catholic school claimed that:

Every student should be given the ability to flourish and fulfil their potential and that there should be nothing put in the way to prevent them doing that.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 2)

In contrast a response from a teacher in a Catholic school also emphasised the development of Christian values as part of that potential:

Well as a Catholic school I think outstanding pastoral care has to be the first of the aims ... If you have outstanding pastoral care then everything else does fall into place, including outstanding learning, outstanding teaching, outstanding results. I think the aim of the school is to provide, is to encourage the young people to fulfil everything that they have the potential to become, fully rounded young people taking their place in society as I would call it Christian disciples.

(Teacher 1: St Olaf's Year 1)

Both of these teachers expressed a desire to see children do well, but there were differences with a greater emphasis in the Catholic school on the inclusion of a Christian perspective. Teachers from the four Catholic schools emphasised the desire not only to help students develop their academic skills, but also their spiritual qualities:

As well as the academic side it's also the spiritual development, the physical development, the emotional development, every aspect of what it means to be human. We're interested in the education of the whole person. From the point of view of it being a Catholic school the aim of the school is to help students grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church and to grow and mature in that.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 1)

Four teachers in Catholic schools emphasised the importance of gospel values while two others talked about faith journeys. An emphasis was given here to recognise a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. It seemed that the enabling of students to fulfil their potential was interpreted in different ways in the two different types of schools.

Responses from the interviews indicated that a greater emphasis was given in the four common schools on gaining academic qualifications than the Catholic schools:

I would say the main aim is to get our children through GCSE at the highest qualification that they can.

(Teacher 2: Yester Year 1)

While academic results were not seen as all that a child needed, a definite emphasis was put on gaining good academic results:

You want every child to achieve as much as they can academically because it's such a need in the world today isn't it?

(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 1)

At one common selective school it was commented that:

We have our overall vision within the school, which is the pursuit of excellence.

They then went on to explain:

We encourage every student to achieve personal excellence in a wide range of academic subjects.

(Teacher 2: Townhead Year 1)

Thirteen out of the sixteen teachers who were interviewed in common schools (84%) mentioned this as an aim of the school in comparison to 10 out of 16 teachers in the Catholic schools (63%). The responses indicated that Catholic schools were also trying to ensure good examination results, but they had additional aims including helping students learn from a faith perspective:

...what makes a successful person?

(Teacher 3: St Mary's Year 2)

To summarise, all of the teachers expressed the desire to support their students in achieving their full potential. However, although the percentages are only indicative, the teachers in the common schools seemed to place a greater emphasis on academic attainment while those in the Catholic schools emphasised a spiritual element to fulfilling potential. Success in a Catholic school appeared to be interpreted in a slightly different way than in the common schools. The question of reaching 'full potential' in a Catholic school could also be seen to be understood as encompassing a spiritual dimension.

5.2.2 Being a good citizen

Some teachers appreciated that they had a responsibility to encourage students to take their rightful place in society. The inclusion of citizenship education as part of PSHE was mentioned by teachers from St Mary's and St Olaf's as well as a teacher

from Townhead School. A teacher at St Angela's advocated that being a good citizen should be seen from a national and a global perspective lending a broader understanding of what citizenship means. One teacher said that the aims of the school were informed by:

Our mission statement and that of course is very much based on the thing of the gospel but alongside that it is active citizenship, for them to become more aware of the world around them, to have not only ideas on it but also a perception and idea of how they may respond to it and that will obviously be in a Christian way.

(Teacher 3: St Olaf's Year 2)

In this way, the idea that students needed to be active in the world and contribute to the wider international community was again emphasised. However, in contrast another teacher in a Catholic school stated:

We have government policy ... we keep doing what we're doing, caring for the progress of our students.

(Teacher 1: St Angela's Year 2)

Similarly, another member of staff from the same school commented:

I want our girls to have that confidence to go out and be capable in the work place.

(Teacher 2: St Angela's Year 2)

It seemed from this comment that it was considered important that the girls were able to take their place in society and contribute the skills they possessed for the benefit of the wider community, for the common good. Overall, it appeared from interviews with teachers in both Catholic and common schools that there was no agreed conception of what it meant to be a good citizen within the context of PSHE. Less emphasis was given to this theme than that of the students fulfilling their potential or developing their strengths to the maximum.

5.3 School ethos

In this section I shall discuss the teacher perceptions of their school's ethos. This is important as it plays a vital role in the way schools function (see Section 2.3.1).

Although certain themes emerged from the interviews in relation to school ethos it was clear that there were not always unified perceptions of the nature of the ethos within the schools visited as one teacher explained:

If you ask different people about what the ethos is, they will choose the bit that suits their personality and their outlook best, whatever it may be. Some people may say they have an ethos of achievement, some people say they have an ethos of supporting one another.

(Teacher 2: Townhead Year 1)

It seemed that however closely a school tried to ensure that its ethos was supported by all staff, the reality was that this was not always the case and individuals would occasionally not support it.

Each school had its own distinct ethos and culture and this was evident through the emphasis that members of each school placed on different aspects of the school's work. The ethos of the school provided the context for what people said about what they did. This emerged through everything that was discussed in all the interviews. Developing the way that language was used in the school as well as the traditions on which the school was based served as a foundation for developing ethos in one school:

We did it with Building Learning Power and our language around the school. And as a part of Learning Power for me, I see that we ask them to look at what our school is good at and very definitely value our traditions, the fact that it is based on a particular ethos and they absolutely understand that ethos and being built on a woman of wisdom.

(Teacher 1: St Angela's Year 2)

Through discussions with teachers at each of the schools, certain sub-themes within the overall themes of school ethos emerged. These sub-themes included the provision of constant support, ensuring that the students felt valued; establishing a caring community and the use of praise.

5.3.1 The provision of constant support

An important element that was stressed by teachers was the level of support that was provided for students on a constant basis. Teachers acknowledged that they were trying to help students achieve their full potential by constantly trying to ensure they supported them. In one of the schools, this was exemplified by a member of staff who felt:

Children are encouraged here to strive to do well and they are constantly, as such that, they are not left to flounder at all, there is constant support that is given, constant follow up that is provided, constant reassurance, lots of systems in place to support them, lots of people who care about them basically.

(Teacher 1: St Mary's Year1)

Nine of the sixteen teachers who were interviewed during my first visits to common schools (56%) emphasised the support students were given in school, in comparison with 8 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools (50%). Another teacher emphasised that pupils knew that if there were problems they would be dealt with and support offered.

I think that if the school is a happy school and ... I think the children feel safe here on the whole and I think when there are problems, there's a level of confidence amongst our young people that those problems will be dealt with and they'll be managed, then I think that allows them to flourish.

(Teacher 1: St Olaf's Year 1)

This teacher went on to assert:

Every single one of us has taught a class where a child is misbehaving just because they want us to notice them, so if we notice them before they start misbehaving then again we've created a culture.

(Teacher 1: St Olaf's Year 1)

From the point of view of this teacher, the school overtly developed a culture of caring and a sense of being part of a community. In order for this to become a reality the teacher told me that they believed students needed to be happy in school in order to function to the best of their ability. Overall, just over half of the teachers interviewed (see above) in both common and Catholic schools emphasised the importance of offering ongoing support to students during my first visit but interestingly on my second visit this had dropped to 15 out of thirty- two teachers

mentioning this 7, (44%) out of 16 in Catholic schools and 8, (50%) out of 16 in common schools).

5.3.2 Ensuring that students felt valued

Making sure that students felt valued was mentioned as important by 5 of the 16 teachers who were interviewed in my first visit in common schools (31%) in comparison with 4 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools (25%). The number of teachers who mentioned this during my second visit was slightly less, 4 out of 16 in common schools (25%) and 3 out of 16 in Catholic schools (19%). A typical example is set out below:

Encouraging the students to believe they are of value, no matter what their academic ability is.

(Teacher 3: Heatherside Year 2)

In the common schools, teachers were expected to have a high regard and respect for students as part of the school ethos. This was viewed as promoting high levels of personal development. Opportunities for students to engage in a wide variety of activities were encouraged, for instance.

We get them to enter competitions and I had a group two years ago who entered the Attorney General's competition and won and they got to be representatives on a youth panel. So that meant they went up to the House of Lords and they were in a Committee Room and they took part in government.

(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 2)

This enabled the building of confidence and the opportunity for the school to express the value that they placed on students.

...confidence and the other thing I absolutely think is key, everything is shared in whole school assemblies. So, I think go out and do that, it's in the News bulletin, it's in the assembly, so the school gets to hear about it.

(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 2)

The sharing of news of events that students had taken part in with the rest of the school and celebrating these achievements, was part of the whole school ethos and

a way of valuing student contributions whether or not these activities occurred in or outside of school. All aspects of a student's life were celebrated and valued.

The school mission statement in Beechwood School referred to providing an excellent education for their students. The school wanted students to be valued today and for what they would do as a woman of tomorrow. In the light of this, one teacher said:

Now to be a woman of tomorrow you've got to be able to be strong, you've got to be keen to learn, you've got to have lifelong learning, you've got to do all these things and we talk about this a lot in the pastoral curriculum but also in assemblies and it's become a running sort of thing, 'What are you going to do as a woman of tomorrow?

(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 2)

Another teacher in this school identified the ethos of the school as being to do with the relationships the students had with the teachers and the value placed on students' achievement which was at the core of the ethos:

Building them up into believing in themselves... the way you treat people, like in everyday life, you've got to remember you are developing a young adult and a school's role in kids' self-esteem is critical.

(Teacher 3: Beechwood Year 2)

Teachers in common schools appeared to be more explicitly focused on issues such as self-esteem as a way of valuing students than they had been in the past.

We're a lot more focused on it... have a large place in school discussion.

(Teacher 1: Townhead Year 2)

All the Catholic schools stressed the support that students were given to help them appreciate their value. Feeling valued was an important element of the ethos in the eyes of a teacher from the following school as they reported who also stressed that the students had to make a contribution as well:

Most students would say because we work so hard on the ethos that is good and they do feel valued and I would suggest that anyone who doesn't feel

valued it's because they are not giving enough of themselves.
(Teacher 2: St Angela's Year 1)

To summarise, a proportion of teachers from both schools recognised the importance of valuing students and the part it plays in the ethos of the school. Although, there was little difference in the percentage of teachers raising this issue in common and Catholic schools, it was the concept of their understanding of what they were valuing in students that differed. Catholic schools emphasised valuing students as beings made in the likeness of God while common schools valued students from a humanist perspective.

5.3.3 Establishing a caring community

Both common and Catholic schools considered that the establishment of a caring community was an important element of the ethos of the school. The principle of a caring community is important to the internal and external life of a school. All the teachers interviewed to some extent felt their school ethos was about caring for students; for example:

We want them to see us as a kind of good school that cares for its students and caters for their needs.
(Teacher 1: Yester Year 1)

The concept of the school being a community was raised by some teachers:

Our ethos in the school is very much 'we're all in it together', we're a community that works together, we provide the same opportunities for all and we provide the opportunities for all ability levels as well.
(Teacher 2: Heatherside Year 2)

The Principal always talks about the school family. I think, you know there is a real, a very strong ethos which says that we care about each other and every person here is important and valued.
(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 1)

In the Catholic schools there was a greater emphasis on the Catholic community and charity work:

A big Catholic charity thinking, the community feel that comes from the school.
(Teacher 2: St Christopher's Year 2)

Here the teacher identified the importance placed on charity work. This was seen as a fundamental component of the school ethos. The students were encouraged to care for others in the wider community and to take some responsibility for the welfare of those outside of their immediate environment. While this was also encouraged by common schools, it was not as evident as in the Catholic schools, with 4 of teachers in Catholic schools and 1 in common schools talking about doing charity work.

Another teacher from the St Christopher's school also explained the school emphasised:

A caring, Catholic, community. Right yeah, really sums it up. You know caring for other people in the community, you know.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 1)

This was further commented on by another member of staff who said:

The school does have a strong Catholic ethos, in assemblies, whether they're main school assemblies or year assemblies, there is always a Christian message element and part of that will touch having that Christian perspective on what God values in people. You know despite, well not despite but regardless of shape, colour you know, that we're all children of God, loved by Him and I think the school's Christian ethos communicates that regularly and I'd hope that would give the students you know, secure in being happy about who they are. Accept themselves for who they are.

(Teacher 2: St Christopher's Year 1)

Getting the right balance right for students was perceived as a hard thing to achieve.

One teacher felt there was a danger of students being over confident and not developing values that were conducive to the school ethos.

There's a thin line between being confident and arrogant and I think it's very important that we try and instil that sort of thing and as a Catholic Christian school we don't want people to be that way. We'd like to think they've got an element of humility and humbleness.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 2)

This sense of community was reported as having always been strong in Catholic schools, but the values that underpinned the ethos of schools had to be made explicit

and spoken about more openly:

The school has always had a very strong committed feel and I think that's part of our ethos of the school. But I think that sometimes we say things out loud. We're more likely to say those things overtly.

(Teacher 2: St Angela's Year 2)

In one Catholic school the caring approach was illustrated by the appointment of a counsellor where a teacher stated that students now:

Feel confident and at ease that there is a door to knock on if they are in trouble at school or at home or they are being bullied or there is an issue on the bus or whatever. That there is someone they can come and talk to and in a confidential and sensitive way.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 2)

This sense of being part of a caring community, during the first visit was stressed by 8 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools (50%) and 2 out of the 16 teachers who were interviewed in common schools (12%). The common schools appeared to have a different approach to being a caring school. For instance:

We firmly believe in Every Child Matters agenda and despite their academic ability or you know, we do have anti-bullying representatives, we have student voice, we have students' council, you know they are, they have got awareness and the pastoral system...there is always somebody that they can talk to and we do have stages that we can go through if a student is struggling with things like that. We do self-esteem, the student support is run by specialist behaviour, child behaviour specialists and they do a lot of self-esteem work.

(Teacher 3: Heatherside Year 2)

The ethos of Heatherside was articulated through teachers caring about students being happy:

The ethos of the school is that you know, all the children are, should be happy and I honestly do believe that the majority of our staff work to helping those, our children to be happy and achieve what they can and feel good about themselves. You know so, I think it is just the ethos of the school.

(Teacher 2: Heatherside Year 1).

The importance of how the school was viewed was also referred to in relation to the students' views of themselves:

It's really important how they see the school, how they see themselves in the school and how they see themselves as part of a community of the school an outside actually. So you know this whole idea of people saying this school you know is a really good school...students see there's a buzz at the moment about being here and about appreciating how successful the school actually is.

(Teacher 1: Yester Year 1)

Some teachers in both sectors indicated that they wanted to help students feel happy and be part of a successful community. In the Catholic schools there was a greater emphasis on the school and the wider community. The students were seen as needing to understand that they were 'children of God' and that they needed to accept themselves and be humble at times, as well as having concern for others in the wider community. Interviews with teachers in common schools indicated a different approach with a greater emphasis on the adoption of particular initiatives to support students, the value of the school being perceived as a 'good' school and students needing to feel positive about themselves.

5.3.4 The use of praise

An ethos of using praise and rewards was common to both Catholic and common schools. Eight of the 16 teachers who were interviewed in common schools during my first visit (50%) mentioned this in comparison with 4 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools (25%). However, during my second visit an equal number of teachers in both common and Catholic schools, 5 out of the 16 in each sector (31%), talked about the importance of praise. For example, one respondent in a common school recognised:

There is a very strong ethos of praise and reward within the school. We have a Rewards Working Party within the school. We are looking at developing the system we have in place at the moment within the school for rewarding students for positive behaviour. We have a house system and have house points which rewards positive behaviour. I think students are confident that they have positive behaviour reaffirmed to them.

(Teacher 1: Townhead Year 1)

Overall, the use of praise constituted an important element in the eyes of a number of teachers in the implementation of school ethos, as can be seen from the figures

above. During my first visit 4 out of 16 teachers in Catholic schools commented on this in comparison to double this in common schools where 8 out of 16 teachers mentioned the importance of the use of praise.

5.4 Distinctive nature of a Catholic school

The interviews relating to the impact of being in a Catholic school were only undertaken with teachers in the Catholic schools. Conflicting views were expressed about the impact of a school being a Catholic as opposed to a common school; some staff felt it had an important impact, while others felt it made little difference to their work. One impact of being in a Catholic school was having a distinctive spiritual ethos, while another aspect of the ethos was seen as the school being a caring school. The presence of a chaplain was seen as offering additional support and issues relating to sex education were also raised.

Not all those teaching within a Catholic school came from a Catholic tradition.

Therefore, a variety of different views and perspectives were held by teachers within Catholic schools. One teacher commented:

To tell the truth being in a Catholic School, the Catholic side of it doesn't come into my teaching at all and I thought it would more, there would be more of an impact but there's not. As long as you are a good teacher and you're within your curriculum there's no, the moral content that a school would normally have is enough.

(Teacher 4: St Mary's Year 1)

The responses gained from some teachers in the Catholic schools appeared to indicate that being in a Catholic school did not always impact greatly upon the work of the school. However, half of the teachers interviewed in Catholic schools stressed its importance, for instance:

The Catholicity of the school has to run through everything we do anyway at all times so there is an assumption that every classroom would have a prayer corner. Everyday staff would start with an act of worship or prayer so it involves every aspect of the school and therefore that would include any issues in PSHCE because the moral agenda that runs alongside making

people good citizens, which is part of the Catholic tradition.

(Teacher 1: St Mary's Year 1)

The Catholic Church permeates through all of it and there's quite a high proportion of staff who are Catholic or Christian and so they would be comfortable delivering the specific Christian elements of it. I think it's to do; it's giving the students a Christian or exposing them to a Christian world view if you like.

(Teacher 2: St Christopher's Year 1)

Helping students to grow up within a Christian morality was key aspect of the work of the Catholic school even though some teachers did not share this perspective.

5.4.1 Pastoral ethos

An element of school ethos included the importance placed on pastoral care. One member of a senior leadership team in a Catholic school described the pastoral ethos as follows:

I think it is to do with the school's mission statement, and the ethos of the school. Every child to achieve their full potential within a caring community. That is every day. We have a student's programme going on through PSHE where if you can't say something nice, don't say it. That kind of caring ethos of a Catholic school. And the family orientation as well, we get siblings coming in, it is a continual process. I think it is really important in the school. We have our masses every week; it is voluntary, but children can go if they want, and we have a Chaplain who supports.

(Teacher 2: St Mary's Year 1)

Some of the differences between Catholic and common schools highlighted by teachers in Catholic schools included encouragement of regular attendance at liturgies and worship and having the support of a chaplain. It was evident that worship was central to the Catholic schools and students were expected to attend masses and liturgies at specific points in the term. This formed part of the process of spiritual enrichment and celebration.

The effect of the Catholic ethos was described by one teacher:

The fact that as a Catholic school you are meant to be Christian and caring and they do need to think of others, rather than just themselves. And of course, we raise money for charity as form groups.

(Teacher 3: St Mary's Year 1)

Pastoral ethos was an important element of support in both school sectors. However, in Catholic schools this included an importance given to attendance at liturgies and worship and the involvement of the school chaplain.

5.4.2 Chaplaincy support

The work of the chaplain was seen as an additional resource that the school was able to draw on to support students. In St Olaf's school I was told that if students had a problem one person they could turn to other than teachers, was the chaplain. Another teacher from this school explained that the chaplain not only helped with developing spiritual matters, but also helped with emotional problems because

There's a lot of one to one work done as well as I say by the chaplain.

(Teacher 1: St Olaf's, Year 2)

In St Mary's the importance of the school chaplain was described in terms of:

we've got the chaplain who is a huge help.

(Teacher 2: St Mary's, Year 2)

The support given by the chaplain was also appreciated and commented on by a teacher in St Angela's school, while in another the work of the chaplain went further:

Often in Year 11 the Chaplain does six double lessons, we have an extended PSHE period with the Year 11's, looking at their own self-esteem.

(Teacher 3: St Mary's, Year 2)

In Catholic schools the work of the chaplain was appreciated and the extra support they provided was seen as a useful addition to the pastoral work of the school.

5.5 PSHE

In the following two sections I shall discuss findings by focusing on the two visits. It was important to see what changes occurred in the provision of PSHE during this time period.

5.5.1 Time allocation

First Visit

The average time spent on PSHE per week in seven out of the eight schools was 50 minutes. The eighth school delivered PSHE through an extension day each term. In four out of the eight schools PSHE was delivered by form tutors. In three schools it was delivered by those who were free on their timetable and in one school it was delivered by specialist teachers. On this first visit I was interested to see how much time was allocated to PSHE in the curriculum, so that later I could judge any changes. In this report secondary schools spent between 45 minutes to one hour a week on the subject.

During my first visit a review of the provision was being undertaken by the schools in the study in order to ensure that they were in a position to be able to implement the new orders due to start in September 2011. The allocated time is set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Year One Allocation of time for PSHE

School	Time Allocation	Provision
St Mary's	50 minutes	Rolling programme
St Olaf's	1 hour	Timetabled
St Angela's	5 hours per term	Extension days
St Christopher's	1 hour	Rolling programme
Heatherside	1 hour a week	Timetabled
Yester	50 minutes a week	Timetabled
Beechwood	45 minutes a week	Timetabled
Townhead	1 hour once a fortnight	Timetabled

Each school had its own distinct way of delivering PSHE. Two schools employed a system of having a rolling programme; one school used extension days when they collapsed the curriculum; other schools used tutor time in the mornings. Another

school had a fortnightly system of provision; two other schools had a weekly programme delivered by those who had space in their timetable. One school employed a school nurse to enhance the work done by tutors.

Where a rolling type of programme was adopted, the PSHE lesson moved one period each week. Therefore, each week a different timetabled lesson lost time to the programme. In St Mary's

The decision that was made for timetabling that was in order not to impact on any one day of the week or any one subject or for it to fall into a slot.

(Teacher 2: St Mary's Year 1)

This decision was taken so that time was not taken from any one specific subject area more than another. So although this school was not committed to providing a curriculum slot on the timetable, they did exhibit some commitment to the subject.

This approach was adopted in another Catholic school, while another Catholic school adopted extension days once a term. Only one Catholic school had a curriculum slot on the timetable. All of the common schools provided a curriculum slot on the timetable.

Another factor that indicated the level of school commitment to the subject involved teacher allocation. Schools allocated teachers to deliver PSHE lessons in different ways. For example, in Heatherside School historically teachers who had space in their timetables had been used to deliver PSHE. However

It used to be whoever was light on their timetable and then when I took over the subject that would be five years ago, there were a lot of behaviour incidents happening in those lessons, there was very little structure to those lesson plans.

(Teacher 2: Heatherside Year 1)

This approach was not successful because the teachers were not committed to the subject, so the school had to re-evaluate its delivery and who was to be involved in teaching PSHE. The school decided to ask teachers to volunteer to be involved and this ensured a more committed core of teachers.

Second Visit

The most obvious change between my visits occurred in the allocation of time for PSHE. On my second visit, the allocation of time for PSHE in two schools had been reduced; St Olaf's and St Christopher's from one hour a week to one hour a fortnight. In comparison, the other schools had stayed the same, except for Beechwood School that had increased its time allocation slightly by five minutes per week. St Angela's school no longer ran extension days once a term, but now had an hour's lesson once a fortnight. In the main common schools provided more time for PSHE than Catholic schools see Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Year 2 Allocation of time for PSHE

School	Time Allocation	Provision
St Mary's	50 minutes	Rolling, carousel
St Olaf's	1 hour	Once a fortnight, timetabled
St Angela's	1 hour	Rolling programme once a fortnight
St Christopher's	1 hour	Once a fortnight
Heatherside	1 hour a week	Timetabled
Yester	50 Minutes	Timetabled
Beechwood	1 hour	Timetabled
Townhead	1 hour once a fortnight	Timetabled

Schools decided on their allocation for PSHE in relation to other curricular area requirements. They examined the needs of their students and provided PSHE accordingly. For example, while knife crime and contracting sexual diseases were topics relevant in one school because these were issues that the students had to confront, they were not so evident in another school, where for example, drugs were more of an issue.

I was told by Teacher 1 at St Mary's, that in order to improve teacher commitment to PSHE, teachers would be expected to produce one lesson, planned thoroughly and deliver it several times instead of being given resources by the Head of Year. This

was felt by Teacher 1 to give teachers more commitment when they had produced lesson materials leading to higher quality teaching. The prepared lesson was to be delivered on a rolling, carousel basis once a week. During this second visit there were two schools employing a rolling system, but only one school had previously been involved in the system since my last visit.

According to Teacher 2 (St Mary's Year 2), staff issues such as teachers being away on maternity leave had had an impact on the delivery of the programme. The school wanted to enhance discussions and give students more experience of active learning. The school wanted to improve the delivery of PSHE:

The plan would be for teachers to teach a lesson six times, I believe to improve the quality of lessons. (Teacher 2: St Mary's Year 2)

Overall, the time allocated to PSHE did not vary a great deal between schools, although the way in which it was included in the timetable did in common schools, where it was more likely to have a regular timetabled slot. Giving PSHE a regular slot on the timetable could be regarded as one way of enhancing its importance.

5.5.2 PSHE programme

First Visit

Four schools mentioned that they had employed outside speakers to support the PSHE programme at certain times in the year. The use of outside speakers within school was a popular approach that took advantage of specialist experience and expertise. In four schools the decision about what should be included in the PSHE programme was decided in consultation with the head of department. In one school the deputy head took the responsibility for this, while in another the deputy head and the PSHE co-ordinator worked together on the provision. Another school worked with the head of department, heads of year and an assistant head to decide on the

programme of study. In both Catholic and common schools there was a variety of provision.

Subject provision within PSHE during my first visit to schools seemed to be determined by schools depending on their perceived needs and also by the expertise of outside speakers. The pedagogical approach adopted was also perceived as important. One respondent commented on the process of delivery:

It has an experiential input for young people that they would not get within their normal curriculum time.... The other way is through the medium in which it is taught. Through listening to, wherever possible, outside experts who can speak from their experience or from the heart, or who understand precisely what's going on, so they are getting first-hand experience as often as not of what these issues are. Also, hopefully through the way it is taught, by the teaching methodology, the extensive use of group work and independent learning and in-depth discussion, and various other methodological approaches which I hope make them more available for students to access.
(Teacher 1: Townhead Year 1)

Another teacher explained:

I think it supports the Every Child Matters side of the school and the requirements and that is making sure that they have a wide and general and appreciation of what is going on in the world outside, preparing for that and when they finish school so they're not blinkered and I think it's improving what it's doing towards that at the moment.
(Teacher 2: Yester Year 1)

One teacher identified, especially for the older students, that

Certain elements of the pastoral programme are very practical, you know teaching practical life skills, you know survival, living away from home, for example cooking. All sorts of things, drugs awareness, alcohol awareness, stuff like that.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 1)

These were all seen as vital skills that helped students cope with life. Another teacher indicated:

For me PSHE is all about living with the subject more that you can live maths or science or geography or anything like that. It is personal, social, emotional, economic skills, all these things we do to survive in the everyday world.
(Teacher 1: St Angela's Year 1)

In one Catholic school PSHE was related to Christian values:

Good quality PSHE for me isn't just about producing good citizens again it would be going back to producing good disciples, Christian values, being encouraging to the young people at every opportunity through that programme.

(Teacher 2: St Olaf's Year 1)

Views about what PSHE lessons should cover varied as can be seen from these quotes; however, there was a consensus shown about PSHE helping students to be more aware of the world in which they live and how to cope with life.

The lack of examinations in relation to PSHE was viewed as promoting its enjoyment.

It's a subject where there isn't an exam at the end of it.

(Teacher 1: Heatherside Year 1)

While different views were held about whether the subject should be examined, in Heatherside School it was evident that the view was that the subject would not benefit from being tested. The relationship students had with the teacher delivering the programme was perceived as an important element in the success of the programme, because as one teacher indicated:

I think perhaps the relationship part of that with tutors is the thing that works if you have a good tutor generally that you will have a good delivery of PSHCE.

(Teacher 1: St Mary's Year 1)

There was also an issue about the quality of the relationship in some cases:

Relationships between staff and students is important and probably not good enough if you listen to the kids.

(Teacher 3: Yester Year 1)

Listening to students and ensuring that their needs were addressed was used in some schools as a basis for developing the PSHE programme. Through PSHE students were helped to appreciate their own worth and this helped enhance their personal development. PSHE was conducive to this process, because as one teacher pointed out students were

All equal, they're starting on an equal block as it were and they can all see that they can achieve.

(Teacher 2: St Angela's Year 1)

The equal status of students in PSHE and being encouraged to express their views, all of which had an equal value also supported personal development:

Learning about themselves... every child will have an experience of leading, being considered good enough to lead and their opinion valued.

(Teacher 1: St Angela's Year 1)

Overall, in the first visit teachers recognised the need to ensure that in PSHE lessons students had the skills that would support them in real life situations. The particular challenges facing different communities meant that content was not always the same. The teaching methods adopted allowed students to be valued and treated equally, particularly where learning outcomes were not formally assessed.

Second Visit

The second visit confirmed the variety of provision for PSHE. The different approaches to assessment emerged strongly in the second visit. In one school, not introducing examinations was seen as important:

It's very important PSHE not to become an examined subject. I think there are far too many exams subjects already and if you make it into an examination subject, you lose its value of learning for the sake of learning and learning for the sake of learning doesn't happen much now in modern day schools.

(Teacher 2: St Mary's Year 2)

However, another school visited used assessment as one of its main drive for the provision of PSHE, as well as:

The Children and Young People's Plan. (Teacher 1: Beechwood Year 2)

Beechwood School merged Citizenship with PSHE and a senior teacher provided materials for teachers to help ensure a consistency of approach. This school took a different view regarding the examination of PSHE by giving students an examination at the end of the course, which they felt enhanced the seriousness with which students took the subject. Senior staff felt that tutors teaching PSHE expected to be given the materials and as a result did not prepare as thoroughly for PSHE as they

would for other subjects. By making the programme an examination course they felt that teachers had to take more responsibility and that, the course would be better constructed and better managed. However, from the point of view of student learning I am not sure this is the best way to develop such the programme. At the same time, they wanted to ensure that they included in the programme what was relevant to student needs. Topics were delivered in Beechwood School in one period per fortnight. One teacher thought that this was inadequate.

Teachers commented on the impact of changes in national education policy:

The most significant change was the fact that we just don't hear any mention of Every Child Matters anymore, that's completely gone.

(Teacher 1: St Olaf's Year 2)

This was echoed by a teacher who said:

Every Child Matters and all that kind of stuff is what we, now Every Child Matters doesn't matter.

(Teacher 2: St Christopher's Year 2)

This member of staff argued that it was important for lessons to be age appropriate as adolescence is a period of rapid change and also that issues should be covered in depth as they were not covered elsewhere in the curriculum. In order to ensure students derived the most from PSHE teachers needed to engage them by inspiring them through topics that captured their interest. Schools appeared to be very much left to their own devices when looking at the PSHE programme. Teachers felt they had to make their own choices and decisions about what to include without national guidance, although programmes of study were published and the National Curriculum talks about a 'broad and balanced curriculum' in which young people are 'prepared for adult life' (DfE, 2014). Overall, there seemed to be little consistency in the provision of the PSHE programme. One teacher said:

Heads of year really predominantly organise their own thing.

(Teacher 1: St Christopher's Year 2)

In one school it was recognised that an important aspect of the provision entailed ensuring that there was a common voice in terms of delivery by staff and that they felt supported in terms of resources. This enabled them to feel as confident as they could in all areas of the delivery and that lessons were of a high quality. The sharing of good practice was one way that this was facilitated. The provision in this school had remained unchanged since the first visit.

We still have our 'Learning for Life' which is our tutor time. We still have our PSHE discrete lessons.

(Teacher 1: Heatherside Year 2)

Learning for life, an element of the PSHE programme, took place three times a week for thirty minutes a time, run by tutors and discrete PSHE was an hour a fortnight.

This enabled the school to look at issues in PSHE including

A whole lot of focus on the whole child and the well-being of the child and you know beyond the classroom and you know helping them to become in healthy in that way as well.

(Teacher 4: Yester Year 2)

Two teachers commented that it was important that schools could have the opportunity to decide what topics were appropriate for their students; in one school gang culture, for example, was having an impact on students, whereas this might not be a relevant topic for other schools to cover

I don't think there's enough, the message, maybe there isn't a message, it's very difficult with PSHE to pass on to the students this is very important, or this is life skills that you'll need.

(Teacher 4: Townhead Year 2)

Only one school had increased the specialist staff that they employed to work in PSHE. This meant that the head of department had:

A second in department. So, I think the capacity to teach has developed and also it means that there are less teachers who are not specialists in that area.... it's an important aspect of the children's well-being, isn't it? And what we are saying here is we value it.

(Teacher 1: Yester Year 2)

This was an unusual step for a school to take in the current educational climate, but showed the school's commitment to PSHE. With a new member of staff, the teaching was able to be more interactive. Previously staffing had been a concern as PSHE was taught by staff who were available but may not have felt competent or enthusiastic. The appointment of a new full-time teacher in the department had eased the situation considerably. There were now better quality lessons and more consistency within the delivery. The experienced teacher in the school expressed a view that PSHE had been put on the back-burner by the government. He included topics in the programme that he felt in consultation with other staff were relevant to the students by researching students' overall needs.

One school was interested in the extent to which students valued PSHE and employed a Kirkland Rowell survey to evaluate their stakeholder's views as part of their self-evaluation process. These surveys have been used in a large number of schools worldwide for a number of years.

The latest Kirkland Rowell survey suggests that they enjoy PSHE and my experience is that they do enjoy, these are things that they very much want to discuss, that they are very interested in that are far more central to their lives than many of the academic issues.

(Teacher 1: Townhead Year 2)

Getting the balance between a fixed curriculum and being able to respond to students' needs was perceived as important as articulated by one experienced teacher:

I always believe in being fairly flexible with whatever structure is because of current interests or needs... link in really with life... It's a fixed period, every other Monday. There's a set scheme of work with a different focus each week with worksheets to do, class discussion and sometimes I get kids to present.

(Teacher 3: St Christopher's Year 2)

Ensuring students got involved in PSHE helped students to access the subject positively. This was recognised by one respondent, who said:

The great thing about it as a subject is there is a level playing field which there isn't necessarily in other subjects apart from when they're streamed of course but you know all students I think are capable vocally at least of you know talking about and understanding or having an awareness or something. So I think opening the floor, allowing active conversation and debate is probably the best way to hook them and very often approaching, particularly the topics what are quite controversial, quite emotive.

(Teacher 3: St Olaf's Year 2)

Getting students involved in contributing to the topics helped them to understand the implications of what they were learning. The topics teachers delivered in PSHE could be of a sensitive nature and teachers needed to have built up a rapport with their class if the subject was to have an impact. The relationships between student and teacher, viewed as so important in the first visit were viewed as improving in one school, contributing to successful outcomes:

I think in many ways I think relationships within schools between staff and students I think are far more positive than maybe they used to be which I suppose is evidence in itself that it's working.

(Teacher 1: Heatherside, Year 2)

In the main, schools allowed heads of year some autonomy in deciding what was to be included in the programme of study for PSHE. There was little difference between the way Catholic and common schools decided on the programme. One common school developed their programme by introducing it as an examination subject, while on Catholic school commented on the importance of ensuring the subject was not examined. All schools struggled with ensuring they had appropriate and qualified teachers for the subject.

5.5.3 Sex Education as a part of PSHE

The Catholic faith aspect of the school was seen to run through everything that happened in the Catholic schools. For example, the Catholic schools recognised that they had to teach particularly sex education within the guidelines as dictated by the Catholic Church and this topic was taught within the context of relationships.

However, although only four teachers mentioned this as an aspect of concern with

regard to their teaching in a Catholic school, the concern appeared to be acute. One aspect of concern brought up by one teacher, for example, was in connection with teaching about contraception. However, when talking to a student, the teacher said

I explained to her although this is a Catholic school, we will give you every single choice. We will give you information on everything. We would never say you mustn't take contraceptives; it's not our place to tell you how to run your life.

(Teacher 4: St Olaf's Year 1)

It was evident that, although Catholic schools had to adhere to Church teachings, nevertheless students were given detailed information and every opportunity to explore sensitive issues.

Another teacher explained:

I think throughout the lesson the definite Christian values are incorporated into the lesson, especially when we are talking about rights and responsibilities. Certainly in our sex and relationships modules, where we don't just talk about the mechanics, as you'd like to say, in sexual issues we talk about the wider issues, the responsibilities of relationships and the decisions that we make based on Gospel values.

(Teacher 3: St Olaf's Year 1)

Although sex education was not the focus of this study, it was evident that it was a sensitive area for some staff in Catholic schools, as indicated by the following comment that being in a Catholic school:

Should underpin, shape and inform everything that happens in the department, from the inception of the department itself. I mean the head of department chose the motto of the department 'You may have life in all its fullness' ...Yes, you know perhaps the government might want an element of sex education and delivered by such and such an age but we might say actually no, bearing in mind our relationships education that we deliver in RE, what we deliver in the National Curriculum Science, we might say we'd like to hold that off or position it somewhere differently and as a Catholic school that's exactly as it should be and sexual health and sexual education is the big challenge.

(Teacher 2: St Olaf's Year 1)

Sensitivity was required here in delivering the needs of the National Curriculum as well as balancing the requirements of the Catholic Church. The question of

addressing sex education during PSHE was raised by another member of staff in a Catholic school:

Anyone who is delivering the sex education has to be aware, most of it is our Catholic RE staff but in Science lessons when we are teaching sex they have to say that this is the teaching of the Catholic Church obviously happy to discuss outside that but make perfectly clear where the Catholic Church stands but we'd do a disservice to the students if we didn't broaden it out and appreciate and achieve that there wasn't more than one view but to make them as Catholic in a Catholic school to make certain in their own knowledge of where the Catholic school stands.

(Teacher 1: St Angela's Year 1)

The emphasis, on ensuring students were given thorough information from which to make their own decisions, was a point that recurred during the interviews. It was clear that teachers in the Catholic schools wanted to hand on the views of the Church, but not to the detriment of ensuring students had a range of information and were able to make their own judgements.

5.6 Technological impact

First Visit

Across the time span of this research concerns about the impact of Facebook and other social networking sites and cyber bullying increased. During the first visit to schools four comments were made related to cyber bullying and on the second visit this increased eight comments. During Visit One, three comments specifically related to Facebook. During Visit Two there were seven comments. For instance:

youngsters today have more on their plate than I did when I was their age and even things like bullying, cyber bullying and the use of all things like Facebook and the mobile phones that they've all got and all of the texting and calling and emailing and blogging and all other things they're up to now.

(Teacher 3: St Angela's, Year 1)

One member of staff was concerned that students needed to be prepared for issues that they might have to confront:

..bullying, especially with the social side such as Facebook and stuff. Kids need not to be drifted into it but they need to be aware of this happening and what to do if it happens.

(Teacher 4: St Christopher's Year 1)

With the growing development of technology there was more pressure on young people.

Second Visit

During my second visit to schools, the concern with the impact of technology seemed to have grown. I was told:

our generation things happened in school, you went home and you were at peace, you didn't, you don't have that now, not with the INTERNET
(Teacher 3: Heatherside, Year 2)

Some schools incorporated issues relating to social media into the PSHE programme.

It's the whole technology issue for us as a school. They are so vulnerable to what these digital media networks and they seem to go into these things naively, exposing themselves to various characters and minefields. That's one of our major concerns is making students more aware of the changing world.
(Teacher 2: St Olaf's Year 2)

Issues related to students being vulnerable on Facebook and Twitter were a concern identified by one teacher, who said:

there's been a big focus recently on cyber bullying.
(Teacher 1: Heatherside Year 2)

Young people had to deal with bullying in a different way, through the use of Twitter and Facebook, and these were having a huge effect on the students:

In my mind because of the pressure that young people have now through the media, the social network sites, I think it's a possibility that self-esteem could actually be on the decline. Particularly with social network sites are having a much bigger impact than we would ever have thought a few years ago.
(Teacher 3: Heatherside Year 2).

Technological impact had far reaching consequences, for instance on attendance:

A lot more school refusers, so there's something not right and it's quite a complex issue and I don't know it's necessarily related to school. I doubt that school is the major factor but yes it's basically to do with friendship, basically to do with being included, basically to do with bullying including cyber bullying. That's the major source of upset and hurt to individual
(Teacher 1: Townhead Year 2).

Time was being taken up by teachers on such matters, which really didn't emanate from school:

...a week last Friday, the whole day was taken up dealing with an incident that had occurred on 'Facebook' but had come into school....and again it's how to educate the young people (Teacher2: St Olaf's Year 2)

These pressures could not be ignored by schools and it was something the schools were having to deal with:

On-line bullying, cyber bullying is something we do have to deal with, you now, we do learn how to deal with bullying in the sense of nasty comments being made.

(Teacher 1: St Mary's Year 2)

Overall, the interviews suggested that schools were increasingly responding to the changing external environment and recognising the need to support students in learning how to deal with social media.

5.7 Teacher training for PSHE

First Visit

Out of the eight schools, only two teachers reported that they had received some In-service Education and Training (INSET) relating to PSHE which had been part of their initial training. Staff in every school were expected to deliver PSHE with little formal training. Schools attempted to address this issue by ensuring that there were aspects of support within the school. Of the sixteen practising teachers interviewed only one teacher had experience of being introduced to the PSHE programme and the role of the form tutor at university. This remained the case on my second visit. Two teachers on my first visit cited being supported by their local education authority, while others received no support.

Some teachers mentioned going to meetings prior to delivering a PSHE lesson once a week, while others said that more experienced staff were available for them to speak to about PSHE lessons if they wished. Heads of Year said that occasionally they were released to go on a day's training, covering, for example, topics such as

domestic violence. Teachers of PSHE were occasionally invited to attend voluntary twilight sessions after school or research materials on their own.

Other ways that PSHE was treated differently to other subjects included its monitoring by senior staff. While other subjects in schools experienced rigorous monitoring, PSHE was not subjected to the same level of scrutiny. Only three out of the eight members of senior leadership teams from common schools during my first visit talked about the importance of formal observation, compared with only one from Catholic schools. This suggested that schools did not treat PSHE as seriously as they did other subjects. Training in particular for PSHE seemed to be sparse. There appeared to be a similar lack of monitoring in both Catholic and common schools.

One difficulty that was identified with regard to training was the turnover in staffing due to teachers leaving or being absent because of illness or maternity leave. If the staff turnover each year was high, it was difficult to keep training new teachers (Teacher 2: Heatherside Year 1). One teacher appreciated the fact that

We are very lucky in this school that we get given the scheme of work so we don't have to write the scheme of work ourselves. And there is people in the school who if you aren't sure about anything you can go and ask, but certainly for me it was just researching making sure I had all the information to give and it wasn't wrong.

(Teacher 3: Heatherside Year 1)

Schools experienced similar concerns in regard to ensuring that teachers were well trained in PSHE.

Second Visit

The situation with regard to lesson observation remained the same during my second visit as it had in the first, when only a total of four members of senior leadership

teams talked about lesson observations for PSHE. However, there had been some changes; two schools had implemented new ways of conducting observations:

...we started a policy, a system of 'Learning Walks' into the pastoral curriculum and observations.

(Teacher 2: Beechwood Year 2)

As well as observing lessons one teacher explained that they had found it useful:

...we are introducing more peer observations.

(Teacher 1: Yester Year 2)

In another school they had enhanced training through completing

... a lot of joint observations.

(Teacher 2 St Olaf's Year 2)

Observation of lessons was used as a way of enhancing good practice, especially as there were limited openings for staff development.

Overall, the teaching of PSHE demands specific skills. There was almost no training available in the school or initial teacher training education and PSHE did not seem to be taken seriously as other subjects in terms of lesson observations.

5.8 Personal Development

In some schools, personal development, in particular the enhancement of self-esteem was a specific focus in the PSHE programme. Some schools put a particular emphasis on providing a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for students as a way of enhancing self-esteem. These will be examined in the next sections.

5.8.1 PSHE Programme – Personal Development

First Visit

Some schools supported personal development by placing a particular emphasis on self-esteem in their PSHE programme. One school used an approach which involved using:

Positive encouragement, like I said before making a safe learning environment to participate in, not being afraid as a teacher to take a risk.
(Teacher 4: Heatherside Year 1)

According to one respondent:

In PSHE giving them the knowledge, skills and understanding by normalising. What I mean by normalising, making them realise that everybody else is struggling with the same issues, the same worries, the same concerns.
(Teacher 3: Yester Year 1)

PSHE was seen of value in personal development because:

PSHE helped them to become more sociable within the group. They didn't have a choice but to work within a group, and that group had to accommodate them. Through that they started to make friendships. That definitely helped. The thing about PSHE as opposed to other subjects is that they can't really fail.

(Teacher 4: Townhead Year 1)

Another respondent explained:

We do a lot in Year 7, building friendships, and on self-esteem that is personal relationships and also friendship... Then in Year 8, we do what is beauty, emotional wellbeing, self-harm, eating disorders... Every child is precious, and we try to get them to develop their own specific skills. .. Often in Year 11, the Chaplain does six double lessons, we have an extended PSHE period with the Year 11's, looking at their own self-esteem, dealing with stress, dealing with stress management.

(Teacher 3: St Mary's Year 1)

In another school they took considered different aspects of self-esteem each year; for example:

In Year 8 we have a whole module on self-esteem and why it is important to build it, what negative things can impact on self-esteem.

(Teacher 3: St Olaf's Year 1)

Overall, schools considered personal development and the enhancement of self-esteem in their programmes, although this was approached in different ways. Some focused these issues specifically while in other programmes the approach was more ad hoc.

Second Visit

During my second visit other ways of supporting personal development were identified, for instance:

A kind of community, we look after each other.... praise in class or sending positive letters home.

(Teacher 4: St Mary's Year 2)

This teacher emphasised the importance of being part of a community where everyone looked after each other. The teacher also felt that using praise and sending letters home to parents about the good work a student had achieved in class could raise self-esteem. Another teacher explained:

The school can provide a range of experiences for students to succeed.

(Teacher 2: St Olaf's Year 2)

Overall, schools felt they were able to help students' personal development through their PSHE programmes, but also recognised that the influence of home had a vital role to play in developing personal development. One teacher pointedly identified the importance of praise in developing resilience so that students would not give up if the work was challenging. There seemed to be little difference in terms of category of school, common or Catholic in the approach to personal development through PSHE.

5.8.2 Extra-curricular opportunities

First Visit

Providing students with extra-curricular opportunities enabled them to learn about themselves, which in turn supported personal development. Most of the teachers in both Catholic and common schools provided a range of opportunities, which they felt enhanced students' personal development with 5 teachers out of 16 in common schools and 5 teachers out of 16 in Catholic schools commenting on this as important, for example:

I think our students are very lucky, they get a lot of support and also lots of opportunity to do lots of different things inside and outside.

(Teacher 3: Heatherside Year 1)

Providing students with a wide range of different types of activity was seen as a useful way in which they could develop skills and see themselves in a positive light.

Students were able to follow their own inclinations with regard to the type of extra-curricular activity in which they wanted to be involved.

Students have a huge range of opportunity, in the sense that you can do a whole range of things to a very high level in this school,
(Teacher1: Townhead Year 1)

PSHE provided the opportunity for students to be helped to

...develop all the other traits and potential.

(Teacher 2: St Angela's Year 1)

It was explained that students were helped to develop the abilities they had whether these were in the realm of academic, social, sport, and music or in another creative field. Every opportunity was given to help students excel.

Second Visit

During my second visit one teacher emphasised that personal development in terms of self-esteem was:

About students feeling confident to engage in all aspects of school life...think it's also about students being confident enough to engage in all sorts of clubs, extra-curricular. It can be school trips, it can be all sorts of things and it's actually recognising that confidence and success means different things to different people... if students are happy and engaged coming to school then they are likely to have fewer self-esteem issues.

(Teacher 1: Heatherside Year 2)

There was recognition that the nature of personal development was very individual:

We give them lots of extra-curricular opportunities, it's not just one size fits all, you might be academic, but you are a sportsman, you are a musician, you raise this for charity or you've helped another kid out.

(Teacher 2: St Christopher's Year 2)

It was considered that getting involved in extra-curricular activities helped enhance personal development and self-esteem of students:

All about self-worth, a sense of belonging, a sense of pride.... The way someone feels about themselves and the community that they are in. How

they function in that community. It's about their health and well-being, their mental health.

(Teacher 1: Yester Year 2)

One teacher said

We praise and reward and encourage... We are always talking about success but you know equally we have to talk about determination, resolve, perseverance and being resilient.

(Teacher 1: Beechwood Year 2)

This teacher drew attention to the fact that there are many elements to personal development and that self-esteem is only one. However, providing a range of opportunities was a way to help all students. In one secondary school it was pointed out that

... it's about providing as many opportunities you can both in the classroom and outside. So that ultimately if students are happy and engaged coming to school

(Teacher1: Heatherside Year 2)

One teacher explained that as the students became proud of the school, it raised their ability to be more involved in a range of activities as well as improving their confidence.

...the children seem to be much more proud of the school and I think their confidence levels have risen.

(Teacher 1: Yester Year 2)

Ensuring that schools provided a wide range of opportunities so that all students could be involved in extra-curricular activities was something that teachers felt benefitted students' personal development enormously.

5.9 Summary

In this chapter I consider the findings in relation to teacher perceptions. All of the teachers interviewed expressed a desire to support their students in reaching their

full potential, though there was a tendency in common schools to place a greater emphasis on academic attainment compared with Catholic schools, where the spiritual aspect of fulfilling potential was emphasised. There appeared to be little agreed conception across the schools of what it meant to be a good citizen within the context of PSHE.

In terms of school ethos, teachers emphasised the importance of offering on-going support for students as they needed it, valuing students, and providing a caring community. There were few tangible differences between Catholic and common schools in relation to these elements, although Catholic schools placed a greater emphasis on the importance of supporting the wider community. Teachers in both sectors emphasised the importance of praise as part of school ethos.

The specific impact of being in a Catholic school tended to focus on supporting students to grow up within a Christian morality, although not all teachers teaching within Catholic schools shared this perspective. The role of the chaplain was seen as an important additional support by students. An important aspect of education in Catholic schools was in the development of student awareness of spirituality.

There was little difference in the time allocation for PSHE in the two types of schools, although in common schools it tended to have a regular timetabled slot. The teachers who were interviewed recognised the need to ensure that in PSHE lessons students had the skills that would support them in real life situations. The particular challenges facing different communities meant that the content was not always the same. It was acknowledged that teaching methods needed to ensure that all students were valued and treated equally and that there was good rapport between students and teachers. There were particular issues in relation to sex education in Catholic schools where teachers needed to support the views of the Catholic Church but at the same time

they aimed to ensure students were provided with a range of information and were able to make their own decisions.

The interviews indicated that increasingly schools were responding to the changing external environment and recognising the need to support students in learning how to deal with social media. Internet safety was becoming an important element for teachers to address with students.

There was little or no training for teaching PSHE. PSHE did not seem to be taken as seriously as other subjects, in terms of lesson observations. If teachers are to feel competent in delivering this subject, they need to be provided with quality training.

In general, schools felt they were able to help students' personal development through their PSHE programmes, but they also recognised that the influence of home had a vital role to play. There seemed to be little difference in terms of category of school, whether common or Catholic, in the approach to personal development through PSHE. Overall, ensuring that schools provided a wide range of opportunities so that all students could be involved in extra-curricular activities was felt by teachers to benefit students' self-esteem enormously.

It can be seen from the findings detailed above, when considering the key research question, *how teachers perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE*, that teachers in all the schools felt that school ethos had a positive impact on the PSHE programme. Teachers indicated, in connection with the second key research question, *that they believed that PSHE helped the development of student self-esteem* by helping students to feel valued through the rewards and opportunities the school provided.

Chapter 6 Findings: Cohort 1 Perceptions of issues relating to ethos, the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, PSHE and progress and attainment.

6.1. Introduction

Having in the previous chapter explored teacher perspectives with regard to the provision of PSHE in secondary schools, in this chapter I shall present and examine the data collected from the first cohort of students in the eight schools I visited. In this chapter I will discuss student perceptions relating to ethos, including the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, in order to set out the wider context for studying perceptions of PSHE. I will also analyse the findings with regard to how students perceive progress and attainment as a process of investigating the broader context of personal development, which will be examined in the next chapter. The research question being addressed in this section of the study is:

How do students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?

On my first visit, Cohort 1 students were in Year 7 and on my second visit they were in Year 9. The data in this chapter therefore refers to the same cohort at two different points in time. Findings from the questionnaires and focus group interviews are grouped under themes that emerged when coding the qualitative data from the questionnaires and the results from the focus group interviews as follows: School Ethos, Distinctive nature of a Catholic School, PSHE and Progress and Attainment while issues relating to Personal Development, are dealt with in the next chapter. These themes emerged from the interviews. These are discussed in relation to Year 7 and then to Year 9, followed by a comparison of the two.

6.2 School ethos

As discussed in Section 2.3.1 school ethos is important in determining the way students interact within the school with particular reference to the values of the school. Ethos emerges through student experiences of everyday life and relationships in school (see Section 2.3). This theme emerged in relation to comments made about what students thought teachers expected of them.

6.2.1 Year 7 Perceptions of school ethos

Students interpreted school ethos as being concerned with interpersonal relationships within the school. A concern with bullying seemed to be quite important for some students. It was referred to by students in seven out of the eight focus groups:

They do have like A, B, C anti-bullying campaigns...I think they do, do very well along subjects like if someone's done something wrong and I think that's one of the school's strongest points.

(Male Heatherside Year 7)

Most of the students felt that their respective schools dealt with bullying appropriately and mentioned that bullying was addressed in assemblies:

There's always an announcement, they [the teachers] don't say who it was but they are always happy, they always emphasise there's been no friendship troubles, in assembly.

(Female Beechwood Year 7)

In another school one girl explained she learnt how to deal with bullying and that students appreciated the support they were given by the teachers, especially when there was any kind of dispute:

Like in assembly they [teachers] talk about what to do.

(Female Yester Year 7)

If you have a problem, you can come to us and we'll try and help sort it out.
(Female Beechwood Year 7)

Expectations about how to conduct themselves were understood by students:

I think they expect you to act like with courtesy and just be generally nice to everyone, even if you don't like them.

(Female St Angela's Year 7)

This student was aware of expected conduct within the school. Another student explained that the school wanted to discourage bullying and that fighting was unacceptable, while another described how, even if students could not form friendships with everyone, there was a basic assumption of being at least polite:

They expect you to be polite and not to like shove people out of the way, if you are trying to get into a doorway or something.

(Female St Angela's Year 7)

We need to treat others how you would want to be treated.

(Male St Christopher's Year 7)

As a reflection of school ethos, a series of questions in the questionnaire explored students' responses to statements about the extent to which they were given positive feedback about themselves and the extent that they compared themselves with others.

6.2.2 Year 9 Perceptions of school ethos

By Year 9 some of the cohort 1 students were aware of a need to gain recognition and to be acknowledged more often. One student considered that it was difficult for some young people to be satisfied with themselves because they felt they were not sufficiently appreciated:

There's always people who are like I want to be a celebrity and have all the fame and stuff. For celebrities it's like I wish I had some privacy, it's like either way; you're never satisfied with what you have. You always want something else.

(Female Yester School Year 9)

Another aspect that was identified by the students when they were in Year 9, in both types of school, was the importance they attached to helping in the community; both the community of the school and the wider community. If a student actively

participated in some kind of community work, this was recognised and rewarded by the school, reinforcing the values that were part of the school ethos:

Sometimes if you do something good to help the community you can get an award or certificate or something and that makes praise.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

By conforming to the expectations of the ethos of the school, students were rewarded for their efforts:

We do House things and if we do well we get to watch a film or in the summer have a picnic.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

Overall, by Year 9 students were more aware that conforming to school expectations would bring rewards. They were encouraged by the praise and rewards they gained. Students had settled into school by this stage and were motivated by the rewards they gained.

6.2.3 Comparison between Year 7 and 9 in terms of school ethos

In this section the question regarding how students perceive the ethos of the school they attend and whether this changed over time has been considered.

When in Year 7, the main points that students commented on during the focus group interviews when considering school ethos were concerned with the establishment of good interpersonal relationships, conducting themselves correctly and bullying. The questionnaires indicated that all Year 7 students appreciated being praised in relation to academic work in terms of being good at a subject. Students in common schools put more value on being told their work had improved, while those in Catholic schools appreciated that they had potential. These findings are supported by the work of Gallagher (2001) who argued that by focusing on the person students could become,

gave them hope for their futures. If teachers' comments concentrated on possible student test levels, this could limit student potential; however, if teachers' comments to students were more general, students could be praised and given encouragement to improve.

When the students were in Year 7, they took note of teacher expectations in terms of how to behave towards others and this was still evident when they reached Year 9. However, Year 9 students were aware that conforming to school expectations brought rewards. They were encouraged by the praise and rewards they gained. This reflects comments made by teachers in Chapter 5 emphasising the importance of using praise and rewards to encourage students. The student perceptions indicated that views of school ethos as they progressed through school remained broadly stable but some changes were identified, which may be influenced by the increased concern with testing and examinations.

6.3 Distinctive nature of a Catholic school

Students in Catholic schools were asked to share their views about their perception of the distinctive nature of attending a Catholic school on both visits. Comparisons were made between students in Year 7 and Year 9.

6.3.1 Year 7 distinctive nature of a Catholic school

I was interested to find out how students perceived attending a Catholic school. One student indicated:

I feel like I'm in three communities; my friend's group, my class group and my Christian group. So if you're ever alone, you can just talk to someone else and you have something in common.

(Male St Mary's Year 7)

This student expressed a sense of belonging that reached beyond the school. He felt that the communities to which he belonged formed a cohesive whole. Another student also felt they were part of *one big community* (Female St Mary's Year 7).

Overall being part of this community was seen as a positive. One student referred to the importance of belief:

God's always going to be there for you.

(Female St Mary's Year 7)

Students in other focus groups from the Catholic schools echoed this notion of God being there with them. However, another point of view was expressed:

Because like we're all Catholic like, I think people that think we're all turned to God if they, obviously some people are more religious than others, so there's only like so far you can go with things like praying to God like saying like you can help me with this, but like obviously some people will do that a lot, others will, might not do it as much.

(Male St Christopher's Year 7)

It is possible to infer from this student's point of view that there is not necessarily consistency in the students' beliefs. However, some students did comment that they had something in common, for instance:

If you're ever alone, you can just talk to someone else and have something in common.

(Male St Mary's Year 7)

Something you believe in.

(Male St Mary's Year 7)

The implication of these comments was that students appreciated the security of believing that God was there for them. Other issues that Year 7 students raised about being in a Catholic school included the fact that they appreciated having a chaplain who they could go to and discuss matters. One girl explained

Because we've got a chaplain that we can go to, to talk to if we don't, if we like got into an argument with your friends, she like can tell you it's all OK and then like how you can make it better.

(Female St Angela's Year 7)

Overall, these comments by Year 7 students in Catholic schools conveyed an appreciation of the extra support provided by the religious dimension of the school.

6.3.2 Year 9 distinctive nature of a Catholic School

Generally, students' perceptions as they progressed through the school, concerning the distinctive nature of attending a Catholic school did not lose its significance. Year 9 students made a number of positive comments, for instance:

You feel more relaxed because you know someone's always there for us as well...We believe Jesus is always with us.
(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

Knowing God's kind of with you.
(Female St Angela's Year 9)

RE it's about believing and it helps you believe in yourself as well.
(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

Another student commented:

Like you have a strong Catholic faith and you like really believe in God you'll feel it like helps you along in a way, gives you that little bit of a boost to keep going. (Male St Mary's Year 9)

This student seemed to suggest that his commitment to religion had had an impact on his attitudes. Another student indicated:

If you are religious, you might think that God like helps you.
(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Not all students, however, felt that being in a Catholic school had a positive impact; some students had begun to feel sceptical:

You notice it if you're in a Catholic school but it doesn't really have a big impact on the way you behave outside the school.
(Male St Mary's Year 9)

I don't think it does make a difference really; religion shouldn't really affect how you feel about yourself.
(Male St Olaf's Year 9)

This student felt that faith had little impact on self-belief. By the end of Year 9 it appeared that there was a greater diversity of views towards the impact of attending a Catholic school.

6.3.3 Comparison between Year 7 and 9 student perceptions of the distinctive nature a Catholic school

Year 7 students emphasised their appreciation of belonging to a community with shared beliefs, even though not everyone had the same level or depth of faith commitment. An appreciation of knowing there was a chaplain, who was available to support students, was recognised by Year 7. Teachers recognised the support given by the chaplain as having an important impact for students (see Chapter 5, section 5.4.2). Believing God was there to support them was a shared concept that Year 7 commented on. Groome (2014) stressed the importance and impact of the belief that individuals are loved by God. Believing you are loved by God helped students to develop confidence and self-esteem through feeling reassured that there was constant support for them whatever they may experience in or out of school.

Many of the students from Year 9 also, believed that God was there to support them and they felt this had a positive effect on their self-esteem. However, by Year 9 it was acknowledged that not all students agreed that faith had an impact. This seemed to indicate that in the course of the two years between Year 7 and Year 9 there had developed an increasing scepticism for some students towards aspects of their faith. One of the reasons why this might have developed may be due to the development of an increase in adolescent questioning. As young people develop through adolescence they enhance their potential to acquire new ways of thinking (Halpen, Heckman and Larson, 2013).

When considering the main contrasts between the perspectives of students across the two years, it is interesting to note that whilst Year 7 students suggested that one of the important factors of attending a Catholic school involved being a member of a faith community. Wenzel (2012) supported the concept of the importance of

belonging to a community which is important for developing positive relationships and helping to ensure that students are motivated in school. By Year 9 students, some students were beginning to doubt if attending a Catholic school made much of a difference, in terms of feeling that they belonged to a faith community. This may reflect the increasingly critical nature of the students in terms of what they were taught about religious belief and the influence on them of the common world around them as they became more aware and began to be more independent in their thinking.

6.4 Perceptions of PSHE

Exploring students' perceptions of PSHE was an important aspect of this research. This subject could help students understand how they developed on a personal, social and emotional level and helped them to explore their own attitudes and values by comparing their perceptions with those expressed by other students.

6.4.1 Year 7 Perceptions of PSHE

In Year 7, students in both types of school indicated that they enjoyed PSHE and found it useful in helping them to develop ideas. During PSHE lessons they felt that they had time to look at problems and how they could be resolved. This was a safe environment within which they could examine their feelings. They learned team building skills and how to get on with others as well as being helped in real life situations. They could learn about themselves, what they were good at and how to make decisions. PSHE supported them in coping with life:

It's sort of teaching you how to cope in life and about teaching you how to deal with different problems.

(Male St Mary's Year 7)

A high percentage of students in both Catholic and common schools stated that they enjoyed PSHE with 88.3% (498) of students in Catholic schools agreeing with this statement and 84.3% (424) of those in common schools.

In response to an open question concerning *things they found useful in PSHE*, 'Learning about life' scored the highest response rate from students in both sectors. This gained a much higher response than other categories. More students in common schools (45 out of 371, i.e., 12%) found the emphasis on developing confidence and self-esteem more useful in PSHE than those in Catholic schools (29 out of 435, 7%). However, there was a slightly higher percentage (20% compared to 17%) of students in Catholic schools who found it useful to learn about bullying. A student in Section 6.2.1 commented on the school wanting to discourage bullying and this emphasis given by the school in terms of behaviour may explain why these students in a Catholic school found the topic of bullying useful.

Students in Catholic schools indicated that they perceived that PSHE helped them with discerning the difference between right and wrong and to a greater extent helped with organising their work than those in common schools. By comparison with those in common schools, students from Catholic schools appeared to be more concerned about organising their work. This could indicate greater concern from students in Catholic schools with attainment. Learning about drug abuse was indicated as more important by students in common schools than those in Catholic schools and could indicate that students from common schools were more likely to be more exposed to drugs than those in Catholic schools. A chi-squared test indicated that there were highly statistically significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools; ($\chi^2=109.38$, $p=.001$) in terms of things students found useful in PSHE. See Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Year 7 Responses to the statement *Things you have found useful in PSHE*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (371)	Total (435)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Learning about life	45.3% (168)	41.4% (180)
Learning about bullying	17.3% (64)	20% (87)
Developing confidence and self-esteem	12.1% (45)	6.6% (29)
Learning about drug abuse	11.3% (42)	0% (0)
Learning to respect and work with others	9.7% (36)	10.6% (46)
Learning I am the same as others	2.7% (10)	4.4% (19)
Learning what is right and wrong	1.1% (4)	3.9% (17)
Organising my work	.5% (2)	13.1% (57)

Students across the sample generally agreed that PSHE was about life skills:

I think it's basically usually how you like develop in life.

(Male Heatherside Year 7)

I think that it is how we develop ourselves to become, like how we get older.

(Female St Olaf's Year 7)

Being able to talk about issues in PSHE was mentioned by students in all of the focus groups as an enjoyable and positive experience. They found it useful for developing ideas. PSHE gave students time to think and talk about what had occurred during the week; if things had gone wrong and how problems could be solved. Students expressed the view that it helped them develop team building skills and helped them in real life situations. Students said they felt that PSHE not only helped them improve their ability to make decisions, but also recognised the things they were good at. It helped them understand how other people felt about issues:

It's important because if you didn't have PSHE you would like go out into life and you wouldn't know a lot. I mean you would know maths and stuff that might get you a job but you wouldn't be like safe because you wouldn't know like what's coming.

(Female Beechwood Year 7)

In the open question, *How has PSHE helped you to make useful decisions?* Students in common and Catholic schools found PSHE to be helpful (see Table 6.2), in connection with making the right decisions. Making decisions about drugs appeared to be less of an issue for those in Catholic schools as compared with common schools. This could be interpreted in different ways, but it might indicate that teachers in Catholic schools concentrated more on this topic than those in common schools particularly as it was mentioned specifically as being part of the programme of study by Catholic teachers in the previous chapter (See Chapter 5, section 5.5.2).

Bullying was evidently a concern and was mentioned more often by students in Catholic schools and could indicate that common schools have focused more successfully on this issue and therefore it is of less concern for them. One student in a common school referred to it in the Ethos section (6.2.1), earlier in this chapter and commented on their confidence in the school system in the way it dealt with the issue of bullying.

Comments made by students in Catholic schools indicated that students felt an emphasis was placed on how to treat others rather than on how to deal with bullying. This indicates a different approach to how to deal with social interactions. Students in Catholic schools mentioned that PSHE had helped them make decisions about making friends. This could indicate that in Catholic schools there is a greater emphasis on creating social cohesion. The responses of students in the two types of schools were highly statistically significant ($\chi^2=37.7$, $p=.001$). See Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Year 7 Responses to the statement *How has PSHE helped you to make decisions?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (167)	Total (260)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Making the right decisions	35.9% (60)	36.9% (96)
Learning about life	16.2% (27)	15.8% (41)
About bullying	13.7% (23)	18.1% (47)
Learning about drugs	12.6% (21)	1.2% (3)
About being confident and having more self-esteem	7.8% (13)	6.8% (18)
About the future	6% (10)	3.1% (8)
Making friends	4.2% (7)	13.1% (34)
Regarding peer pressure	2.4% (4)	1.5% (4)
About being a better friend	1.2% (2)	3.5% (9)

Respondents indicated in an open question where they gained support (see Table 6.3). In both types of schools, family was the main source of support. Subject teachers provided more support for students in common schools, but form tutors appeared to provide more support in Catholic schools. The data from the students was categorised into six groups. The difference between the percentage responses between Catholic and common schools were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 13.3$, $p=.04$). Table 6.3 sets out the details. The greatest percentage differences were in relation to support from family, friends, school teachers and tutors. The students in Catholic schools reported receiving less support from friends and more support from family than those in common schools. In the focus group interviews students in Catholic schools emphasised the support they gained from knowing God was there for them. This may account to some extent for the difference in responses between students in common and Catholic schools with regard to the perceived levels of support from friends. See Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Year 7 Responses to the statement *If you have concerns about life, who do you get support from?*

	Common Total (503)	Catholic Total (564)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Family	26% (131)	30.9% (174)
Parents	23.3% (117)	22.9% (129)
Friends	18.5% (93)	13.8% (78)
Subject teacher	12.3% (62)	9.8% (55)
Tutor	11.7% (59)	16.1% (91)
Brothers/sisters	4.6% (23)	2.8% (16)
Other	3.6% (18)	3.7% (21)

6.4.2 Year 9 Perceptions of PSHE

Students from cohort 1 reported that in Year 9 that PSHE enabled them to examine their reactions to situations without having to experience them first. It helped give them an insight into other people's feeling and behaviours, which enabled them to have more understanding of the world around them. The PSHE programme helped students understand:

How we should sort of react in social environments.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

This gave students an understanding of what was appropriate and how they should behave. The PSHE programme provided an understanding of:

Things that other people go through that you might not necessarily go through yourself but your friends might, so you know how to react if you find out and not you know how to be sensitive in a way that they would understand that.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

You get to see other people's, other views, so for like the elderly person's point of view to understand a bit more about how they live.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

A number of students found that the subject could be very personal and that talking about and sharing experiences in front of a whole class could be intimidating. I was told by another student in this group that it would be better to:

Write down their points of views and then they can also, if they seem like a bit troubled sometimes, they can write that down and feel confident that they've got it on paper, some people don't like talking in front of people.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Although students often wanted to express their concerns and worries, they did not always want to say things out loud in front of everyone in the class. Another member of the same group suggested:

You can write questions about things you're not sure about and you are not judged.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Not being judged was part of the process of establishing an atmosphere of trust that was an important aspect of setting the right kind of climate for PSHE. Students needed to gain an insight into *relationships and how you cope in the world* (Male St Christopher's Year 9). This understanding helped students to deal with what could be expected of them in their futures. PSHE lessons enabled students to examine *how they felt about things* (Male St Christopher's Year 9). This opportunity to examine feelings did not occur in other kinds of lessons. Boys in particular expressed an appreciation of learning about:

Life skills and how to be like a better person and like things to be aware of.

(Male Heatherside Year 9)

Although some students felt that they learnt this kind of thing at home, a number of students were aware that this was not the case for all young people. Some of the students found some aspects of PSHE tedious as:

Sometimes it's like general things like with the smoking we've done... in PSHE we kind of like, it's like social, like how it can affect others, the attitudes towards other people.

(Female St Mary's Year 9)

Nevertheless, students were aware that they gained insights into how other people felt. Another important aspect of PSHE can be seen from the following comment with regard to learning about making decisions:

It helps us make the right choices as well because it is teaching us about alcohol, the bad effects and smoking as well and some things like that.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

This sentiment was echoed by others who felt that PSHE helped them *make the right choices in stuff* (Female Yester School Year 9). Not only was it important to make the right decisions, but to also understand the implications of the decisions:

Like they teach you about the consequences of the decisions you make and stuff.

(Female Yester School Year 9)

Students were not told what was right or wrong, but given the skills to make informed decisions. If students were informed, they could deal with situations in an appropriate way and being given the facts about situations enabled students to form their own opinions:

It helps us make the right choices as well because it is teaching us about alcohol, the bad effects and smoking as well and some things like that. It also helped you to get along with others.

(Male St Olaf's Year 9)

If you didn't do PSHE at school then you'd have no knowledge about like, of how to be sort of streetwise and how to like stay away from drugs, because if someone offered you something you wouldn't really know what it was.

(Male Heatherside Year 9)

I actually find it quite useful when they are telling you all the, they show you all the wrongs and you feel, like they show you parents that have got pregnant really, really young and how they have to look after their children, like what a struggle it is. So it shows you like, it shows you such like severe things that you think well I'm really not going to do that and it really helps you to be a better person.

(Male Heatherside Year 9)

Helping with decisions about the future in PSHE was useful in developing skills.

They're all helpful things you learn like you can put, you can put like into practice anytime.

(Male St Olaf's Year 9)

Students understood the need to have PSHE lessons, because it taught them about:

Social education, sex education, alcohol, stuff like that.

(Male Yester School Year 9)

Another issue that emerges was that students also enjoyed the variety of approaches in PSHE lessons and moving around the room. Students appeared to appreciate the different approach to PSHE lessons which allowed them to access information in a variety of ways. This may have given them a fresh approach to the lessons:

Some lessons where there's stuff round the room like notes and you have to go round and take down bullet points or watching videos and write down what you've learnt from it, then more physical stuff, not the more copying down big chunks of text.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

Students could find out about themselves, their skills and talents by discussing them with others. But some students felt that there were negative aspects to PSHE:

Some of the lessons that we do is purely common sense we should know.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

Some lessons we learn a lot, other lessons we don't really learn that much, you just sit there chatting.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

A bit tedious sometimes because if you're like sitting there and they are saying stuff like, don't do drugs and don't smoke and you find yourself just thinking well, okay, I'm obviously not going to, you don't have to keep giving me reasons why.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

The perceptions expressed in these quotes acknowledge views that had implications for lessons to be geared more towards individual needs. It is interesting to note that some students may have felt that a lot of the work in PSHE was common sense but this was not a perspective perceived by all students.

6.4.3 Comparison between Year 7 and 9 Perceptions of PSHE

Year 7 students appreciated being able to examine possible life situations in PSHE, in advance of actually experiencing them. PSHE provided all students with a safe environment in which to examine feelings and learn about themselves. The importance of establishing a safe environment in PSHE was clearly expressed by teachers (see Chapter 5 section 5.8.1). Bucholz and Sheffer (2009) emphasised the importance of establishing an environment in which students felt it was safe to express their views. Putwain, (2009) indicated that it was necessary to establish an environment in which students could build skills to help them understand issues, make appropriate decisions and learn about other people's feelings. Students in common schools in Year 7 appreciated learning to be more confident while students in Catholic schools were more concerned with organising their work. When they had concerns, students in common schools in Year 7 gained more support from friends while those in Catholic schools gained more support from their families. It may be that family is given a higher priority by Catholic parents.

Year 9 also appreciated that PSHE lessons provided a safe environment in which situations could be examined. They felt they learnt how to react suitably in social situations and, as in Year 7, appreciate other people's perspectives and feelings. A certain level of trust needed to be established in PSHE lessons and it was important that students did not feel judged. Year 9 students appeared to be more sensitive about sharing feelings than was apparent in Year 7 and this may reflect their greater awareness of self-image and the way they were seen by others. Year 9 students felt they learnt how to make correct choices about their future in PSHE, which would be expected of students who were two years nearer to making choices that would affect career decisions. Students in common schools felt they became more aware of

issues and the consequences of decisions, however students in Catholic schools were more concerned with learning about making what they perceived as the 'right' decisions (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.3). This could indicate that students in Catholic schools felt that if they made the 'right' decisions, their future would follow from this and they would develop in an appropriate way.

Year 7 students in both school types noted that PSHE helped them cope with life and helped build their confidence. They found dealing with issues such as bullying useful, while others found learning to organise themselves and learning about drugs pertinent. By the time this group of students were in Year 9 they expressed concern about how they could conduct themselves in different situations and make the right decisions. They could examine the consequences of decision-making in a safe environment before committing themselves to a course of action and participate confidently. This perspective is supported by Gallagher (2001) who stresses the importance of enabling students to be able to participate and be more confident in school activities.

6.5 Perceptions of progress and attainment

The theme of Progress and Attainment related to students' perceptions about their school work which in turn impacted on their self-beliefs.

6.5.1 Year 7 Perceptions of progress and attainment

Students made comments regarding their progress in connection with how it made them feel about themselves. This gave an indication of their perceived level of self-belief and self-esteem. One student commented:

When they get some good grades or something in tests, makes them feel proud of themselves.

(Male Townhead Year 7)

Success could enhance the way they thought about themselves. In some cases, there were concrete rewards:

Passing tests and exams and sometimes then I'll get, with the 11+, I got presents.

(Male Townhead Year 7)

When good progress was made, students felt rewarded and motivated. Getting good grades in tests and school work was perceived as important and not just in order to get rewards:

Sometimes I get some good grades for myself.

(Male Townhead Year 7)

Clearly, some students were intrinsically motivated.

In both common and Catholic schools, students recognised that they were rewarded for working hard in each subject. Table 6.4 sets out student responses to the question *Where do you get most rewards in school?* There were statistically significant differences in the responses made ($\chi^2=15.873$, $p=.046$). In Catholic schools in Year 7 a higher percentage of students indicated that they were likely to be extrinsically rewarded by their teachers in lessons, than students in common schools. The students in common schools seemed to feel that they did not receive as many rewards as students in Catholic schools, see Table 6.4.

These results indicate that, from the point of view of the students, rewards in both types of schools were gained mostly in relation to academic work, whilst for effort, sports and other activities far fewer rewards were gained. There is a clear difference between rewards received in subject lessons and other activities. The rewards given for academic work reflect the pressure that schools and teachers are under to meet attainment targets. A slightly higher percentage of students in Catholic schools recognised gaining rewards from subjects, although the difference between Catholic and common schools was very small. A higher percentage of students in common

schools indicated that they did not receive many rewards at all. Overall, these findings suggest that all teachers place the greatest emphasis on students' academic work.

Table 6.4: Year 7 Responses to the statement *Where do you get most rewards in school?*

	Common Total (498)	Catholic Total (557)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
From subject lessons	55.7% (276)	60.9% (339)
From working hard	12.7% (64)	13.3% (74)
From sports activities	12.4% (62)	10.2% (57)
I don't	11.4% (57)	8.4% (47)
From my tutor	6.8% (34)	5.4% (30)
Being involved in assemblies	1% (5)	1.6% (9)
From tests	N/A	0.2% (1)

When asked whether students would like the school to help them achieve more, 367 (73%) of the 503 students in common schools agreed with this statement while, 462 (82%) of the 564 students in Catholic schools agreed. In the focus group students revealed that they were told about their progress when they had been given time to settle into the life of the school. In Year 7 they received:

A report when we got our grades ...

They were told:

What the teachers think about us.

(Female Beechwood Year 7)

One student related progress to having had a lot of practice. I was told by one boy in Heatherside:

Some children ...can't achieve because they haven't had lots of practice.
(Male Heatherside Year 7)

Practice and making an effort had an impact on how students were able to achieve.

One girl from the same group pointed out:

It's quite nice when you've worked really hard to get some praise.
(Female Heatherside Year 7)

This girl enjoyed being praised for her efforts. This gave her real encouragement.

Other students made similar comments:

If you try really hard...and you get praise...then it's worth it ... and that makes
you feel really good.
(Female St Angela's Year 7)

You know you've worked hard and other people have recognised it.
(Female St Mary's Year 7)

However, another student pointed out that:

If you don't get mentioned ... and you've worked really hard, sometimes it
makes you feel worse.
(Female Heatherside Year 7)

One issue that emerged was that students' self-belief played a part in their progress:

I didn't think I was like bright, I wouldn't put my hands up. I was scared.
(Male St Christopher's Year 7)

Students' views of what they perceived teachers thought about them had a major
impact on their ability to progress. Test results also played a part in how students felt
about themselves because:

When you do like exams you get your results back and if you get a high score
in that subject.
(Male St Olaf's Year 7)

Table 6.5 sets out student responses to an open question *What good things have
given you satisfaction?* The differences in responses were highly significant
($\chi^2=19.09$, $p=.008$). Overall, getting good results appeared to give the most
satisfaction, although students in Catholic schools reported that helping others gave
more satisfaction than those in common schools. The converse was the case in
relation to getting good results. This appeared to be more important for students in

common schools than those in Catholic schools. Taken together, this may indicate that a different set of values may exist in Catholic schools in which a sense of community may have a greater resonance for students, whereas for those in a common school, individual achievement may have a greater value. This would align with findings discussed in the literature review by Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993), who emphasised the importance in Catholic schools of developing a learning community and sharing in the mission of the school with an emphasis on personal and social responsibility which contrasts with a more individual approach supported by competition and the pursuit of individual rewards.

Table 6.5: Year 7 Responses to the statement *What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (476)	Total (545)
	% (No.)	% (No.)
Getting good results	51.7% (246)	43.3% (235)
Helping others	16.8% (79)	21.2% (116)
From hobbies	11.7% (56)	10.8% (59)
Entering competitions	8.6% (41)	10.4% (57)
Don't know	8.1% (39)	12.1% (66)
Giving to charity	3.1% (15)	2.2% (12)

6.5.2 Year 9 Perceptions of progress and attainment

When cohort 1 students were in Year 9, they reported that satisfaction could come when someone had:

...made a task for themselves and then like they've completed it or something then they might feel really good because you've kept to what you've done.

(Male Townhead Year 9)

These showed that some students appreciated that they could make progress and improve their attainment when they made the effort and this could be intrinsically rewarding. Other students referred to extrinsic motivators:

If you get a good exam result or a good something, your parents might reward you.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

In the questionnaire students were asked, in an open question, where they gained most rewards. Table 6.6 sets out the findings. There were similarities between students in common and Catholic Schools all indicating they gained most rewards in lessons. Schools played a significant part in how students gained rewards. In both common and Catholic schools, students gained most rewards in lessons with a higher proportion of students in Catholic schools recognising this than those in common schools. Most rewards were received in lessons and the difference between gaining rewards from academic work and other areas of the curriculum are distinctive. More students in common schools gained rewards from their form tutors and also said they gained more rewards from sports than those in Catholic schools. However, the differences were not statistically significant and students may have been expressing a view that they gained rewards in similar ways in school.

Table 6.6: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *Where do you get most rewards in school?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (336)	Total (451)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
In lessons	54.5% (183)	62.8% (283)
Sports	19% (64)	15.3% (69)
I don't	11.7% (39)	13.4% (60)
Form tutor	5.9% (20)	3.3% (15)
After school activities	3.3% (11)	1.3% (6)
Homework	2.5% (8)	1.3% (6)
Assemblies	1.7% (6)	.9% (4)
Attendance	1.4% (5)	1.7% (8)

When students felt capable in a subject, they were more likely to make more effort and therefore their progress would improve. If they perceived that they were not doing well then there was a tendency for them to give up:

If you're good at the subject, you'll want to perform to your best, then it makes you want to do well but if you're not good at the subject and the teacher doesn't like you, then you don't want to do well.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

Students perceived that others could be helpful in changing perceptions:

...then you could tell them to keep trying... then they could get a good mark and feel they can do it.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Motivation could be improved when perceptions of self-efficacy were changed. If students felt that they were:

...good at something, then you feel more likely to do that.

(Female Yester Year 9)

This student reflected a general view that when students had high levels of self-efficacy, they would be more inclined to participate positively. This perspective may

reinforce the view that having higher levels of self-esteem enabled students to feel confident to participate in activities.

Year 9 students were asked in the questionnaire to respond to statements about their progress and achievement. Responses to the statement '*Would you like school to help you to achieve more?*' showed that students in Catholic schools, 308 (68%) out of 453 students, compared with 161 (47%) out of 343 students in common schools, wanted school to help them to achieve more. This difference in response was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 7.9, p = .019$). The desire for students from Catholic schools to receive more support might indicate that they have been encouraged to adopt virtues of modesty and prudence in connection of their achievement and suppress more egotistical feelings, as commented by teachers in Chapter 5, section 5.3.3.

Students were asked to respond using one of the three categories set out in Table 6.7 to the question *How well are you doing in school?* A chi-squared test indicated that these differences were not statistically significant. The majority indicated that they were achieving satisfactorily with a small proportion indicating that they were doing very well. In both types of school there was a substantial proportion who felt they could achieve more.

Table 6.7: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *How well are you doing in school?*

		Very well	Satisfactorily	Could achieve more
Common Total (354)	% (N.)	39% (138)	45.4% (161)	15.6% (55)
Catholic Total (512)	% (N.)	36.2% (169)	51% (283)	12.8% (60)

Young people in both sectors were concerned with developing skills, and getting good grades. Table 6.8 illustrates responses to an open question asking how the students wanted school to help them achieve more in their life. These differences were highly statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 24.1$, $p = .002$). Those in Catholic schools were overall less focused on the school providing a good education and more concerned with the school helping them to develop their skills. The teachers reported that PSHE provided opportunities for developing practical skills including developing skills that would help students to be able to live independently and be able to cook for themselves and cope with the availability of drugs and alcohol (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.2). These results may indicate that the ethos of common schools leads to greater emphasis being placed on the instrumental practical value of academic qualifications in terms of potential rewards in later life. As Grace (2002) indicates, common schools have their own beliefs about what it is that is important in helping students to develop as people. In contrast, the ethos in a Catholic school may encourage students to place greater value on service to others. Being a good citizen was a concept that emerged from the interviews with teachers in Catholic schools as it was part of the Christian world view (see Chapter 5, section 5.4).

Table 6.8: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *How would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (187)	Total (333)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting a good education	31% (58)	16.5% (55)
Developing skills	24.6% (46)	32.1% (107)
To help with the future	24.2% (45)	25.5% (85)
More practical work and sports events	5.3% (10)	6.6% (22)
Getting good grades	4.3% (8)	9.7% (32)
More after school clubs	3.7% (7)	5.1% (17)
More revision classes	3.7% (7)	3.9% (13)
More trips	1.6% (3)	0.3% (1)
Having someone to talk to and getting more rewards	1.6% (3)	0.3% (1)

Some students indicated that they appreciated the fact that in some subjects they could express themselves more freely:

The Arts, they are quite good because you can express it in the way you want to, in a way you know you how and not just have to write down a block answer.

(Female Beechwood Year 9)

Some students felt pressure to achieve:

It's kind of more academic subjects; the teacher's always pushing you to get to the next group even if you don't want to.

(Female Beechwood Year 9)

On the other hand, for some there was also pressure not to progress too fast:

People stop you from doing things even though you know you can do them and you want to move on but they won't let you; they make you stay behind just so you won't get too far ahead.

(Female Beechwood Year 9)

It was difficult to assess reasons for the differences between the two school types with regard to contentment with option choices, because a larger percentage of

students in Catholic schools had not been given explanations about their options at the time of completing the questionnaire.

In response to an open question about what gave student satisfaction, both those in common and Catholic schools students recognised that getting good grades gave them satisfaction ($\chi^2=13.6$, $p=.03$) see Table 6.9. This indicated that in both sectors students regarded achieving good results, academically, as a high priority and much more important than other areas. There were statistically significant differences in responses in other areas. However, there were some differences between those in common and Catholic schools. For example, those in common schools were more likely to indicate that achievement in sports gave them satisfaction than those in Catholic schools. Students in Catholic schools appeared to gain greater satisfaction than students in common schools in terms of being involved in extra-curricular activities. This could imply a greater commitment to participation in social activities across the school community rather than exclusively in relation to sporting activities. Perhaps, as part of school culture there is a greater competitiveness in common schools which makes sports more attractive to students. However, teachers in both types of schools regarded the provision of a wide range of opportunities as important (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.2).

Table 6.9: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *What things have you done that have given you satisfaction?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (328)	Total (444)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting good grades	46.6% (153)	44.9% (195)
Sports	24.4% (81)	19.5% (85)
Helping others	13.1% (45)	14.6% (68)
Being involved in extracurricular activities	12.9% (39)	15.8% (73)
I don't know	3% (10)	5.2% (23)

6.5.3 Comparison between Year 7 and 9 perceptions of progress and attainment

Overall, Year 7 students who participated in the research recognised that getting good grades and good results in tests enhanced their self-beliefs. Gaining good grades could also result in rewards. Gaining rewards mainly came from subject lessons for students in Year 7. Fewer rewards were acknowledged from areas other than the academic. While students recognised the importance of practising skills in order to improve performance in this first year in secondary school, they also appreciated receiving recognition for their efforts. This emphasis on the formal curriculum suggests that schools are under great pressure to conform to national standards in terms of academic achievement. Teachers in both types of school indicated that they wanted to encourage and help students to reach their full potential (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.1).

Year 9 students also recognised the importance of making an effort in order to achieve success. Recognition or lack of it from teachers affected their motivation and some students indicated that there was pressure to achieve from teachers. Most rewards were gained from academic effort or success.

Both Year 7 and Year 9 students were aware that gaining good grades enhanced self-belief and they enjoyed working hard in order to gain praise. They appreciated the recognition they received from others when they had worked hard. However, by Year 9 students were very focused on academic attainment and were also conscious of the need to develop their skills. This seems to suggest that, as the students progressed through the school system, they became more aware of the pressure to

succeed academically and therefore to make a greater effort to conform to the expectations of the school, whose priorities were also focused on academic achievement because of the importance of league tables and consequent parental expectations. Teachers felt it was important to encourage achievement and for students to support and help each other.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter I have examined results of both quantitative and qualitative data with reference to student perceptions of school ethos, including the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, perceptions of PSHE and those of progress and attainment. I have addressed the findings in relation to evidence concerning the first key question: How do students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?

It was evident from the findings that there were differences of emphasis between the ethos of common schools and Catholic schools with regard to how they expected students to behave and conduct themselves. Catholic schools appeared to place greater emphasis on building community cohesion and on spirituality compared with common schools which appeared to be more concerned with the behaviour of individual students.

The way the school taught about how to treat others and the way it dealt with issues such as bullying both in assemblies and in the PSHE programme reinforced the expectations and ethos of all schools. This gave an understanding of how students felt the ethos impacted on PSHE through the modules and topics that were presented and provided evidence when considering the first key research question. Students saw PSHE as a vehicle through which they could learn about how to cope with life. Specifically, their confidence and self-esteem were built through knowing they would be able to deal with the situations that they would experience in life.

Through PSHE, they learnt the consequences of decisions and their impact. It was interesting to note that all students expressed their understanding of school ethos in terms of their behaviour and the way they treated others. When students conformed to expectations of the school they felt they gained rewards.

Most students in the Catholic schools expressed their perceptions of their experience of attending school through their understanding of the presence of God in their lives. Although in Year 7 not all students had an equal commitment to faith, it was not evident until Year 9 that some students had become more questioning about the importance of faith.

PSHE was valued because it helped students to cope with life, particularly with bullying in Year 7. In Year 9 it appeared that the temptation of drugs became more significant for students. PSHE concerned the real world and students in both year groups appreciated having a safe environment in which to examine possible future circumstances and to explore potential consequences. They learnt how to deal with issues that may arise.

It appeared that the perceptions of most students with regard to progress and attainment were influenced by the experience of gaining rewards. This helped to build their personal development. As they progressed through the school most students appeared to adapt to the growing academic demands made upon them.

Chapter 7 Findings: Cohort 1 Perceptions of issues relating to personal development

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored issues relating to student perceptions of ethos, the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, PSHE and progress and attainment. This chapter will continue to examine the findings with regard to perceptions of personal development. In this research personal development was framed in terms of self-esteem as this was believed to be a concept which would be more familiar to the students. This chapter is divided into three sections and examines firstly perceptions regarding the nature of self-esteem, then the exploration of issues that might affect self-esteem and thirdly reports the findings from the measurement of self-esteem of the participating students. The specific question considered in this part of the findings is as follows:

Do students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

7.2.1 Year 7 Perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

In the focus groups students were asked about their perceptions of the nature of self-esteem. According to one Year 7 student, self-esteem was all about themselves, the study of themselves and how they thought about themselves and others. Another student felt it was feeling good about yourself. Positive comments from friends and teachers, or members of the family helped students to improve their view of

themselves. It was stated that students' view of themselves could be improved when *people said they were good at something* (Male St Olaf's Year 7).

One student explained that self-esteem was about:

How confident you feel about your abilities in school
(Male St Christopher's Year 7)

Some students emphasised the importance of friendship on the impact of self-esteem and having:

A good friend who likes you for who you are
(Female Yester Year 7)

However, another girl in the school explained it was important for your perception of self-esteem for family members to be *happy for what you have achieved* (Female Beechwood Year 7). This comment is interesting as this student seems to be expressing a feeling of wanting to be accepted and not rejected for what they are unable to do. Another boy also emphasised the importance of family helping to develop perceptions of self-esteem because:

You know you are really good at something because your parents have encouraged you
(Male Townhead Year 7)

These comments appear to give an insight into the importance that students place upon not only the individual view that a student had of themselves but also the value they gave to the support and encouragement they gained from other people. Goble and Bye-Brooks (2016) argued that exploring the self and developing relationships could support the development of self-esteem not only in PSHE but could have implications for all experiences in life.

Students were asked to rate a number of categories in terms of their beliefs about self-esteem. Their responses are set out in Table 7.1. Findings from both Catholic

and common schools indicated a number of cases where there were statistically significant differences. A chi-squared test of responses to *understanding you own strengths and weaknesses* indicated statistical differences ($\chi^2=10.68$, $p=.030$), where students in common schools agreed with this statement slightly more emphatically than students in Catholic schools. Statistical differences were also seen in the response to *knowing and accepting yourself* ($\chi^2=10.89$, $p=.028$) where again agreement with the statement was slightly higher from students in common schools. Another response where there was a statistically significant difference was in relation to *having a positive outlook on life* ($\chi^2=10.08$, $p=.039$) and again students from common schools were more in agreement with the statement than students in Catholic schools. Results from responses to *Understanding you own value* ($\chi^2=17.18$, $p=.002$) indicated a highly statistical difference and students in common schools agreed with this statement more emphatically than students in Catholic school. However, although *loving yourself* ($\chi^2=37.97$, $p=.001$) on a chi- square test indicated a highly statistical difference between the two types of school, it was the students in Catholic schools who agreed more emphatically with this statement than students in common schools.

Responses to *liking and respecting who you are* ($\chi^2=10.26$, $p=.0306$) indicated a significant difference and students in common schools were more in agreement with this than those in Catholic schools. *Accepting who you are and working to improve your life* ($\chi^2=11.01$, $p=.026$) indicated a statistically significant difference in responses between the two types of school and again students from common schools were more in agreement with the statement than those in Catholic schools.

It was only the category of *loving yourself* that students in Catholic schools placed a higher emphasis than those in common schools. This may indicate that students in

Catholic schools viewed themselves slightly differently than those in common schools. Catholic students may be more accepting of themselves and less focused on themselves as individuals and may rely more on God for their given skills and talents. On the other hand, students in common schools may look at themselves in a more analytical way and appreciate their value from a different stance.

Teachers in Catholic schools commented on the importance of understanding your own value (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). These results suggest that the students in the two types of school viewed the development of self-esteem in slightly different ways. *Loving yourself* distinguished the personal development of students in Catholic schools in contrast with common schools. This may be because the notion of loving yourself is explicitly expressed in Gospel values which are promoted in Catholic schools.

There were no statistically significant differences between the students in common and Catholic schools in response to the statements, *believing in yourself and knowing your own worth; being confident in your ability; and being able to recognise what makes someone unique.*

Table 7.1 Year 7 Responses to the statement concerning the meaning of self – esteem

		School Type Total	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
			% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
1	Believing in yourself and knowing your own worth	Common (503)	48.9% (246)	45.7% (230)	4.2% (21)	1.2% (6)
		Catholic (559)	48% (268)	48% (268)	3.5% (20)	.5% (3)
2	Being confident in your ability	Common (503)	53.5% (269)	40.1% (202)	5.2% (26)	1.2% (6)
		Catholic (559)	56.4% (313)	39.9% (225)	3.2% (18)	.5% (3)
3	Understanding your strengths and weaknesses	Common (503)	55.9% (281)	36.5% (184)	5.8% (29)	1.8% (9)
		Catholic (558)	53.4% (298)	41.8% (233)	3.7% (21)	1.1% (6)
4	Knowing and accepting yourself	Common (503)	54.1% (272)	38.2% (192)	5.6% (28)	2.1% (11)
		Catholic (558)	53% (296)	42.4% (236)	3.5% (20)	1.1% (6)
5	Being able to recognise what makes someone unique	Common (503)	47.7% (240)	41% (206)	9.7% (49)	1.6% (8)
		Catholic (558)	51.3% (285)	40.6% (227)	6.7% (38)	1.4% (8)
6	Having a positive outlook on life	Common (503)	49.9% (251)	42.9% (216)	6% (30)	1.2% (6)
		Catholic (558)	43.6% (246)	47.3% (267)	7.3% (41)	1.8% (4)
7	Understanding your own value	Common (503)	51.9% (251)	40.3% (210)	6.3% (33)	1.5% (9)
		Catholic (557)	45.2% (252)	46.5% (259)	7.6% (42)	.7% (4)
8	Loving yourself	Common (503)	29.4% (148)	38.6% (194)	21.7% (109)	10.3% (52)
		Catholic (557)	36.2% (201)	45% (251)	15.6% (87)	3.2% (18)
9	Liking and respecting who you are	Common (503)	53.8% (271)	37.6% (189)	6.6% (33)	2% (10)
		Catholic (557)	50.5% (281)	41.5% (231)	7.1% (40)	.9% (5)
10	Accepting who you are and working to improve your life	Common (503)	58.8% (296)	35.4% (178)	4.4% (22)	1.4% (7)
		Catholic (556)	54.5% (303)	40.5% (225)	4.3% (24)	.7% (4)

7.2.2 Year 9 Perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

Cohort 1 students in Year 9 recognised that self-esteem was important. They understood that it was part of an understanding of how and why they presented themselves in certain ways. It also had implications for motivation, because their

beliefs about themselves, either supported or hindered their ability to fully participate in activities. When discussing self-esteem students felt it involved:

How you feel about yourself. How you portray yourself to others. Are you loud, quiet? If you normally have a big self-esteem you're normally out there talking to like loads of people but if you like have a small self-esteem you normally keep to yourself and are confined to like a few people that you talk to.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

The interesting perspective here was that students expressed the point of view that self-esteem was concerned with the way they portrayed themselves, which perhaps was not related to reality, but with the image that they were trying to project.

Self-esteem is about how you think people are looking at you and how you think you are coming across as a person.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

About how you see yourself and how you want other people to see you.

(Female Yester Year 9)

When you like give yourself an image and what people will expect of you and then you have to live up to that.

(Male Yester Year 9)

Self-esteem was considered to be:

About how you respect yourself and everything and how you think about yourself.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

Self-esteem could be affected by different situations.

It kind of depends on different situations like if I met people I didn't really know, it would come across that I have low self-esteem because like I wouldn't really go over to them and say like 'Hi' but then if I was with people I know I'd probably because I'm louder with my friends.

(Female St Mary's Year 9)

One boy noted:

If you're happy to be you and happy to be yourself. If you haven't got good self-esteem you won't say a lot.

(Male St Olaf's Year 9)

Self-esteem enabled students to participate more fully in lessons and to communicate fully with others. Another student described the changes that occurred with self-esteem as

It's about how you feel sometimes and how you can have highs and lows, just how like you're getting on with everybody else.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Some students were confused when trying to express their views:

I'd say something which makes you want to do something like make you stand out to other people, stand up, like teachers, instead of standing at the back of the class and hiding in the shadows looking down, not trying to get noticed, it's trying to get through the day without being noticed.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

This student was implying that low self-esteem resulted in a person wanting to remain anonymous. Another aspect of having low self-esteem could result in bullying:

It's kind of like how good your friends are to you in a way, like if, make sure you don't get bullied, things like that, because that can really bring it down.

(Female Yester Year 9)

In the focus group interviews advantages to having high self-esteem were reported, including having high self-esteem which enabled some students to be more active and successful:

I think the more self-esteem you have; the more likely you are to do better in your grades because you are more likely to get involved in the class.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

Self-esteem is really important because if you don't like want to keep going you end up just like giving up before you've even given it much of a try.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

Performance in some subjects had a specific impact on self-esteem:

PE has a big effect both ways because if you're a sporty person then they'll pick you first for teams and they'll rush to you and you'll get a lot more congratulations if you do well in a match but if you're not very good then you're going to feel people yelling at you.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

Drama was also identified as a subject which impacted on self-esteem:

Drama helps because you can be like someone else, you can get out of your own skin and be someone else.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

While another student believed:

I think Music helps because you don't have to listen to anyone else you just have to listen to the notes; you can be your own person.

(Female St Mary's Year 9)

Self-esteem was seen from the evidence above to concern the way an individual felt about themselves. For some students it involved how students thought they presented themselves and how this was perceived by others. This reflected the kind of image an individual wished to display. Self-esteem was seen as important for ensuring students felt able to get involved in situations, it could affect how they got on with others and the level of motivation they had. Students felt that some more creative subjects supported the development of self-esteem where they were freer to express themselves. Low self-esteem, however, was seen as making some students vulnerable to bullying. In the context of this enquiry the development of self-esteem as part of PSHE can be seen as making a valuable contribution.

In the first questionnaire that they completed in Year 7 students were asked to respond to a list of self-esteem concepts, in the second questionnaire when they were in Year 9, they were given the opportunity to freely express what they thought self-esteem involved. The categories in Table 7.2 were derived from student responses. Students in common schools demonstrated that they thought self-esteem was most concerned with the way you thought and felt about yourself, whereas those in Catholic schools suggested self-esteem was more about being confident. A chi-squared test that was carried out indicated that there were significant statistical differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=28.41$, $p=0.001$) in terms of the meaning of self-esteem.

Responses by students in common and Catholic schools differed. Students in common schools thought of self-esteem in terms of the way you feel about yourself and while a number of students in Catholic schools agreed with this they put more of an emphasis on being confident. Slightly more students in Catholic schools regarded being proud of yourself, valuing and respecting yourself as being more important than students in common schools. However, slightly more students in common schools regarded being a happy person as more important than students in Catholic schools. Students in common schools appeared to express a more personal and individualistic interpretation of self-esteem, whereas for the Catholic students feeling confident implied that its value existed within a social context. The importance of developing confidence was indicated as vital by teachers (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3). Maslow (1943) emphasised the importance of needing to be fulfilled, which contributes to being able to feel happier and this can therefore aid the development of self-esteem. Maslow described a hierarchy of needs, and once basic needs, such as food and shelter are fulfilled, individuals, are able to satisfy higher order psychological needs, such as feelings of belonging and esteem, leading ultimately to self-fulfilment. The developments of views expressed in Table 7.2 indicate how feelings contribute to self-esteem which is an important element in self-fulfilment.

Table 7.2: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the meanings of self-esteem

	Common	Catholic
	Total (345)	Total (436)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Way you think and feel about yourself	51.3% (177)	36.4% (158)
Being confident	30.2% (104)	42.3% (185)
Believing in yourself	11.8% (41)	12.7% (53)
Being a happy person	2.3% (8)	1.1% (5)
Being proud of yourself	2.3% (8)	3.6% (17)
Valuing yourself	1.2% (4)	2.4% (11)
Respecting yourself	.9% (3)	1.5% (7)

Students were asked how important they believed self-esteem to be. Very few of those completing the questionnaire thought it was unimportant as indicated in Table 7.3. However, the responses indicated that most students thought it was very important. There was a significant statistical difference between responses from the two types of school ($\chi^2 = 13.6, p = .018$). A higher percentage of students in Catholic schools felt self-esteem was very important than those in the common schools. This could indicate that students in Catholic schools appreciated that self-esteem was informed by faith. It is also interesting to note that there was a slightly lower percentage of 'not important' and 'don't know' responses from students in Catholic schools, which may suggest that there is a greater appreciation of the value of self-esteem by these students. In the light of this research, this gives an indication that students in Catholic schools may recognise the intrinsic value of appreciating self-esteem as a personal construct which can be used for the benefit of the wider society and in common schools it may be seen as a more social and public attribute. This may provide material for further enquiry.

Table 7.3: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *How important do you think self-esteem is?*

	Common (342)	Catholic (425)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Very	67.2% (230)	70.4% (299)
Important	15.2% (52)	13.3% (56)
Pretty important	11.4% (39)	12.2% (51)
Not important	5.6% (19)	3% (14)
Don't know	.6% (2)	1.1% (5)

7.2.3 Comparison between Year 7 and Year 9

Perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

Year 7 students recognised that achievement impacted on self-esteem. This could be through gaining good results, helping others or entering competitions. It was important because it affected motivation.

Year 9 students also identified the importance of positive self-esteem in motivating them to continue to engage in activities. By Year 9, some students were more concerned with the image they created and portrayed. The responses of students to the questionnaires indicated that some students in Year 9 felt self-esteem was concerned with how happy you felt about yourself. This was reinforced by comments made in the focus groups. This indicated the importance of self-esteem as an important element in facilitating the ability to enable students to be fulfilled, motivated and engaged in school activities.

7.3 Exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

The second section in this chapter of issues relating to personal development, deals with the student perceptions of the factors that might have an effect on self-esteem.

7.3.1 Year 7 Exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

In the focus groups students were asked to discuss *What builds people's self-esteem?* All the students in the focus groups expressed the idea that praise was important. Two students in different schools suggested that friends could help each other, if they gave support when things were difficult. Not to make fun or laugh at people who found things difficult was the advice given by one student in St Olaf's School:

If they're stuck, then like don't laugh at them, help them, don't just laugh at them because they can't do something.

(Female St Olaf's Year 7)

Another way to build self-esteem:

Give them compliments then and they'll feel good about themselves and might try a bit harder.

(Male St Christopher's Year 7)

When looking at factors that affected self-esteem students were asked about *the most positive thing they had been told about themselves*, those in common schools indicated in an open question that they appreciated being told that their work had improved, while most of those in Catholic schools preferred being told they had the potential to improve.

Table 7.4 presents an analysis of the student responses to the question *What is the most positive thing they had been told about themselves*. A chi-squared test showed

that there were statistically significant differences between the responses made ($\chi^2 = 17.622, p=.04$). A sizeable proportion of students in both types of schools appreciated being told they were good at a subject. The greatest difference in responses between students in Catholic and common schools was in relation to the extent to which they believed that their work had improved and whether they had potential. A higher percentage of students in the Catholic schools reported that they were told they had potential, this might have indicated that students in Catholic schools are more concerned with the person they may become.

Table 7.4: Year 7 Percentage responses to the statement *What is the most positive thing you have been told?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (471)	Total (537)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am good at a subject	29.9% (141)	31.8% (171)
My work has improved	19.3% (91)	13.2% (71)
I have potential	13.3% (67)	20.1% (108)
Don't know	12.3% (58)	12.8% (69)
I am a good friend	8.6% (38)	6.7% (36)
I am positive	5.9% (28)	5.3% (27)
I am helpful	4.8% (23)	3.5% (19)
I look and am nice	4.7% (19)	3.9% (21)
I am pleasant to work with	1.2% (6)	2.7% (15)

Student responses to an open question on the questionnaire regarding *where they got most compliments* indicated that students felt they gained most compliments in school. The responses to this statement were highly statistically significant see Table 7.5 ($\chi^2 = 21.24, p=.007$). Students in Catholic schools responded more positively.

They also put more emphasis on gaining rewards from family, while those in common schools emphasised that they gained more rewards from friends. This could be an indication that in Catholic schools, as Morris (2010) when writing about Catholic schools, highlights, the unit of the family may have more importance in line with more traditional values.

Table 7.5: Year 7 Responses to the statement *Where do you get most compliments?*

	Common Total (480)	Catholic Total (542)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
At school	42.7% (205)	50.7% (275)
From family	16.4% (78)	19% (103)
From Friends	15.8% (76)	11.3% (60)
From sport outside school	11.6% (56)	9% (49)
Don't know	8.7% (42)	7.5% (41)
From family and friends	3.2% (15)	0.9% (5)
Doing things well	1.6% (8)	0.9% (5)
Facebook	0% (0)	0.7% (4)

Self-esteem develops in interactions within elements of the individual's environment and includes individuals making comparisons with others. Students were asked whether they compared themselves with others. In Year 7 a similar percentage of students in common and Catholic schools indicated that they compared themselves to others; three hundred and sixty-five students of the 503 (73%) students in common schools and 417 (74%) of the 564 in Catholic schools. Students were also asked about the nature of the comparisons see Table 7.6. Most students saw themselves as equals, although more students in common schools saw themselves as different. Students in Catholic schools may see themselves as being part of an inclusive,

supportive environment which may reduce the incidence of feeling different. Students in Catholic schools mentioned that they felt part of the community (see Chapter 6, section 6.3.1). There were statistically significant differences in the responses made ($\chi^2=14.19$, $p=.027$).

Table 7.6: Year 7 Responses to the statement *How do you compare yourself to others?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (365)	Total (420)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
As an equal	70.7% (258)	75.5% (317)
I see others as better	11.2% (41)	11.4% (48)
I am different	9.9% (36)	4.1% (17)
I am brighter than others	3.3% (12)	3.3% (14)
I compare others with the way I look	2.7% (10)	1.9% (8)
When playing sport	2.2% (8)	3.1% (13)
Missing	N/A	0.7% (3)

When discussing self-esteem in the focus group, students felt that achievement played a large part in how they felt about themselves:

I think a competition or something because when I've been working on something for a while and I get it, I feel so happy and that gives me good self-esteem.

(Male St Mary's Year 7)

When students were praised, their self-esteem improved. This enabled students to be confident in themselves and believe in their own abilities. This was important because it affected their motivation and affected *how much students wanted to do things* (Male Heatherside Year 7). This, in turn, was vital issue to schools, because students could not enhance their learning if they were not motivated and did not take part in learning activities. A teacher from Heatherside (See Chapter 5, section 5.8.1)

had also discussed the importance of positive encouragement and ensuring the learning environment felt and one in which they could take risks.

When students felt positive about themselves, they reported being able to set targets and aim high. This enabled students to feel proud of themselves because:

You know you are going to achieve one day...you've got your parents ... who say ' keep going, keep going'.

(Female Beechwood Year 7)

A sequence of questions on the questionnaire was designed to investigate how self-esteem was manifested; to indicate how self-esteem became apparent in the day to day lives of students.

A series of six statements was given to students. Table 7.7 sets out the responses to show how students felt about themselves. There were no significant statistical differences between Catholic and common schools in relation to any statement. Overall, the majority of the students were confident in and out of school, not overtly concerned about what others said about them, or needing recognition to feel good about themselves. Most indicated that they were truthful to themselves and achieved goals they set themselves.

Table 7.7: Year 7 Responses to the applications of self-esteem

	School Type Total	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am concerned about what others say about me	Common (503)	19.9% (100)	47.1% (237)	27% (136)	6% (30)
	Catholic (564)	15.8% (89)	52.5% (296)	27% (152)	4.7% (27)
I need recognition to feel good about myself	Common (503)	10.2% (51)	48.9% (246)	31.4% (158)	9.5% (48)
	Catholic (564)	8.7% (49)	46.1% (260)	34.4% (194)	10.8% (61)
I am confident in different situations in school	Common (503)	30.3% (154)	59% (297)	8.4% (44)	1.3% (8)
	Catholic (564)	32.1% (181)	58.2% (328)	8.5% (48)	1.2% (7)
I am confident in different situations outside of school	Common (503)	37% (186)	52.3% (263)	10.1% (51)	.6% (3)
	Catholic (564)	36% (203)	53.2% (300)	9.2% (52)	1.6% (9)
I am truthful with myself	Common (503)	44.9% (226)	47.7% (240)	6.2% (31)	1.2% (6)
	Catholic (564)	44.4% (251)	46.5% (262)	8% (45)	1.1% (6)
I achieve goals I set myself	Common (503)	22.1% (111)	60.8% (306)	13.3% (67)	3.8% (19)
	Catholic (564)	28% (158)	59% (333)	10.6% (60)	2.4% (13)

7.3.2 Year 9 Exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

Table 7.8 sets out the responses of the students when they were in Year 9 to the question *How can self-esteem be improved?* The replies denoted interesting perspectives. Students declared that the way to improve self-esteem was through gaining rewards and compliments and believing in yourself. Students in Catholic schools considered help from others as more important than those in common schools. A chi-squared test was carried out to determine whether or not there was a relationship between responses of students in common or Catholic school, in terms

of how students felt self-esteem could be improved but no statistical significance could be detected.

Table 7.8: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *How can self-esteem be improved?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (296)	Total (380)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting rewards and compliments	32.5% (96)	22.3% (85)
Believing in yourself	16.2% (48)	21.3% (81)
Being positive about yourself	13.2% (39)	12.6% (48)
Help from others	12.2% (36)	14.8% (55)
Being involved in activities and achieving	12.2% (36)	12.6% (48)
Not worrying about what others think	7.1% (21)	6.3% (24)
Finding things you are good at	3.7% (11)	5.7% (22)
Not being bullied and treated as an equal	1.6% (5)	3.4% (13)
Being happy	1.3% (4)	1% (4)

Feeling secure in their own group enabled some students to enhance their self-esteem. Another issue that emerged identified the importance of establishing an environment in which students felt safe to express themselves:

Its compliments in part but also, I think sometimes if you are working in a group with your friends, then you'll feel, like yourself because you'll feel more that you are allowed to go out of your shell because you know these people.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

It's not just your friends who you've got to be able to trust because obviously you've got to be able to trust your teachers and the environment as well.

(Male Olaf's Year 9)

Another student from the same school explained:

Having support from the teachers as well that understand you better helps boost your confidence, as well, just in general feeling much better about yourself. Teachers who support you.

(Female Olaf's Year 9)

The opinions of others affected self-perception:

Other people's opinions help you, saying if you're getting good at like things.
(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Being around others could support the development of confidence as one student indicated:

If someone else is confident, then it is all rubs off on you and makes you feel confident.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

Overall developing self-esteem involved a range of influences.

Responses in Table 7.9, concerning where students gained most compliments, examined similar concepts to those in Table 7.4 considering the most positive things students had been told about themselves. The responses to these statements allowed the triangulation of findings. Questions were open and categories were derived from student responses. Students in common schools gained most compliments in lessons as did students in Catholic schools, although there were statistically significant differences ($\chi^2=24.302$, $p=0.002$) in terms of where students gained most compliments. Students in common schools indicated that they gained most compliments from sporting activities outside school, besides lessons, while those in Catholic schools gained most rewards from lessons and from their friends. The importance of participation in school activities and more actively in classroom learning was an aspect of life that was supported by the work of Arthur, Davidson and Stow (2000). A higher percentage of students in Catholic schools indicated that they gained compliments from lessons than those in common schools and this could suggest that the schools put more of an emphasis on academic learning. The evidence from the teachers also tends to support this (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.1).

Table 7.9: Year 9, Year 2, Responses to the statement *Where do you get most compliments?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (336)	Total (455)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Lessons	35.4% (119)	45.1% (204)
Home	22.8% (76)	16.9% (77)
Sports outside school	17.8% (60)	10.8% (50)
Friends	13.8% (46)	18.2% (83)
I don't know	6% (20)	5.7% (26)
Extracurricular activities	2.8% (10)	2.6% (12)
Form tutor	.8% (3)	.4% (2)
Facebook	.6% (2)	.2% (1)

When the students were in Year 9 and asked how they compared themselves to others the highest responses indicated that the students saw themselves as equals. Fewer students in Catholic schools compared themselves to others than those in common schools ($\chi^2 = 34.9, p = .001$). More students in common schools saw themselves as more intelligent and unique than those in Catholic schools, see Table 7.10. This could indicate that students in Catholic schools were more accepting of who they were owing to the values and ethos of the school where they are encouraged to fulfil their potential to become 'fully rounded young people taking their place in society as Christian disciples' as indicated by a teacher comment (Teacher 1: St Olaf's see Chapter 5, section 5.2.1).

Table 7.10: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the statement *How do you compare yourself to others*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (369)	Total (467)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
As an equal	50.1% (185)	41.8% (195)
I don't compare	20.3% (75)	34.3% (160)
I see others as better than me	13.1% (48)	13.3% (62)
I am more intelligent than others	6.5% (24)	3.4% (16)
Missing	3.5% (13)	3.2% (15)
I am different	2.4% (9)	N/A
I am unique	2.4% (9)	1.5% (7)
With the way I look	1.4% (5)	1.9% (9)
I am nice and helpful	0.3% (1)	0.6% (3)

A series of statements, see Table 7.11, were given to students to explore how self-esteem might manifest itself in different situations. There were similar results from both groups of students. The chi-squared test indicated that in two cases there were significant differences between students in common and Catholic schools; *I am concerned about what others say about me* ($\chi^2 = 12.87$, $p = .012$) and *I am confident in different situations in school* ($\chi^2 = 9.09$, $p = .028$). Far fewer students in Catholic schools responded always in relation to whether they were concerned about what others said about them than those in common schools. However, more students in common schools were more confident in situations in school than those in Catholic schools. This could indicate that students in common schools were more concerned about the effect that they had on others. Students in Catholic schools may feel more inhibited because the school ethos may emphasise the importance of being a member of a community rather than being individual.

Table 7.11: Year 9 Year 2 Responses to statements about applications of self-esteem

	School type Total	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am concerned about what others say about me	Common (368)	20.8% (76)	40.8% (150)	27.3% (101)	11.1% (41)
	Catholic (467)	12.8% (60)	46.3% (216)	31% (145)	9.9% (46)
I need recognition to feel good about myself	Common (370)	7.8% (29)	40% (148)	37.8% (140)	14.4% (53)
	Catholic (466)	5.2% (24)	41.8% (195)	37.3% (174)	15.7% (73)
I am confident in different situations in school	Common (370)	30.8% (114)	57.6% (213)	10.5% (39)	1.1% (4)
	Catholic (467)	26.1% (122)	66.2% (309)	6.2% (29)	1.5% (7)
I am confident in different situations outside of school	Common (370)	38.1% (141)	54.9% (203)	6.2% (23)	.8% (3)
	Catholic (467)	35.3% (165)	57.6% (269)	6.9% (32)	.2% (1)
I am truthful with myself	Common (370)	40.3% (149)	51.9% (192)	7% (26)	.8% (3)
	Catholic (467)	43.7% (204)	48.8% (228)	6.2% (29)	1.3% (6)
I achieve goals I set myself	Common (370)	20.5% (76)	61.6% (228)	14.9% (55)	3% (11)
	Catholic (467)	20.4% (95)	65.5% (306)	13.5% (63)	.6% (3)

To explore how students viewed the development of their self-esteem in school they were asked in an open question *What are the most positive things you have been told about yourself in school?* Table 7.12 sets out the categories derived from the responses. Students in both sectors indicate agreement in being told they were a good student, that they had potential and were good at sport in that order. The result of a chi-square test to assess if there were any significant differences between responses from students in different school types indicated no significant statistical difference.

Table 7.12: Year 9, Year 2, Responses to the statement *What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (330)	Total (422)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
I'm a good student	31.2% (103)	35.3% (149)
I have potential	22.9% (72)	20.2% (88)
My work has improved	17% (53)	16.3% (70)
I'm good at sport	9.1% (27)	6.2% (27)
I don't know	8.2% (24)	12% (51)
I look nice	5.7% (19)	3% (13)
I'm a good friend	3.3% (11)	6.6% (28)
I won't fail	.6% (2)	.4% (2)

The responses again indicated the stress that schools were placing on attainment and how the students perceived this through the way teachers praised them. They also recognised that this impacted on their self-esteem. A student in a Catholic school commented:

Again, like it's tests, if you do bad I think you won't want to try because you're going to think you're not going to achieve well in the next test, whereas if you achieve good then people will praise you and you feel better but it's good to have people there to say you are good at it, it's just maybe try again.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

If the school puts an emphasis on achieving, support was needed or students might just give up:

There's always something that not everyone, everyone can't be perfect for everything. Everyone's going to have something that's bad about them, so its people can't even be satisfied because there's never been the perfect person in the world.

(Female Yester School Year 9)

Different ways that self-esteem could be developed were pointed out by students and the use of praise and rewards were indicated as how a school could enhance self-esteem:

You get merit marks, so if you get a certain amount of merit marks you get like a bronze award and you get to go in front of the year group and get your certificate but we don't do that much anymore but that used to be more like an achievement, you are just kind of proud when you go up to get it.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

7.3.3 Comparison between Year 7 and Year 9 of the exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

Year 7 felt being confident in your own abilities affected self-esteem. When they received compliments or rewards this improved their level of self-esteem. Support from family and friends affected self-esteem. Praise improved confidence which affected the development of self-esteem. If students were able to feel positive about themselves in Year 7 they felt they could set targets and aim high. Getting involved in activities was another important aspect that affected self-esteem.

Receiving compliments was important for Year 9 students. However, getting compliments from teachers was most highly appreciated as it was felt that this had more significance. Year 9 identified gaining most rewards in lessons and this indicated the value they put on academic rewards. Being confident was important for Year 9 students and being a good student was perceived to affect their levels of self-esteem.

While Year 7 felt self-esteem was enhanced through support from others, Year 9 put more emphasis on how they felt they were perceived by others. This could be seen as the older students becoming more subjective in their perceptions in this area as they become more aware of their self-image, particularly with the increase in the use of social media.

7.4 The measurement of self-esteem

Within this study the Rosenberg self-esteem scale was used to measure levels of self-esteem as an indicator of personal development. This was used as a reliable method of measurement (Schmitt and Alik, 2005; Heatherton and Poliny 1991).

7.4.1 Year 7 the measurement of self-esteem

The results were similar from the students in both common and Catholic schools.

Table 7.13 sets out the Year 7 students' responses to the ten areas of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale that they completed. Few results in the table revealed statistically significant differences. However, responses to *I certainly feel useless at times* indicate that 47% (239) of students in common schools compared with 57% (320) in Catholic schools disagreed with this statement. This finding was statistically significant. A t test analysis reinforced this with a mean for common schools of 1.52, (Standard Deviation=0.903) and for Catholic schools a mean of 1.65 (Standard Deviation=0.870) ($t(1065) = 2.35, p=0.019$).

There was also a statistically significant difference in the response of students to *at times I think I am no good*, with 61% (309) of students in common schools disagreeing with the statement in comparison to 68% (382) of those in Catholic schools. This could indicate that in some senses students in Catholic schools appreciated themselves slightly better than those in common schools. An independent t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between common schools (Mean =1.77, Standard Deviation=0.989) and Catholic schools (Mean=0.193, Standard Deviation =0.929) ($t(1065) = 2.71, p= .007$).

Table 7.13: Year 7 Responses to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale statements

	School type Total	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD	Sig
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)			
I Feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	Common 503	1.8% (9)	6.2% (31)	57.4% (289)	34.6% (174)	2.25	0.651	NS
	Catholic 564	.5% (3)	4.6% (26)	66.2% (373)	28.7% (162)	2.23	0.550	
I feel I have a number of good qualities	Common 503	.6% (3)	6.8% (34)	57.9% (291)	34.7% (175)	2.27	0.611	NS
	Catholic 564	1.2% (7)	3.7% (21)	61.8% (348)	33.3% (188)	2.27	0.589	
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	Common 503	35.4% (178)	46.9% (236)	15.7% (79)	2 % (10)	2.16	0.753	NS
	Catholic 564	38.5% (217)	45.2% (255)	14.3% (81)	2% (11)	2.20	.053	
I am able to do things as well as most other people	Common 503	2.4% (12)	11.1% (56)	57.9% (291)	28.6% (144)	2.13	0.696	NS
	Catholic 564	2.5% (14)	10.7% (61)	61.4% (347)	25.1% (142)	2.09	0.672	
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	Common 503	35% (176)	45.9% (231)	15.5% (78)	3.6% (18)	2.12	0.796	NS
	Catholic 564	34.4% (194)	46.1% (260)	15.1% (85)	4.4% (25)	2.10	0.814	
I take a positive attitude towards myself	Common 503	1.8% (9)	10.3% (52)	58.5% (294)	29.4% (148)	2.16	0.673	NS
	Catholic 564	.7% (4)	6.7% (38)	64.4% (363)	28.2% (159)	2.20	0.581	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	Common 503	1% (5)	10.7% (54)	54.9% (276)	33.4% (168)	2.20	0.667	NS
	Catholic 564	1.4% (8)	9.9% (56)	56.3% (317)	32.4% (183)	2.20	0.665	
I wish I could have more respect for myself	Common 503	13.5% (68)	47.1% (237)	31.4% (158)	8% (40)	1.66	0.809	NS
	Catholic 564	13.1% (74)	42.9% (242)	34.6% (195)	9.4% (53)	1.60	0.832	
I certainly feel useless at times	Common 503	16.5% (83)	31% (156)	40.8% (205)	11.7% (59)	1.52	0.903	.019
	Catholic 564	17.4% (98)	39.4% (222)	34.2% (193)	9% (51)	1.65	0.870	
At times I think I am no good	Common 503	27.8% (140)	33.7% (169)	26.4% (133)	12.1% (61)	1.77	0.989	.007
	Catholic 564	32.6% (184)	35.1% (198)	25% (141)	7.3% (41)	1.93	0.929	

Where respondents to the Rosenberg tests score 14 or below this is an indication that they are more vulnerable to being depressed and that their self-esteem is less likely to be stable. In contrast, those with scores of 15 or above think more highly of themselves and are likely to regard themselves with more self-respect and self-acceptance (Rosenberg, 1965). Table 7.14 sets out a comparison between the outcomes of students in common and Catholic schools in relation to these categories. Overall, there is a slight trend for levels of self-esteem to be higher in Catholic schools but the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 7.14: Year 7 Results of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale above 15

Self-Esteem scale		15 and above	14 and below
		% (N.)	% (N.)
	Common Total (503)	90.3% (454)	9.7% (49)
	Catholic Total (564)	92.2% (520)	7.8% (44)

7.4.2 Year 9 the measurement of self-esteem

The Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaires were completed by students again when they were in Year 9. There were no statistically significant responses to any of the statements by Year 9 between the schools. Results between students in the two sectors were fairly similar which could indicate particular perceptions were changing at this stage of development in the middle of their time in secondary school as described by Harter (1999). Overall, most students had positive images of themselves, see Table 7.15.

Table 7.15: Year 9, Year 2 Responses to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale statements

	School type Total	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD	Sig
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)			
I feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	Common 353	.6% (2)	7.1% (25)	60.6% (214)	31.7% (112)	2.25	.616	NS
	Catholic 464	1.1% (5)	6.9% (32)	62.7% (291)	29.3% (136)	2.21	.619	
I feel I have a number of good qualities	Common 356	N/A	8.1% (29)	63.2% (225)	28.7% (102)	2.21	.572	NS
	Catholic 467	.9% (4)	5.4% (25)	68.3% (319)	25.4% (119)	2.18	.556	
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	Common 355	33.7% (120)	52.3% (185)	11.2% (40)	2.8% (10)	2.17	.738	NS
	Catholic 466	34.5% (161)	53.5% (250)	9.3% (43)	2.7% (12)	2.21	.712	
I am able to do things as well as most other people	Common 355	1.4% (5)	10.8% (38)	63.5% (226)	24.3% (86)	2.11	.636	NS
	Catholic 465	1.7% (8)	14.3% (66)	62.6% (291)	21.4% (100)	2.05	.663	
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	Common 356	27.5% (98)	52.3% (186)	15.4% (55)	4.8% (17)	2.03	.789	NS
	Catholic 465	29.6% (138)	54.3% (253)	13.6% (63)	2.5% (11)	2.12	.727	
I take a positive attitude towards myself	Common 353	.8% (3)	14.6% (51)	64% (226)	20.6% (73)	2.06	.643	NS
	Catholic 465	1.5% (7)	9% (42)	69.5% (323)	20% (93)	2.09	.599	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	Common 353	2% (7)	13.9% (49)	63.8% (225)	20.3% (72)	2.04	.672	NS
	Catholic 465	1.7% (8)	11.2% (52)	63.7% (296)	23.4% (109)	2.10	.648	
I wish I could have more respect for myself	Common 353	16.1% (57)	45% (159)	31.7% (112)	7.2% (25)	1.72	.845	NS
	Catholic 465	15.7% (71)	49% (229)	30.8% (144)	4.5% (21)	1.76	.776	
I certainly feel useless at times	Common 354	16% (57)	37.5% (133)	37.8% (134)	8.7% (30)	1.63	.871	NS
	Catholic 465	17.6% (81)	39.4% (183)	34.5% (161)	8.5% (40)	1.66	.865	
At times I think I am no good	Common 355	27.6% (98)	38.6% (137)	26.4% (94)	7.4% (26)	1.87	.910	NS
	Catholic 465	29.8% (138)	38.8% (181)	25.4% (118)	6% (28)	1.93	.892	

Overall, relatively small proportions of students fell into the category of having low self-esteem (14 points or below). Slightly more students in common schools fell

within this category but the difference was not significantly significant, see Table 7.16.

Table 7.16: Year 9, Year 2 Results of Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale scoring above 15

	15 and above	14 and below
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (370)	88.4%(327)	11.6%(43)
Catholic Total (465)	91.6%(428)	8.4% (39)

7.4.3 Comparison between the measurement of self-esteem Year 7 and 9

Most students in both Year 7 and Year 9 students indicated positive levels of self-esteem on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. There was minimal difference between levels of self-esteem in the two years although a small drop in levels could be detected (1.5% drop in common schools and .7% in Catholic schools). A drop in the level of self-esteem is not uncommon at this stage of development, as indicated by previous research by Harter (1999). However, in this study in the main levels of self-esteem remained relatively stable over time.

7.5 Summary

In this chapter I have presented results from the first cohort in the study and looked at their responses to the questionnaires and their comments during the focus group interviews. Having addressed the perceptions of students regarding the impact of school ethos on PSHE in the previous chapter, in this chapter I discuss the development of student self-esteem. I focus on the second key question: Do students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

Evidence from the findings indicated that Year 7 felt perceptions of the nature of self-esteem were concerned with the view they had of themselves and this belief continued to be held when they were in Year 9. Year 7 students emphasised that the nature of self-esteem was concerned with being confident in their own ability and whether or not you thought you were good at something. However, by Year 9 the view of others became more pertinent. Regard for what others thought became important and not only how you saw yourself, but also how you wanted others to see you, perhaps reflecting the importance of social media as indicated earlier.

Year 7 believed factors which might affect self-esteem included it being improved through receiving compliments from others. Year 7 students received most compliments in school and this was also true for them when they were in Year 9. In both year groups, students saw themselves as equal to others. Year 7 recognised that working on something, putting effort into achieving and then doing well built their self-esteem. Year 7 appreciated that praise built confidence and self-esteem.

Year 9 students appreciated being told that they were a good student and that they had potential. They felt it was important to do well in tests and this gave a level of satisfaction which helped build self-esteem, as did gaining rewards for their efforts. Year 9 students felt working with friends in a supportive way was another aspect that helped develop their self-esteem and emphasised the importance of teacher support to boost confidence. If a student had confidence, this could impact on others.

Responses to the questionnaires and comments made in the focus group discussions consistently indicated that during PSHE lessons aspects of the programme helped students to build their self-esteem. Students indicated that PSHE helped them develop their self-esteem through, for example, valuing friendships they formed, and appreciating their own value. They also indicated that they had

developed an understanding of where they built their self-esteem in and out of school.

The measurement of self-esteem in this study remained stable over time between Year 7 and Year 9, although the older students appeared to be more influenced by academic achievement and self-image. The difference between the two types of school was identified as students in common schools having slightly lower levels of self-esteem at this stage.

In the next chapter I will present the responses for the second cohort I investigated.

Chapter 8 Findings: Cohort 2 Perceptions of issues relating to ethos, the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, PSHE and progress and attainment.

8.1. Introduction

In this chapter I shall present the data collected from the second cohort of students in the eight schools I visited. In this chapter in particular, I will discuss student perceptions relating to ethos, including the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, PSHE and progress and attainment. The research question being addressed in this chapter is:

How do students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?

I will examine the findings with regard to how students perceive progress and attainment as a process of examining the broader context of personal development, and self-esteem in the next chapter.

The first time I collected questionnaires from this group, the students were in Year 9, the middle year of secondary school. The second time I went to visit them they were in Year 11 at the end of their compulsory education. This enabled me to have an insight into students' opinions and attitudes across the secondary age range. As in the previous chapter focus groups were made up of students from a range of abilities. The same headings will be employed as those used in Chapter 6, i.e., ethos, PSHE and progress and attainment. Personal development will be addressed systematically in the following chapter. Not all the students who attended the focus group interview during the first visit were the same students who attended the second focus group interview because some children were absent on that day or had moved

schools. Therefore, approximately half the students had previously attended the focus group and this was common to all the interviews.

8.2 School Ethos

Judging from student comments during focus group interviews, it was evident that school ethos continued to help students appreciate what the school regarded as important.

8.2.1 Year 9 Perceptions of school ethos

With regard to perceptions of school ethos, students viewed it in terms of expectations and relationships:

All the teacher's like urge you to have strong relationships with others around you and like they, if you have a problem then the teacher will help you to sort it out and like then they just yeah.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Students indicated that, if there were problems, teachers would help them resolve issues by ensuring good relationships and encouraging them to treat others in a positive way. Good relationships helped students to be confident and were appreciated in the same way by younger students in the first cohort. Students said that having good relationships enabled them to work well and support each other, as well as having fun, which made learning enjoyable. Teachers reinforced the importance of developing supportive relationships and encouragement (Chapter 5, section 5.8.1). Where school ethos rewarded student achievement, it helped students to appreciate that they could achieve more than they thought:

If you've done something well...outside of school, then you get recognised and you get an award for it.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

This student mentioned the Jack Petchy award, which students in other schools also made reference to. Another boy in the same school went further adding:

With different experience you begin to realise that you are capable of doing more than you think.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

Some schools had a specific ethos that provided opportunities that encouraged students to take part in a wide range of activities both within school and in the wider community. This enabled them to grow and expand their personal horizons. This was a common theme discussed by some teachers in their interviews (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.2). Students in other schools indicated that their ethos placed an emphasis on helping them to *respect other's views and beliefs* (Male Heatherside Year 9).

For a student in one school this idea was reinforced by having:

More understanding of people in different places.

(Female Beechwood Year 9)

School ethos led to an understanding that however different people were they all needed to be respected. One girl added that not only had she learnt to be more aware of other people's feelings, but she was also able to

Empathise with other's points of view.

(Female Beechwood Year 9)

Another student said that she learnt *to be a better person* (Female Yester Year 9).

One boy said that he felt he learnt how to be more open in school and at the same time not let others put him down. Overall, the students indicated that the effect of school ethos was far-reaching. The values that schools expressed through their ethos helped students to develop different ways of thinking about the wider world around them. Monahan (2000) describes ethos as being understood through how it was experienced, while Solvason (2005) and Stern (2009) accentuate ethos being understood through the atmosphere that is established.

8.2.2 Year 11 perceptions of school ethos

The attitudes of this cohort towards ethos, work and achievement seemed to be positive in both Catholic and common schools. One student from a Catholic school mentioned:

I think they focus more on lessons like how well you do in exams more
(Female St Angela's Year 11)

This student expressed the view that she felt the school wanted her to do well in examinations and understood the pressure to achieve. Another student said:

There are so many opportunities during school time and after school, like sports after school, you've got so many activities that you can go along to and then you may find you're good at it.
(Female St Olaf's Year 11)

This suggested that students felt they were encouraged to find things that they were good at and different ways in which they could achieve. Students were able to grow through the varied opportunities they experienced as described by Bigger (1999) such as their responses to reading different texts. This was summed up by another student who felt the ethos of the school was expressed through expectations and explained how he was required to interact with other students:

You can be friendly to them and help them through like hard times and stuff.
(Male Yester Year 11)

One reason for this finding might be that schools were trying to encourage students to take full advantage of opportunities that were available to them in order that they could develop their full potential. Interactions with other students were encouraged through positive encounters so that they could support each other to succeed.

8.2.3 Comparison of Year 9 and Year 11 student perceptions of school ethos

Year 9 students understood that they needed to establish good relationships with other students in order to support and help each other to work hard and achieve. Schools rewarded achievement and provided a range of opportunities to help students develop experiences by which they learnt about themselves and could appreciate that they were more capable than they thought they were. The school ethos also helped students in Year 9 to develop respect for people who were different.

School ethos continued to reinforce an ethic of work and achievement for Year 11 students. Year 11 students also appreciated the range of opportunities that they were encouraged to experience in order to find activities in which they could achieve.

Both as Year 9 students and as Year 11 students, this cohort understood that the ethos of the school required them to develop good relationships and to be friendly towards others. Both year groups appreciated the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities the school provided. In Chapter 5 teachers indicated that they provided a range of opportunities for students to help them grow and develop their self-perception (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3) and develop as good citizens in the future (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.2). Year 9 students valued that the school ethos helped them develop their thinking on various topics, while Year 11 valued the emphasis the school put on achieving academic goals. This again may reflect the schools concern for their position in league tables and external perceptions. Brown, Busfield, O'Shea and Sibthorpe (2011) stressed that ethos could be understood through values that were promoted.

Through taking advantage of opportunities available students were able to develop both for now and in the future. They were able to develop their own values through the experiences that school provided for them. By Year 11 students were more focused on the needs of their futures and needed to ensure they gained good academic results.

8.3 Perceptions of the distinctive nature of a Catholic School

Students in Catholic schools discussed the distinctive nature of attending a Catholic school.

8.3.1 Year 9 perceptions of the distinctive nature of a Catholic School

Students in the Catholic schools expressed the view that it made a difference being in a Catholic school. The impact of belonging to a Catholic school added specific meaning to their lives. This had an implication about how to live life and they were supported in this through the way they made decisions:

I feel our school is kind of special because I don't know, you're classified in a category a Catholic and you actually mean something.
(Female St Mary's Year 9)

Knowing that you go to a Catholic school means you get a bit of guidance, knowing that you have Jesus in your life.
(Male St Mary's Year 9)

There was support which guided behaviour. However, one student in this school pointed out that not everyone is the same in the school, not all students held exactly the same beliefs. He said that not all children practised their faith and individuals held different beliefs. The students felt they had more Religious Education lessons than

others in common schools. On the whole students felt positive about this, as they felt God helped and supported them, especially when they felt unhappy or worried. Some students intimated that they would go to the chapel. It was explained:

In some readings they talk about how God has made every one unique and you're special whoever you are, so I guess that can raise your self-esteem, because you are unique and you are special and better than people in some ways than others, so.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

This theme of being supported by God was reflected by others. The following statement reinforced the idea of support that students felt they gained:

It's like you think of well, like how God affects how you feel and that He's always around to talk to if you're feeling sad, so they in RE lessons they explain there's always someone with you and we've got a chapel, so we can go there with a friend or we can talk to someone or we can talk to God about how you're feeling.

(Female St Olaf's Year 9)

Others felt that there was a benefit as they felt it *made them feel like they had God on their side to help them* (Female St Mary's Year 9). This was seen as supportive.

Some students felt quite strongly that being in a Catholic school had a strong effect upon them:

I think it's really important having a Catholic school like where you get taught like the things you should be doing and like we have weekly themes. Like helping people and I think that like when you go to a Catholic school and you learn about God and you learn about all the different things in the Bible, like Jesus and that. Then it gives you something to go back to, if you ever feel, if you ever feel completely alone and it would probably help as well, if you go to a Catholic school, other people they are there to help you like because you have all learnt hospitality, charity and things like that.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

This student felt that the teaching received in a Catholic school set expectations about how to interact with others. Students acknowledged that God had a distinctive place and role in Catholic education. During teacher interviews it was noted that spiritual development was an important part of the school's mission (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3).

Of course, not all those within a Catholic school were committed to the Catholic faith:

It doesn't really depend on the school because like some people here they are not even Christian because they have different religions so it doesn't really matter if it's a Catholic school because you're just you and your religion doesn't really count.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

The same sentiment was echoed in the following comment:

I think it depends how you practise your Catholic [faith] because some people don't really go to Catholic [liturgies] or anything, it kind of depends who you are and what you believe.

(Male St Mary's Year 9)

So a proportion of students in Year 9 were not as committed to Catholic beliefs. They did not feel that being in a Catholic school had any impact on them. There were students who disagreed about the importance that religion played in the school. Individual personal opinions played a part in student beliefs. Overall, a diversity of views was expressed by Year 9 and while most students appreciated the support they gained from God and their beliefs, alternative opinions were articulated. The students who participated in the focus group interviews recognised that individuals had different outlooks and views.

It is possible that these findings indicate that there is a diversity of views held within a Catholic school. Nevertheless, an appreciation of the community ethos was appreciated by students.

8.3.2 Year 11 perceptions of the distinctive nature of a Catholic School

When they were in Year 11, the students thought that going to mass was seen as an important aspect of attending a Catholic school:

We go to mass and it gives people like just time to reflect quietly.

(Male St Christopher's Year 11)

Year 11 students explained that quiet times gave space for reflection. It was a time when they could think about what they wanted to achieve and think about themselves

while not being compared to others. They said this gave confidence, as they felt that God was with them. Sharing during RE lessons also gave additional space to talk about issues when they could share with others, which aided confidence. One student explained that they *did RE and it was compulsory* (Female St Angela's Year 11).

One student felt behaviour in a Catholic school could be better than in other schools. They thought that a Catholic school was less likely to have a negative impact on an individual's self-esteem. Having a shared set of beliefs was also something that students felt they had in common and this made it easier to make friends:

It can get you more involved with the community like going to Catholic (events) and stuff you get more involved with different programmes.
(Female St Olaf's Year 11)

I think it helps you in some ways like coming to a Catholic school, like everyone has the same sort of, we all have a similarity, we all believe in one thing together, so that can kind of encourage people to like find out if there are other similarities with people.
(Male St Mary's Year 11)

A shared sense of values was something that was seen as important to establish by the Congregation for Catholic Education (1997) and students recognised this was something they had in common. There were students who felt that it was not necessarily a positive thing to be educated in a Catholic school because:

Just because you are in a Catholic school doesn't mean people can censor what you are saying or how people are feeling on the impact it's having on someone in the playground you can still build or like destroy someone's self-esteem and they'll never know. So it doesn't make a difference I don't think just because you are in a Catholic school doesn't mean people can censor what you are saying or how people are feeling on the impact its having on someone in the playground... So it doesn't make a difference I don't think.

(Female St Mary's Year 11)

Some students went as far as to say:

I guess in some ways it can lower self-esteem. This is out of school, if someone asks you what school you go to and you tell them this school and they'll turn round and be like that's a Catholic school and then go, start slating religion and things like that and if you're dedicated to your Catholic and know

what it's really about and they don't, it can really like lower your self-esteem because you start to think, why am I there and what am I doing.
(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

Two students felt it made little difference being in a Catholic school. Another student felt the school was focused too heavily on students gaining academic results.

Whereas another student explained:

I don't think it's to do with being a Catholic school, I think it's more to do with the teachers and the people you are socialising with, I think they have a bigger effect on it.

(Male St Christopher's Year 11)

While some Year 11 students appreciated being part of a specific community where beliefs were held in common, it was also recognised that individual views could be diverse. Some students felt attending a Catholic school had little impact and peers had more influence, again a possible reflection of the impact of social media on teenagers. There may be a number of reasons for this including the diverse family backgrounds that students came from. With the increasing influence and impact of society on student views as they progressed through school, individual spiritual values will vary from student to student.

8.3.3 Comparison between Year 9 and 11 of student perceptions of the distinctive nature of a Catholic school

Some Year 9 students felt special because they attended a Catholic school. Some students felt the school provided guidance about how to live life and make appropriate decisions. It was recognised that not all students held the same degree of faith or practised their religion to the same degree, but in the main students felt positive about compulsory RE lessons. Gallagher (2001) argued that in Catholic schools it was important for students to develop a relationship with God and

communicate with Him. Students also felt that God supported them, which helped them develop their relationship with Him.

Year 11 students felt that attendance at mass during school gave them time for reflection and they could examine issues relating to what they wanted to achieve. They felt that knowing God was there for them gave them confidence. Teachers felt this helped students to appreciate and value themselves (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). RE lessons provided a time for talking and sharing in a positive way. Having in general, a shared set of beliefs and values gave students something they held in common and this made making friends easier. Both McGettrick (2005) and Morris (2008) maintain that building positive relationships is an important aspect of building a strong school community.

One interesting feature of the results of the questionnaire and focus group interviews was the acceptance by students in both year groups of the diversity in beliefs. For example, a Year 9 student said that they felt God had made individuals unique and therefore they were all special. The Catholic school had enabled Year 9 students to value that God was always available to communicate with and that within a Catholic school greater time was made for Religious Education lessons. Attending a Catholic school provided both Year 9 and Year 11 students with an understanding of shared beliefs and a sense of community that they could identify with.

These findings indicate that it can be considered that the perceptions of the impact of attending a Catholic school will vary from individual to individual.

8.4 Perceptions of PSHE

8.4.1 Year 9 perceptions of PSHE

Students told me that PSHE helped them deal with issues that arose outside of school relating to life. I was told that PSHE helped:

Mainly like dealing with problems that we have outside school.
(Male St Mary's Year 9)

This included knowing about what items were regarded as weapons by the police, for example. Students needed to know about how to handle finance and things that affected their future as well as helping them with present situations. I was told PSHE was helpful, because there was nowhere else on the curriculum that students could learn about such topics. PSHE was productive in terms of:

Like when you like get into situations like sex or drugs or whatever and just like give you facts about it. You know what to do.
(Female Yester Year 9)

PSHE supported students in being prepared for situations in life that they might come across and it gave them the confidence to know how to handle issues. It enabled students to understand the consequences of their actions, both now and in the future. It was also constructive in helping students understand their feelings and emotions:

I think it's important because if you didn't have PSHE you wouldn't know what to do or who to help or what things would happen to your body, you wouldn't know any of that.
(Female Beechwood Year 9)

Students learnt about changes that were happening to them both physically and emotionally. Talking with others helped students to understand themselves better and to be able to make appropriate decisions based on evidence they could evaluate through discussion and debate. In this way students were able to learn how to look after themselves. They learnt and enjoyed the process:

I like PSHE because it teaches you to be cooperative and to get on with people and not to mix with the wrong people.
(Male St Olaf's Year 9)

PSHE gave students confidence, because they could compare their views with others and learnt about the dangers of life in a safe environment. Students were able to express their views and share opinions and given opportunities to succeed (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.1). Taking part in activities was stressed by Pring (2005) as an important aspect of student development.

The ability to share views could be cathartic. However, sometimes students felt PSHE could be repetitive; if a topic had been studied on a previous occasion, and if they were familiar with the topic, they found it could be tedious, if they were familiar with the topic. Nevertheless, on the whole students found PSHE helpful in gaining insight into the world around them and it helped to give students stepping stones into the adult world. Students felt they were able to empathise with others in different situations through PSHE, such as those with a disability or being part of the older generation. Some felt they were able to learn how to cooperate and get on with others through working and learning together. They learnt that most students shared similar experiences as they progressed through this stage of life, which was reassuring (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.2). Stress could be experienced according to Kyriacou and Zuin (2016) by all students from communications received through mobile phones. This was common to all those with access to mobile communications, but was something PSHE could help all students cope with.

Responses to the question regarding concerns about life and where support was available indicated that students in common schools gained most support from friends, while students in Catholic schools gained most support from their family. Students were presented with the six categories and they responded as indicated in Table 8.1. The category indicating *other* was not defined and students may have indicated that they used such devices as Facebook or social media for support in

such cases. The chi-squared test was carried out to determine whether or not there was a relationship between responses of students in common or Catholic school, indicated that these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 8.1: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *If you have concerns about life, who do you get your support from?*

	Common Total (517)	Catholic Total (558)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Friends	26.1% (135)	26.7% (149)
Family	25.7% (133)	32.8% (183)
Parents	19.5% (101)	18.1% (101)
Subject teacher	10.1% (52)	9% (50)
Tutor	7.2% (37)	5.2% (29)
Other	5.8% (30)	3.7% (21)
Brothers/sisters	5.6% (29)	4.5% (25)

The chi-squared test that was carried out to determine whether or not there was a relationship between responses of students in common and Catholic schools regarding whether or not they enjoyed PSHE indicated no statistical significant difference.

Table 8.2: Year 9 Year 1, Responses to the statement *Have you enjoyed PSHE?*

	Yes	No
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (521)	71.8% (374)	28.2% (147)
Catholic Total (558)	72.9% (407)	27.1% (151)

Most students in common and Catholic schools indicated they valued learning about life. Learning about drug abuse was appreciated by those in common schools, while learning about confidence, self-esteem and knife crime, was appreciated more by

students in Catholic schools. This could indicate that more time was spent on the topic of drugs in common schools or that students in Catholic schools had more concern with how to conduct themselves as identified by Pring (2005) who emphasised that the school ethos ensured that there was a shared understanding of the aims and conduct of life. The categories in Table 8.3 were compiled from the open responses given by the students. The chi-squared test out indicates that there were statistical significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 91.6$, $p = .001$) in terms of whether they enjoyed and found PSHE useful.

Table 8.3: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *What have you enjoyed and found useful in PSHE?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (286)	Total (348)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Learning about life	50.3% (144)	49.1% (171)
Learning about drug abuse	28.5% (81)	10.9% (38)
Learning to respect and work with others	10.5% (30)	9.2% (32)
Learning about bullying	4.5% (13)	.6% (2)
Learning what is right and wrong	2.8% (8)	2.9% (10)
Developing confidence and self-esteem	1.4% (4)	8.9% (31)
Learning I am the same as others	1% (3)	2.9% (10)
Learning about knife crime	.7% (2)	14.1% (49)
Organising my work	.3% (1)	1.4% (5)

Those in common schools demonstrated that they had found PSHE less useful than those in Catholic schools, and a chi-squared test indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the responses of those in the two types of

school ($\chi^2 = 29.05$, $p = .001$) in terms of how useful they found PSHE. Students in Catholic schools may have appreciated learning about themselves more, because it may have been given greater prominence in a Catholic school (see chapter 5, section 5.8.2).

This may indicate that Catholic schools placed more emphasis on the appreciation of the individual whereas common schools may spend more time on helping individuals to achieve. See table 8.4.

Table 8.4: Year 9, Year1, Responses to the statement *Has PSHE helped you?*

	Yes	No
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (521)	22.1% (115)	77.9% (406)
Catholic Total (558)	37.1% (207)	62.9% (351)

Table 8.5 suggests that students in common and Catholic schools found PSHE useful in helping them make the right decisions. This was an open question and student answers were used to establish the categories below. Students in Catholic schools appreciated learning about life more than those in common schools. A focus given to conducting individual behaviour, as stressed by O'Malley (2007), in the community may account for this difference. There were statistical significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 16.48$, $p = .036$) in terms of whether students found PSHE useful when making decisions.

Table 8.5: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *How has PSHE helped you to make decisions?*

	Common Total (95)	Catholic Total (192)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Making the right decisions	22.4% (21)	30.2% (58)
About the future	20% (19)	10.8% (21)
Learning about drugs	18.9% (18)	11.2% (22)
Learning about life	13.6% (13)	27.7% (52)
Regarding peer pressure	12.6% (12)	8.2% (16)
About being confident and having more self-esteem	7.3% (7)	4.6% (9)
About bullying	4.2% (4)	4.2% (8)
About being a better friend	1% (1)	1.6% (3)
Making friends	N/A	1.5% (3)

8.4.2 Year 11 perceptions of PSHE

When this cohort of students was in Year 11, they perceived PSHE in a positive manner. One student explained that as far as PSHE was concerned *they'd like to do it more* (Male St Christopher's Year 11). This was because they only had one lesson per fortnight and he felt this meant they did not do enough PSHE. Most students acknowledged the fact that being able to take part in debates and talk about issues was helpful, but some students felt this could be difficult if all your friends were discussing something that one individual knew little about. This individual would be unlikely to admit to such ignorance, as he would not want to be alienated from the group and therefore may have felt uncomfortable.

Students felt PSHE did allow for a more relaxed and open atmosphere to be created in the class. I was told PSHE was useful because it helped students deal with real life situations. The importance of PSHE was recognised because:

It's more applicable than other subjects.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

Life situations ...and things that could possibly happen in your future.

(Male Townhead Year11)

PSHE involved:

The practical stuff about life, the social things, problems that you are going to encounter.

(Male Yester Year 11)

This student thought PSHE was important, because it was relevant to student lives.

Other students also mentioned that they were learning lots of different subjects in school, but PSHE was the only one that had direct relevance to their lives:

It gives you ideas about how to deal with situations when they come up and informs you about stuff which you wouldn't find out otherwise.

(Male Heatherside Year 11)

Students regarded PSHE as involving learning about social skills which helped them in life and helped prepare them for their futures. It had practical applications and helped them learn about problems they may encounter in the future. PSHE helped students to know *how to work in society* (Female Beechwood Year 11).

PSHE was appreciated because:

It's more applicable than other subjects, what we learn in Chemistry we'll probably never use again unless we're going to become chemists, but this is stuff we actually need to learn.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

It teaches you like about what you like have to deal with in life and shows you how to like use skills.

(Female Beechwood Year 11)

If you don't know how to cooperate with the outside world and once we leave school we'll find ourselves a bit stuck.

(Male St Mary's Year 11)

This subject had practical applications to life. Students learnt about:

Dangers of like the outside world and like drugs.

(Male St Mary's Year 11)

The topics studied in PSHE were found to be relevant and students appreciated the opportunity to discuss these issues amongst themselves and take account of different opinions. Students were also taught about *the bad things in life what to avoid* (Male St Olaf's Year 11). PSHE gave students an awareness of the dangers that could occur if they were not vigilant. PSHE helped students to:

Learn about life out of school and like when we have to be independent and sort of the bad things in life what to avoid and what's going to happen next like managing finances and drugs.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

It helped students to become more independent by preparing them with skills for their future. One student, for example, talked about the fact that:

We also learn about benefits and also bad parts about social media, social networking sights such as not giving details out on Facebook, lots of things and making sure that you don't meet up with strangers.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

Students learnt about the details of how not to get into danger as well as preparing themselves for learning to cooperate, empathise and work with others. PSHE was important because students were:

Informed about everything so you can make informed choices.

(Female St Mary's Year 11)

We wouldn't really learn it if we didn't have this lesson.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

PSHE prepared students for what they were going to have to deal with in life, like going to university and taking part in interviews for jobs. It helped them develop:

Just good skills and it's crucial at the time, at the moment which we're in.

(Male St Mary's Year 11)

This student identified the importance of PSHE and found it useful. By Year 11 students had a more complete experience of the programme and it appeared to

make more sense to them by this stage. Students appreciated how PSHE had practical application for their lives as they were beginning to make more important decisions:

It's good to have the support and knowledge that PSHE give us.
(Male St Mary's Year 11)

Students were able to draw on the knowledge and experience that PSHE had provided. This was found to be reassuring by some students, because it gave them a reference base on which to make decisions. After studying PSHE for five years one student explained:

We understand how it's preparing us for the future rather than in the previous years.
(Male St Mary's Year 11)

Having a personal belief was an important element of self-esteem and PSHE helped students to stay positive:

It's about how you regard yourself and often it can be put down by other people, but you have to have faith in yourself and confidence and look at life in a positive way.
(Female St Mary's Year 11)

Self-awareness was a component that helped an individual to feel secure. The way they felt about them self-affected what they thought they could achieve. It also involved *accepting who you were* (Female Yester Year 11). Knowing that they could achieve, but that there were certain things that they were not good at, were part of self-understanding and self-esteem involved accepting both positive as well as negative aspects. It concerned *how students viewed themselves* (Male Yester Year 11). This enabled individual students to talk to others and to cope with everyday life. They were able to accept negative things about themselves, but remain confident without worrying about the negatives; for example, how they looked. Students were able to appreciate the way people could work together which was stressed as an aspect of the ethos which affected the way individuals interacted and developed a set of values by Glover and Coleman (2005).

There were also negative aspects to the subject:

They never really show the positive side of anything. It's always like, I know it sounds quite blunt but it's like if you drink you are going to pass out, you'll probably get raped and then you'll die. It's like it's not going to happen. It's good to have the warnings there but you know they should talk about the fun side as well.

(Male Yester Year 11)

Table 8.6 indicates open response replies to what students found they had enjoyed and found useful in PSHE. Students in common schools enjoyed learning about social issues, while those in Catholic schools enjoyed learning about the next phase in their life; leaving school or going to sixth form. The difference in responses could be explained by the fact that students in Catholic schools may cover some of these topics in Religious Education. The chi-squared test indicated that there were statistically significant difference between the responses of those in the two types of school ($\chi^2 = 189.8$, $p = .001$).

Table 8.6: Year 11, Responses to the statement *What have you enjoyed and found most useful in PSHE?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (236)	Total (393)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Learning about social issues	62.4% (147)	16.2% (63)
Discussions and watching videos	16.9% (40)	15.1% (59)
Nothing	12.4% (29)	12.4% (49)
Learning about leaving school and going to sixth form	4.2% (10)	40% (157)
How to be successful	2.1% (5)	8.3% (33)
Learning to make the right decisions	1.2% (3)	2% (8)
Learning about jobs	.8% (2)	5.8% (23)
How to stop bullying	0% (0)	.2% (1)

8.4.3 Comparison between Year 9 and 11 perceptions of PSHE

Learning about issues relating to life and problems that may occur out of school were appreciated by Year 9 students. Students learnt about how to handle issues relating to finance among other topics. They felt PSHE had a unique place on the curriculum as there was nowhere else where issues relating directly to life were addressed in a practical way. They gained confidence in handling issues and learnt about their feelings and emotions, as well as learning about changes they were undergoing both physical and emotional. In this subject, students in Year 9 learnt to understand themselves better and to make appropriate decisions through discussion and debate. They were able to gain insights into the world and the subject presented a stepping stone into adult life. Friends and family provided a good source of support. Students in Catholic schools respected learning about how to make the right decisions and life, students in common schools appreciated learning about their futures, drugs and peer pressure.

Year 11 students found debating issues in PSHE helpful. They found that issues discussed related directly to life situations. The subject was very practical and dealt with issues that students might experience in social situations. Developing social skills was seen to be helpful in knowing how to conduct themselves in situations such as the workplace in the future. Year 11 students in common schools emphasised learning about social issues, while students in Catholic schools emphasised learning about their futures.

8.5 Perceptions of progress and attainment

8.5.1 Year 9 perception of progress and attainment

When students felt they had succeeded, they felt pleased with themselves:

If you did really well in a test it makes you feel as if you can do it in the next test but if you got a bad mark, it's, you feel a bit like you haven't done really well and you feel kind of like I don't want to do this.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Another girl in the group explained that feeling they were capable of succeeding had a big impact:

Like its tests, if you do bad I think you won't want to try because you're going to think you're not going to achieve. However, if you do well and get praise you keep trying.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

This was challenging for teachers, because while they needed to be realistic with students, it was obvious from statements that they needed to ensure students were able to be in a frame of mind where they kept trying to make progress. Students made comments indicating it was important for them to get recognition and praise in order to keep focused. One boy commented:

If you do work, teachers make good journal comments.

(Male St Christopher's Year 9)

This boy appreciated good comments that were put in his journal that he could take home and show his parents. Another boy in the same class explained:

If you do something well in class or get a good test result, a letter is sent home.

(Male Christopher's Year 9)

Here again a student showed understanding of recognition for good work that he had produced. This was reinforced further by another student who said of his subjects:

If you are doing academic ones and like maths and you get a good maths test result, that helps.

(Male Christopher's Year 9)

Gaining positive results appeared to play a vital role in enabling students to make more progress.

Table 8.7 provides data about what Year 9 students would like the school to do to help them achieve more. Most students from this study in both sectors acknowledge that they would like school to help them achieve more in life. A chi-squared test indicated that there were highly significant differences between the responses of Year 9 students in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=7.9$, $p=.019$). Students in Catholic schools indicated that they desired slightly more support. This may indicate that students in Catholic schools were more accustomed to expecting greater levels of support. An ethos of support was commented on by teachers in Catholic schools (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3). Students in common schools may feel more confident in their own ability.

Table 8.7: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *Would you like school to help you to achieve more in your life?*

	Yes	No
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (520)	75.8% (394)	24.2% (126)
Catholic Total (547)	76.8% (420)	23.2% (127)

Table 8.8 indicates that Year 9 students in both common and Catholic schools, when asked how they would like school to help them achieve more, students testified that they were most concerned to improve their skills and learning. However, to get noticed and increase confidence was more important to those in Catholic schools than those in common schools. This was an open question and student responses dictated the categories that emerged in the table. A chi-squared test indicated that

there were significant differences between the responses from those in the two types of schools ($\chi^2 = 21.84$, $p = .009$) in terms of how they would like school to help them achieve more. Students in common schools were more concerned with improving skills and learning than those in Catholic schools, whereas students in Catholic schools were more concerned with getting good grades. Students in Catholic schools may therefore be more influenced by the priority of their school to uphold academic standards.

Table 8.8: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *How would you like school to help you to achieve more?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (388)	Total (422)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
To help improve my skills and learning	33.2% (129)	26.3% (111)
Help me get a job	20.9% (81)	21.6% (91)
To get good grades	18.3% (71)	23% (97)
To make lessons fun	14.2% (55)	8.8% (37)
To be more noticed and increase my confidence	8% (31)	10.4% (44)
To have more clubs	4.1% (16)	7.3% (31)
Have more equipment in school	1.3% (5)	1.2% (5)
Teach right from wrong	0 (0)	.9% (4)
Use more ICT	0 (0)	.5% (2)

Students in common and Catholic schools acknowledged they gained most rewards from subject lessons and a higher percentage in common schools appeared to get rewarded for working hard see Table 8.9. This was an open question and the categories below were compiled from responses given. A chi-squared test indicated that there were highly significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 20.74$, $p = .004$) in terms of where they got most

rewards in school. While all students gained most rewards in subject lessons, more students in common schools got greater rewards from working hard, but a higher percentage of students in this sector felt they didn't get rewards. Rewards may therefore be used to a greater extent in Catholic schools which may help as Arthur (2002) stresses in the Catholic school ethos being concerned with building individuals into who they can become, rather than just focusing on who they are at present.

Table 8.9: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to *Where do you get most rewards in school?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (517)	Total (548)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
From subject lessons	43.3% (224)	47.8% (262)
I don't	26.3% (136)	22.8% (125)
From working hard	14.9% (77)	8.8% (48)
From sports activities	9.3% (48)	13.4% (73)
From my tutor	4.4% (23)	3.8% (21)
Being involved in assemblies	1.2% (6)	1.8% (10)
From tests	.6% (3)	1.6% (9)

Table 8.10 displays responses concerning the most positive thing students had been told about themselves in school. Students in both common and Catholic schools indicated that being good at a subject was the most positive thing they had been told. Students in Catholic schools appear to appreciate being told they have potential more than students in common schools. This indicates, as McLaughlin (2005) argues, that the influence of the teacher cannot be underestimated. Again, students in common schools indicate that they appreciate knowing their work has improved,

whereas students in Catholic schools value their potential more. There were highly statistically significant differences in the responses made ($\chi^2 = 39.19$, $p = .001$).

Table 8.10: Year 9, Year 1 Responses to the statement *What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?*

	Common Total (471)	Catholic Total (523)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am good at a subject	24% (113)	28.3% (148)
My work has improved	21.2% (100)	9.9% (52)
Don't know	21% (99)	21.5% (111)
I have potential	15.3% (72)	22.1% (116)
I am a good friend	4.5% (21)	6.3% (33)
I look and am nice	6.4% (30)	5% (26)
I am positive	4.5% (21)	2.4% (13)
I am helpful	2.3% (11)	3.2% (17)
I am pleasant to work with	.8% (4)	1.3% (7)

The evidence presented may indicate that students in common schools are more encouraged by seeing immediate development, whereas students in Catholic schools are more encouraged by future attainment. This could be explained by students in Catholic schools being encouraged to appreciate their future potential rather than concentrating on their present ability.

In Table 8.11 *indications* of responses to the open question *what good things have given you satisfaction?* testified that getting good results had given more satisfaction to those in common schools, while those in Catholic schools gained more from helping others than those in common schools. A chi-squared test that was carried out indicated highly statistical significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2 21.19$, $p = .004$) in terms of what good things had

given satisfaction. The data revealed that students in Catholic schools were less focused on getting good results than those in common schools and gained more satisfaction from hobbies and helping others. This could reveal a greater sense of involvement within the community. While those in common schools gain greater satisfaction from entering competitions which may reveal greater individual satisfaction. It may be that these results indicate different attitudes that are developed within the two types of schools and that students in common schools are more focused on ensuring they achieve individual success through the inherent messages that are developed within their school sector and that students in Catholic schools have developed more social awareness in terms of being more concerned with helping others. This would be in alignment with the values laid out by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1997).

Table 8.11: Year 9, Year 1 Responses to the statement *What good things have you done that given you satisfaction?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (487)	Total (526)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting good results	50.3% (244)	39.5% (207)
Don't know	13.9% (68)	17.9% (94)
From hobbies	12.3% (60)	16.5% (87)
Helping others	11.7% (57)	16.5% (87)
Entering competitions	9.6% (47)	8.3% (44)
Giving to charity	2.2% (11)	1.3% (7)

8.5.2 Year 11 perception of progress and attainment

In order to help make progress and improve attainment in their studies, when Cohort 2 students were in Year 11, they indicated the importance of gaining praise and

approval. One girl explained that if you worked at a subject you got *praise for getting work done* and then she was able *to sit there and focus* (Female St Olaf's Year 11). Even at this stage, Year 11 still felt they needed praise and encouragement to help them make progress. One boy commented:

[If] A teacher knocks you down, it really does like, you kind of give up.
(Male Heatherside Year 11)

Teacher impact played an important part in student attainment. Students were given every opportunity in school to do well in subjects, but it depended on:

Whether you want to persist with that.
(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

Students needed help to ensure they continued to make progress and were motivated to work. Some students indicated that it was important to *be forward and have an active part* (Male Townhead Year 11). This student was aware that an individual had to play their part and make every effort to be sure they were successful. Another boy observed:

If you can shine and show that you're getting like the best grades and prove to the teacher that you can like do the task they set and get something out of it.
(Male Townhead Year 11)

Recognition was given to the part played by students in ensuring they achieved the results that were beneficial to them. This idea was summed up by the following student who explained:

Getting a good grade helps you learn that you do have the potential to achieve.
(Male Townhead Year 11)

However a student did not always gain a good grade even though they may have tried hard, because progress was affected by *what you're good at and what you know you are good at* (Female St Angela's Year 11). This student reinforced the concept that perception played a role in motivation.

When looking at whether students wanted school to help them achieve more in life most were in agreement with this statement, Table 8.12. The chi-squared test indicated that there were highly significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=18.21$, $p=.001$). In terms of whether students would like school to help them achieve more in life, more students in Catholic schools indicate a positive response to this question. This could indicate more of a concern for them with the future rather than just the way they are at present. Groome (1996) when writing about Catholic schools considers it important that students are concerned with respecting themselves, developing their potential and living life responsibly.

Table 8.12: Year 11, Responses to the statement *Would you like school to help you to achieve more in your life?*

		Yes	No
Common	%	74%	26%
Total (264)	(N.)	(194)	(70)
Catholic	%	85.4%	14.6%
Total (404)	(N.)	(345)	(59)

Table 8.13 demonstrates that Year 11 students in both common and Catholic schools were more concerned with support for their futures, developing skills and getting good grades. Gaining a good education was appreciated more by students in Catholic schools than those in common schools, while more practical work and sports events were shown to be more highly regarded by those in common schools. Offering students a wide range of opportunities was commented on by teachers in common schools (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.2). This was an open response question and categories evolved from student replies. Significant differences between the responses of those in the two types of school were identified through a chi-squared test ($\chi^2=15.88$, $p=.044$) in terms of how students would like school to help them achieve more in life.

Table 8.13: Year 11 Responses to the statement *How would you like school to help you to achieve more in your life?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (205)	Total (360)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
To help with the future	27.8% (57)	25% (90)
Developing skills	26.3% (54)	21.4% (77)
Getting good grades	16.6% (34)	20% (72)
More revision classes	9.3% (19)	10% (36)
More practical work and sports events	7.8% (16)	4.4% (16)
Getting a good education	5.4% (11)	10% (36)
Having someone to talk to and getting more rewards	3.4% (7)	5% (18)
More after school clubs	2.9% (6)	1.1% (4)
More trips	.5% (1)	3.1% (11)

Table 8.14 displays answers given to the open question about where students got most rewards in school. Most students gained rewards in lessons. However, students in common schools indicated they got more rewards from their form tutor than those in Catholic schools. PSHE and tutor time may have more of a focus in common schools, especially as Catholic schools devote more curriculum time to religious education. There were highly significant differences between the responses of those in the two types of school ($\chi^2=20.25$, $p=.001$) in terms of where students gained the most rewards in school.

Table 8.14: Year 11 Responses to the statement *Where do you get most rewards in school?*

	Common Total (244)	Catholic Total (402)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
In lessons	53.3% (130)	55.3% (221)
I don't	22.6% (55)	23.9% (96)
Sports	11.9% (29)	11.4% (46)
Form tutor	6.5% (16)	2% (8)
After school clubs	4.9% (12)	4% (16)
Assemblies	.8% (2)	1% (4)
Homework	N/A	1.1% (5)
Attendance	N/A	1.3% (6)

Responses to the categories in Table 8.15 indicated that students in common schools thought that they would gain better results than those in Catholic schools. Not only did more students in common schools think they would gain more than 10 GCSEs at level C or above, but fewer students believed they would gain less than 5 GCSEs at below level C. This may suggest that there was a greater range of student ability within the Catholic sector, or that teachers in common schools instilled greater student self-belief (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.2). The chi-squared test indicated highly significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=10.29$, $p=.016$) in terms of how students expected to do in GCSEs.

Table 8.15: Year 11, Responses to the statement *How do you expect to do in your GCSEs this year?*

	10Cs+	5Cs+	Below 5Cs+
	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (262)	69.1% (181)	29.4% (77)	1.5% (4)
Catholic Total (453)	58.6% (265)	37.7% (171)	3.7% (17)

Students were given these three options with which to respond to *what they hoped to do after GCSEs* and in Table 8.16 the results show that more students in common schools hoped to follow 'A' level courses than those in Catholic schools; a higher percentage of students from Catholic schools hoped to follow non 'A' level courses. An equal number of students from both Catholic and common schools hoped to find a job. The main difference between the two groups of students in response to the question lay in the higher number of students from Catholic schools who hoped to follow non A level courses. A chi-squared test indicated that the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 8.16: Year 11, Responses to the statement *What do you hope to do after GCSEs?*

	Go to college to do A levels	Follow non-'A' level courses	Find a job
	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
Common Total (260)	85% (221)	11.5% (30)	3.5% (9)
Catholic Total (453)	80% (362)	16.5% (75)	3.5% (16)

Table 8.17 shows Year 11 students from both common and Catholic schools indicated they gained satisfaction from getting good grades, helping others and sports. Students in Catholic schools gained more satisfaction from being involved in extra-curricular activities than those in common schools. This was an open response question and the categories below were derived from students' responses. Getting

good grades was more important to students in Catholic schools. Students in common schools were more concerned with helping others than those in Catholic schools, but being involved in extra-curricular activities was emphasised by students in Catholic schools. A chi-squared test indicated that there were significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=13.45$, $p=.036$) in terms of what gave students satisfaction.

These findings indicate that students in a common school express a balanced view about issues that have given them satisfaction. However, students in Catholic schools regard getting good results as important, as well as being involved in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This could be driven by different views concerning what is important. Grace (2001) points out that common schools are driven by a culture in which material interests are valued and Catholic schools' prime commitments are to spiritual and moral interests.

Table 8.17: Year 11 Responses to the statement What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?

	Common	Catholic
	Total (240)	Total (391)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting good grades	41.2% (99)	48.5% (190)
Helping others	19.3% (46)	12.2% (47)
Sports	18.7% (45)	16% (63)
Being involved in extra-curricular activities	17.9% (43)	22.3% (87)
Don't know	2.5% (6)	1% (4)
Attendance	.4% (1)	N/A

Students in common and Catholic schools indicated that the most positive things they had been told about themselves were the fact that they were a good student and that

they had potential, see Table 8.18. The aspect that was different for those in Catholic schools was that students said they were told they were a good friend more than those in common schools. This may reflect the importance of Catholic schools valuing education as being about service to others as commented on by the Bishops of England and Wales (see CES 1997). Students in common schools at this point appear to be happier about having potential than those in Catholic schools. This was an open response question and students were able to indicate their individual preferences. A chi squared test indicated that the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 8.18: Year 11, Responses to the statement *What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (242)	Total (362)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
I'm a good student	34.7% (84)	35.6% (129)
I have potential	34.2% (83)	32.3% (117)
My work has improved	9.9% (24)	9% (35)
I don't know	7.9% (19)	7% (25)
I look nice	5% (12)	4.8% (17)
I'm good at sport	4.6% (11)	4% (13)
I'm a good friend	3.7% (9)	6.2% (22)
I won't fail	N/A	1.1% (4)

8.5.3 Comparison between Year 9 and 11 perceptions of progress and attainment

Year 9 students felt pleased when they had succeeded in their work at school. Praise motivated them to sustain their efforts and they felt they needed recognition to keep focused (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.4). Positive notes in their school journal and

letters home were appreciated by students in Year 9. While developing skills was indicated to be important for students in common school, students in Catholic schools emphasised the importance of getting good grades. Students in both school types gained most of their rewards in subject lessons. Students in Catholic schools appreciated being told they had potential, whereas students in common schools enjoyed being told their work had improved. Teachers in common schools indicated the importance of developing students' confidence (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.2).

Year 11 students still appreciated receiving teacher praise and approval. They emphasised the impact of teacher recognition for motivation. The same divide between students in Catholic schools emphasising the importance of gaining good grades and students in common schools placing importance on developing skills that occurred in Year 9, existed in responses from Year 11 students. Overall, Year 11 students gained most rewards from subject lessons, but students in common schools gained more rewards from form tutors than those in Catholic schools. In Catholic schools, there was a wider range of views about how students would achieve across the board than those in common schools, who felt they would achieve more 10+ A/C GCSEs. At this stage of their time in school, students were most concerned about getting good grades and preparing for their futures in terms of courses to follow at Sixth form. Being a good student and having potential was valued by students in Year 11.

There were few differences in attitudes towards progress between those in Year 9 and Year 11. All students thought that getting good grades enabled them to make better progress. Year 9 wanted school to help them achieve and ensure they got good grades and develop skills. Students in Year 11 expected to gain more than 10+ GCSEs and go on to do A' level courses when finishing their GCSE courses. Year 11

emphasised that perception played an important part in achievement; if they thought they could do something, they were more likely to work harder.

Encouragement and self-belief played a vital part in enabling students to achieve.

Teacher praise and support also affected the amount of effort students were prepared to make.

8.6 Summary

In this chapter the findings were focused on how students perceived the ethos of the school and its impact on PSHE. As well as looking at the implications of perceptions of PSHE and progress and attainment, another aspect investigated included whether there was a perception by students of the distinctive nature of attending a Catholic school. In this section I will draw out some of the salient points explored in this chapter.

Students in Year 9 perceived that the impact of school ethos on PSHE could be considered to be concerned with the establishment of good relationships. Overall, the data indicated that students appreciated the range of opportunities that school provided which enabled students to learn about themselves. They also learnt to respect other people who were different from them. Year 11 students also appreciated the range of opportunities available in school for them to experience. Year 11 students overall were naturally more focused on gaining good examination results and preparing themselves for their futures. Religion can be seen to have a major role in the ethos of the Catholic Church while it could be argued that it is relatively marginalised in a common school.

Year 9 students felt that attending a Catholic school helped provide them with guidance concerning making the right decisions. Whilst they recognised that not all

students had the same degree of faith, the data indicated that it was not until Year 11 that they really questioned the importance of faith. Year 11, however, were appreciative of time spent in mass which gave them an opportunity for reflection.

Year 11 students in Catholic schools felt that knowing God was there for them gave them a level of confidence in themselves. They felt having a shared set of beliefs and values enabled them to make friends more easily and get involve with the community.

The findings revealed that PSHE helped Year 9 students to prepare for life outside of school and prepared them for life in general. When considering the question: *how students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE*, students felt that teachers urged them to develop positive relationships. Students also said that in PSHE teachers would help those who had problems in this regard. Support of the school ethos was evident in PSHE where students were encouraged to develop an understanding of others and to be able to empathise with different perspectives. In addition, the ethos of the school encouraged them to develop an understanding of managing personal finances, individual and social responsibility, and an awareness of environmental issues.

In PSHE, students also learnt about issues such as the importance of organising their finance, drug abuse and the emotional and physical changes that were impacting on them. PSHE helped students develop insights into the adult world and develop decision making skills. PSHE provided an opportunity for dealing with issues such as bullying, cyber bullying, and the stress that may arise from these situations. On the other hand, Year 11 appreciated learning about social situations in PSHE and learning about workplace issues that may affect them in the future. By Year 11

students felt the ethos of the school was focused more on academic success and this impacted during PSHE lessons on their preparation for adult life.

The difference in perceptions between Years 9 and 11 may reflect the priorities of the respective year groups. Whereas, Year 9 students were concerned with relationships and self-image, they were less preoccupied by the stresses of examinations and the need to make decisions which may affect career opportunities. This may be the reason why they were able to comment on the value of topics such as personal finance and drug abuse in PSHE. Year 11 on the other hand seemed to be equally concerned with social relationships, but their perceptions about the value of learning about workplace issues and how to achieve the best examination results may arise because of their and the school's priorities in terms of league tables and the students' future career paths.

Praise provided Year 9 students with motivation to achieve and getting good grades was accepted as important in terms of their progress and attainment. Year 11 overall acknowledged the importance of gaining teacher recognition as a motivator for improving their work. They were also aware of the importance that perception played in achievement in terms of whether they thought they were capable or not. However, getting good results was seen as more important to students in common schools in Year 9, when thinking about things that had given them satisfaction than those in Catholic schools who viewed helping others as giving them slightly higher levels of satisfaction (see Table 8.11).

Chapter 9 Findings: Cohort 2 Perceptions of issues relating to personal development

9.1 Introduction to perceptions of issues relating to personal development

In the previous chapter I explored issues relating to student perceptions of ethos, including the distinctive nature of a Catholic school, PSHE and progress and attainment. This chapter will continue to examine the findings with regard to perceptions of personal development. Personal development in the research was framed, as with the first cohort of students in terms of self-esteem as this was believed to be a concept which would be familiar to the students. As before, this chapter is divided into three sections and examines firstly perceptions regarding the nature of self-esteem, then the exploration of issues that might affect self-esteem and

thirdly the measurement of self-esteem within this research. The specific question considered in this chapter is:

Do students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

9.2 Year 9 perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

Students clarified their views about self-esteem by explaining what it meant to them.

It was stated that:

Self-esteem is feeling good about who you are.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Feeling good about who they were was important for believing in themselves, which could affect how they behaved. Teachers in a previous chapter had commented on how important it was for students to appreciate their own value (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). Some of the girls felt it was connected to the way they looked:

Self-esteem is feeling good and looking good and being confident in their looks.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

This personal view was made particularly in regard to their peer group and comments made about how an individual looked. This was expressed by one respondent who explained that an individual's self-esteem was affected by:

How other people feel about themselves and what makes them feel good about being them. How they are encouraged by people saying nice things to them and getting compliments from people and increasing their confidence.

(Female Yester Year 9)

This student identified that what others said had an impact on self-esteem.

Table 9.1 examined students' views on self-esteem and what it meant. Students were asked to respond to the ten statements presented below. The results displayed an understanding of what it was that students felt the meaning of self-esteem

involved. By responding to these points, it is possible to see practical implications for levels of self-esteem and the impact this could have on the day to day existence of students. The chi-squared analysis that was carried out on these results indicates various differences between student responses in the two types of schools:

concerning *believing in yourself and knowing your own worth* ($\chi^2 = 10.45$, $p = .03$). Believing in your own worth was always acknowledged by those in common schools as always being important to 53% of students compared to 45% of those in Catholic schools. Fifty-six per cent of students in common schools compared to 47% of those in Catholic schools agreed *with being confident in your ability* ($\chi^2 = 12.9$, $p = .012$). Whereas, 55% of students in common schools and 47% of students in Catholic schools always agreed with *understanding your strengths and weaknesses* ($\chi^2 = 12.23$, $p = .016$). 58% of students in common schools always agreed with *knowing and accepting yourself* compared to 48% of students in Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 16.92$, $p = .002$). Fifty-one per cent of students in common school always agreed with the statement having a *positive outlook on life* compared to 39% of students in Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 21.56$, $p = .001$). *Understanding your own value* ($\chi^2 = 17.73$, $p = .001$) was always recognised by 51% of students in common schools compared to 41% of students in Catholic schools. *Liking and respecting who you are* ($\chi^2 = 16.07$, $p = .003$) was always recognised by 50% of students in common schools compared to 43% of students in Catholic schools while *accepting who you are and working to improve your life* ($\chi^2 = 27.48$, $p = .001$) was always accepted by 62% of students in common schools compared to 50% of students in Catholic schools. These categories indicated statistically significant differences in responses.

There was no significant difference between responses regarding being able to recognise what makes someone *unique* ($\chi^2 = 4.336$, $p = .362$) where 44% of students in common schools always agreed with this statement compared with 47% of students

in Catholic schools. This was the only statement that more students in Catholic schools always agreed with this statement than those in common schools. Another category where there was no statistical difference was *loving yourself* ($\chi^2=7.632$, $p=.106$) where 27% of students in common schools compared to 26% of students in Catholic schools always agreed with the statement.

Students in Catholic schools tended to indicate that they related to aspects of self-esteem more often sometimes rather than always. This could imply that students in common schools were more confident in expressing their values and those students in Catholic schools who were more reticent which may indicate an understanding of the need to be more humble as expressed by teachers in Catholic schools during teacher interviews (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). The only statement where more students in Catholic schools indicated a higher agreement than students in common schools was with *an understanding of what makes someone unique*. This may reflect the values that are promoted within Catholic schools concerning appreciating that individuals are created and loved by God. This concept is discussed by Groome (2014) in his work.

Table 9.1: Year 9, Year 1 Responses to the statement *Self-Esteem means*

	School Type Total	Always % (N.)	Sometimes % (N.)	Rarely % (N.)	Never % (N.)
	Believing in yourself and knowing your own worth	Common 519	53.2% (277)	42.4% (219)	3.8% (20)
	Catholic 551	45.2% (249)	48.3% (266)	5.8% (32)	.7% (4)
Being confident in your ability	Common 519	55.9% (291)	39.4% (204)	4.1% (21)	.6% (3)
	Catholic 550	47% (259)	45.8% (252)	6.5% (35)	.7% (4)
Understanding your strengths and weaknesses	Common 519	55.4% (288)	39.2% (203)	4.4% (23)	1% (5)
	Catholic 550	46.9% (258)	47.4% (261)	5.2% (28)	.5% (3)
Knowing and accepting yourself	Common 519	58.4% (302)	37.2% (194)	3.8% (20)	.6% (3)
	Catholic 550	48.7% (268)	42.6% (234)	7.6% (42)	1.1% (6)
Being able to recognise what makes someone unique	Common 519	44.5% (231)	45.2% (235)	8.9% (46)	1.4% (7)
	Catholic 550	46.9% (258)	43% (237)	9.1% (50)	1% (5)
Having a positive outlook on life	Common 519	50.6% (263)	40.4% (209)	7.7% (40)	1.3% (7)
	Catholic 545	38.7% (211)	52.3% (285)	7.5% (41)	1.5% (8)
Understanding your own value	Common 519	51.4% (267)	40.4% (210)	6.5% (33)	1.7% (9)
	Catholic 550	41.4% (228)	48.9% (269)	8.9% (49)	.8% (4)
Loving yourself	Common 519	27.3% (142)	38.8% (202)	24.3% (125)	9.6% (50)
	Catholic 550	26.3% (145)	43.2% (237)	24% (132)	6.5% (36)
Liking and respecting who you are	Common 519	50.3% (261)	41.6% (216)	6.4% (33)	1.7% (9)
	Catholic 549	43.1% (237)	47.8% (262)	8.7% (48)	.4% (2)
Accepting who you are and working to improve your life	Common 519	62.2% (323)	33.1% (172)	3.5% (18)	1.2% (6)
	Catholic 549	50.8% (279)	40.2% (221)	8.6% (47)	.4% (2)

9.2.1 Year 11 perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

When asked about what self-esteem meant, students from the second cohort when in Year 11 said that it was concerned with how they felt about themselves and their level of self-confidence. It was:

The way you feel: the way you portray yourself, I think whether you have self-respect.

(Male Townmead Year 11)

It appeared to involve whether individuals were out-going or not. An individual's view of themselves affected how they presented themselves and the attitude they took towards others. The way:

You respond to how other people like see you, whether you mind how you act on their criticisms or something like whether you change how you are around certain people.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

In other words, self-esteem enabled an individual to be true to themselves and the way they behaved. It was important to recognise the things they were good at because:

If you think you're good at certain things, like if you have good self-esteem you don't put yourself down all the time.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

Self-esteem involved being aware of what other people expected of an individual as well as involving their own expectations. Confidence played an important part as self-esteem involved *having confidence in yourself* (Male St Mary's Year 11). This concept was reiterated by another student who mentioned:

Having the confidence in yourself to do things.

(Female St Olaf's Year 11)

Some Year 11 students commented that self-esteem had a lot to do with confidence. Confidence enabled students to do the things they wanted. Feeling good was an important aspect of self-esteem that was emphasised. It was summed up as:

It's about how you regard yourself and often it can be cut down by other people, but you have to have faith in yourself and confidence and look at life in a positive way.

(Female St Mary's Year 11)

Students recognised the need to treat themselves well, because self-esteem encompassed:

How much you respect yourself, as a person, so how you treat yourself.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

The way they viewed themselves had implications for dealing with situations and self-esteem concerned:

How you view yourself, so if you view yourself like in a positive way, like if you instead of like looking at negative things about you as opposed to the positive things, still accept the negative things but stay confident and positive you are able to deal with issues

(Male Yester Year 11)

An individual needed to have faith in themselves and keep a positive outlook on life if they were to be able to achieve and move forward in life because:

If you've got like a really low self-esteem then you won't like want to push yourself.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

On this second questionnaire students were asked to explain in an open question what they thought self-esteem involved. Table 9.2 showed students in common schools demonstrated that they believed that self-esteem was mainly concerned with the way you thought about yourself, while those in Catholic schools indicated it was predominantly concerned with being confident. A chi-squared test that was carried out indicated highly statistical significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2 = 25.13$, $p = .001$) in terms of what self-esteem entailed. The student responses in this table revealed that students in common schools regarded self-esteem to involve the way an individual thought and felt about themselves, whereas students in Catholic schools felt self-esteem was more to do with being confident and to some extent having a belief in yourself. Students in

common schools emphasised valuing yourself and being happy. The data revealed different ways in which students in both types of school valued themselves. Students in Catholic schools indicated greater personal respect and being proud of themselves, which may indicate a greater sense of appreciation of self. The way students valued themselves may indicate different approaches taken in the two types of schools. Students appeared to understand the concept of self-esteem as did teachers (see Chapter 5, section 5.8.1) during the interviews and indicated that this was a subject that they developed as part of the PSHE programme. The common school approach may indicate a more practical individual focus, whereas Catholic schools may appear to focus more on exemplifying a more spiritual value style.

Table 9.2: Year 11 Responses to *Explanations of self-esteem*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (250)	Total (430)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Way you think and feel about yourself	46.8% (117)	36.8% (157)
Being confident	34.8% (87)	47.6% (205)
Believing in yourself	6.4% (16)	7.9% (34)
Valuing yourself	4.8% (12)	1.4% (6)
Being a happy person	3.6% (9)	1.6% (7)
Being proud of yourself	3.2% (8)	2.3% (10)
Respecting yourself	.4% (1)	2.4% (11)

Although students in both Catholic and common schools were fairly close in agreement with self-esteem being very or pretty important, a higher percentage of students in common schools denoted that they felt it was not very important. This was an open question and the students replied as indicated in Table 9.3. There were highly statistical significant differences between the responses from those in the two types of school ($\chi^2 = 28.72$, $p=0.001$) in terms of how important students regarded self-esteem. Seventy-five percent of students in Catholic schools indicated they felt it

was very important compared to 61% in common schools. The reason for this difference could be because Catholic schools may emphasise the importance of developing the self in a different way to that of common schools where greater emphasis may be given to a more immediate sense of gratification rather than a deferred sense of development of self-esteem. Students in common schools may feel more satisfied with themselves and self-esteem would not therefore be so important.

Table 9.3: Year 11 Responses to the statement *How important do you think self-esteem is?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (249)	Total (424)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Very	61.4% (153)	75.2% (319)
Pretty important	20.2% (50)	10.8% (46)
Important	9.6% (24)	7.5% (32)
Not important	7.6% (19)	2.9% (12)
Depends on the person	.4% (1)	.7% (3)
Vital	.8% (2)	2.9% (12)

9.2.2 Comparison between Year 9 and Year 11 perceptions of the nature of self-esteem

On the basis of student responses, the data revealed that this cohort of Year 9 students felt the nature of self-esteem was concerned with feeling good about who you were. Self-esteem also included awareness about the way you looked and an understanding about how other people felt about you.

Year 11 participants reported that self-esteem included having self-respect. It involved the way you portrayed yourself to others and included being confident. Self-

esteem gave you confidence to try things and was important to aiding a positive self-view.

The analysis demonstrates that students between the years of 9 and 11 progressed from a view of self-esteem being concerned with not only with your personal self-view, but with the important view that others held of you towards a more internal view concerned with self-confidence which gave you an ability to attempt a greater range of experiences. Students at both stages were trying to develop a clear sense of their identity which Branden (1994) stressed is an important aspect of the development of self-esteem.

It is a recognised phenomenon as described by Ziegler-Hill (2013) and Wigfield, Lutz, Wagner (2005) that the levels of self-esteem of young people decline as they progress from childhood to adolescence. This may be due to cognitive changes that Harter (1999) describes as making young people more vulnerable. For example, the change from primary to secondary school and the way students judge themselves can provide a dip in their levels of self-esteem. Harter (1999) expresses a view that adolescents may not feel differently about themselves, but change the way they assess themselves.

9.3. Year 9 exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

Students at this stage in their development identified the effect of behaviour of others as having an impact on their level of confidence and self-esteem. When other students were encouraging through being supportive and sympathetic towards something that had been done well, self-esteem was enhanced. It appeared that self-esteem depended upon how much one individual allowed others to have an impact

on the way they thought about themselves, because if they identified comments as the problem of the speaker, their own individual self-esteem could stay intact.

Teacher comments affected student self-esteem:

In lessons they do, they don't usually say, can't really say your grade and blah de blah and sometimes you are proud of it, sometimes you want to not brag but like be able to show you're proud of yourself getting it.

(Female Yester Year 9)

There was a narrow line between developing self-esteem and being boastful. The importance of this sentiment was echoed by teachers in the previous chapter.

Students at times wanted to feel proud of themselves, but did not want to be regarded as show-offs. Self-esteem was related by some students to being connected to achievement and gaining recognition. Therefore, self-esteem was seen in general as feeling good about yourself. To build self-esteem it was accepted that:

...it's about recognising their achievements, maybe if they've achieved something they might want to show it.

(Female Yester Year 9)

Central to building self-esteem it was important to have one's abilities recognised and to be given compliments. If someone set themselves a task and achieved it, this was also a way of building self-esteem especially if a *friend encourages you* (Female St Olaf's Year 9).

To have someone watch you perform and be supportive could help build your self-esteem and confidence. Being complimented made students feel good and raised their self-esteem. This helped build:

A positive mental attitude towards the day and then you are more likely to do things well during the day.

(Male Heatherside Year 9)

This perception made by a student who felt there could be more far reaching consequences when self-esteem had improved. This was reinforced by others in the group who felt that having a positive mental attitude affected things that happened

during the day. Compliments were identified by most students in the focus groups as being important to building self-esteem. Compliments encouraged students to continue and develop their work:

Compliments and like just keep urging them to give, like somebody's, I'm really not good at this, I want to stop doing it, they can like urge them to keep carrying on.

(Female St Angela's Year 9)

Table 9.4 indicates that schools were an important source for compliments for both groups of students, as were family and friends. This was an open question and the categories evolved from responses given by students. A chi-squared test indicated differences were not statistically significant.

Table 9.4: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *Where do you get the most compliments?*

	Common Total (481)	Catholic Total (523)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
At school	41.8% (201)	41% (215)
From Friends	13.9% (67)	15.7% (82)
From family	13.3% (64)	12.7% (66)
Don't know	12.9% (62)	12.3% (64)
From sport outside school	10.8% (52)	9.8% (51)
From family and friends	4.2% (20)	4.4% (23)
Facebook	2.5% (12)	3.8% (20)
Doing things well	.6% (3)	.3% (2)

Students were asked to respond to statements with regard to self-esteem, see Table 9.5. The responses indicated no statistical significant difference in the way students responded to the statements regarding how they were *concerned about what others said about them*, with fewer students in common schools (17%) being perturbed by this than students in Catholic schools (18.3%). The need for *recognition to feel good*

about themselves, was identified by 10.7% of students in common schools compared to 8.6% of students in Catholic schools. Being *confident in school* was acknowledged by an equal number of students in both types of school but slightly more students in common schools (36%) than those in Catholic schools (31%) were *confident out of school*. More students in common schools (19%) than those in Catholic schools (16%) felt they achieved the goals they set themselves.

The only statement in which statistically significant differences were observed when a chi-squared test was carried out was in relation to the statement *I am truthful with myself* ($\chi^2=10.10$, $p=.039$).

Overall, these results indicate that students in common schools could be more confident in situations outside of school; they were less inclined to be concerned about what others said about them, and although they needed more recognition, they achieved more goals that they set themselves than those in Catholic schools. This could indicate that the secular curriculum provided students in common schools with more confidence in terms of what Grace (2002) describes as 'self-interest' and 'measurable success'.

Table 9.5: Year 9, Year 1 Responses to the application of self-esteem

	School type Total	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am concerned about what others say about me	Common 521	16.9% (88)	49.9% (260)	23% (120)	10.2% (53)
	Catholic 558	18.3% (102)	53.8% (300)	20.6% (115)	7.3% (41)
I need recognition to feel good about myself	Common 521	10.7% (56)	45.2% (235)	30.7% (160)	13.4% (70)
	Catholic 558	8.6% (48)	45.4% (253)	35.1% (196)	10.9% (61)
I am confident in different situations in school	Common 521	28.4% (148)	60.7% (316)	9% (47)	1.9% (10)
	Catholic 558	27.8% (155)	62.3% (348)	8.8% (49)	1.1% (6)
I am confident in different situations outside of school	Common 521	35.9% (187)	54.4% (283)	8.4% (44)	1.3% (7)
	Catholic 558	31.5% (176)	57.5% (321)	9.7% (54)	1.3% (7)
I am truthful with myself	Common 521	37.4% (195)	50.9% (265)	7.5% (39)	4.2% (22)
	Catholic 558	37.6% (210)	53.4% (298)	7.5% (42)	1.5% (8)
I achieve goals I set myself	Common 521	18.8% (98)	57.4% (299)	19% (99)	4.8% (25)
	Catholic 558	15.9% (89)	64.2% (358)	16.8% (94)	3.1% (17)

Marginally more students in common schools said they compared themselves to others, see Table 9.6. The chi-squared test carried determined no statistical significant difference between the responses from students in the two types of school in terms of whether students compared themselves to others.

Table 9.6: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *Do you compare yourself to others?*

		Yes	No
Common Total (509)	% (N.)	71.5% (364)	28.5% (145)
Catholic Total (540)	% (N.)	69% (371)	31% (169)

The responses to the open question *how do you compare yourself to others?* provided similar results from both sets of students. Students in both common and Catholic schools, see Table 9.7, indicated that they saw themselves as equal to others. While more students in common schools saw themselves as different compared to those in Catholic schools, more students in Catholic schools compared themselves to others in terms of the way they looked. There was no statistical difference between responses as indicated by the chi-squared test carried out.

Table 9.7: Year 9, Year 1, Responses to the statement *How do you compare yourself to others?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (362)	Total (373)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
As an equal	60% (217)	60% (224)
I see others as better	18.4% (66)	19% (71)
I am different	7.9% (29)	5.1% (19)
I am brighter than others	6.8% (25)	6.5% (24)
I compare others with the way I look	4.7% (17)	6.7% (25)
When playing sport	2.2% (8)	2.7% (10)

9.3.1 Year 11 exploration of factors which might affect self-esteem

Confidence enabled students to be motivated and without it they were not as able to achieve. Self-esteem engendered confidence, not doubting one's ability:

Being confident in your own skin.

(Male Heatherside Year 11)

If you have lots of self-esteem you're not afraid to put yourself out there and be heard and be seen.

(Male Townhead Year 11)

Self-esteem was seen to help students to take action:

If someone doesn't have self-esteem, then they can, they like lose meaning for things that they do, so if they have self-esteem, they can, they can realise that they can do something.

(Male Yester School Year 11)

Another way to develop self-esteem included:

Reflecting on others who are more confident.

(Male Heatherside Year 11)

This young man felt self-esteem could be improved in this way. Students recognised that self-esteem had implications for their levels of

Motivation. Like keeping yourself on the right track like you want to do stuff.

(Female Yester Year 11)

Another student in the same school emphasised the importance of the way an individual felt about themselves, as it impacted on the motivation to achieve:

How you feel about yourself. Like whether you can achieve certain things.

(Male Yester Year 11)

Self-esteem influenced personal perception. This emphasised the importance of the fact that the way an individual thought about themselves affected their achievement.

Swann, Chang-Sneider and McLarty (2007) describe that the way you think about yourself can affect your levels of achievement. The way you think about yourself could affect self-confidence and self-esteem in a positive or negative way:

How you respond to how other people like see you, whether you mind how you act on their criticisms or something like whether you change how you are around certain people.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

The way they responded to attitudes from other people was an indication of the level of self-esteem. A good level of self-esteem enabled students to remain positive and not put themselves down. It reflected how *highly they thought about themselves*

(Female St Angela's Year 11). While self-esteem was identified as being vital for motivation, students recognised that there were various ways of building self-esteem including:

I think encouragement is an important part of building someone's self-esteem.
(Female St Mary's Year 11)

A random act of kindness or generosity can really help build someone's self-esteem. Say if you're walking past someone in the corridor just compliment them or open a door for them that can build someone's self-esteem because often people feel that lonely or isolated.

(Male St Mary's Year 11)

I think that your parents play a big part in building your self-esteem and like if they give you confidence and compliments then that helps raise it at home and if you walk into school with that confidence then it's hard to break down.

(Female St Mary's Year 11)

Parental support was appreciated and emphasised because:

Your parents can help build your self-esteem. So say if you have a problem at school, or you have a problem with your work or something you can always ask your parents to revise and reassurance.

(Male St Olaf's Year 11)

I think like to have a loving family environment from a young age is probably the most important thing, because when you get to like a certain age like ten, the things you've had in the past stick with you.

(Male St Christopher's Year 11)

During the teacher interviews one of the points made was the issue of providing a range of opportunities in which students could achieve (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). Students identified other ways to develop self-esteem which included being:

Given different opportunities to prove yourself, not only to yourself but to other people.

(Female St Olaf's Year 11)

The notion of getting involved in various opportunities was echoed by other students.

Students felt they surprised themselves as well as others when working for something which provided positive levels of self-esteem:

If you feel you've worked for something and you achieve it you feel a lot better about yourself.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

People can improve their self-esteem by getting involved in activities, sort of clubs and things like that because they will all sort of clubs will be about communication and communicating with other people.

(Male Townhead Year 11)

Getting involved and working with others could build self-esteem. If other people thought positively about an individual this could affect the way they regarded them self because if:

They're thinking positively of you, then you're going to think positively of yourself.

(Female St Angela's Year 11)

Most compliments for students were gained in lessons. However, more students in common schools stated they gained more compliments from home than those in Catholic schools. Table 9.8 demonstrates the results to the open question. A chi-squared test indicated no statistically significant differences. However, more students in Catholic schools indicated they gained more compliments in lessons and fewer at home than students in common schools. This could suggest that students in Catholic schools are focused on achieving in school which is supported and in alignment with the home that Morris (2008) suggests is more developed than in the common sector.

Table 9.8: Year 11 Responses to the statement *Where do you get the most compliments?*

	Common 242	Catholic 412
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Lessons	36.8% (89)	41.7% (171)
Home	22.4% (54)	18.6% (76)
Friends	19.1% (46)	19.8% (81)
Sports outside school	9.9% (24)	11.3% (49)
I don't know	5.7% (14)	3.5% (14)
Extra-curricular activities	4.1% (10)	3.2% (13)
Form tutor	1.6% (4)	1.5% (6)
Facebook	.4% (1)	.4% (2)

Table 9.9 provides evidence of student responses to given statements about self-esteem. Chi-squared tests were conducted to compare results from those in Catholic and common schools, indicated no significant differences in any of the categories. An equal number of students in both Catholic and common schools were concerned about what others said about them. More students in common schools needed recognition to feel good about themselves than those in Catholic schools. More students from common schools were confident in different situations in school than those in Catholic schools, while more students from Catholic schools were confident out of school, this again could testify to a greater commitment to the wider community. More students in Catholic schools testified to achieving goals they set themselves than those in common schools. This could indicate that students in Catholic schools were encouraged to complete goals set.

Table 9.9: Year 11 Responses to the *Applications of Self-Esteem*

	School type Total	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)
I am concerned about what others say about me	Common 262	14.9% (39)	45.4% (119)	31.3% (82)	8.4% (22)
	Catholic 455	15.4% (70)	44.2% (201)	27.9% (127)	12.5% (57)
I need recognition to feel good about myself	Common 258	8.7% (21)	48.5% (127)	34.1% (89)	8.7% (21)
	Catholic 454	7.7% (35)	41.3% (187)	37.6% (171)	13.4% (61)
I am confident in different situations in school	Common 262	29.1% (76)	59.5% (156)	8.4% (22)	3% (8)
	Catholic 454	23.7% (108)	64.5% (293)	9.5% (43)	2.3% (10)
I am confident in different situations outside of school	Common 262	29% (76)	64.2% (168)	5.3% (14)	1.5% (4)
	Catholic 454	31.9% (145)	58.3% (265)	7.6% (34)	2.2% (10)
I am truthful with myself	Common 262	38.5% (101)	51.1% (134)	7.3% (19)	3.1% (8)
	Catholic 454	42.2% (191)	49% (223)	7% (32)	1.8% (8)
I achieve goals I set myself	Common 262	15.3% (40)	63.4% (166)	17.9% (47)	3.4% (9)
	Catholic 454	17.6% (80)	63.8% (290)	15.7% (71)	2.9% (13)

Both groups of students in Catholic and common schools communicated a sense that self-esteem could be improved through gaining rewards and compliments as shown through responses to this open question in Table 9.10. A chi-squared test that was carried out indicated significant differences between the responses of those in common and Catholic schools ($\chi^2=26.93$, $p=0.001$) in terms of how self-esteem can be improved. While the data suggests that students in both types of schools appreciated gaining rewards and compliments, the analysis demonstrates that more students in common schools felt being involved in activities and achieving helped

improve self-esteem, as they did about particularly being positive about yourself. However, helping others was something that the data indicates that students in Catholic schools valued more in terms of improving self-esteem than those in common schools. This could imply that students in common schools are more concerned with achieving in order to gain self-satisfaction and recognition. Competition was felt by one teacher in a common school to aid student development (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.2). On the other hand, students in Catholic schools might be attempting to make the best of the skills they have through finding things they are good at. It appears that different perspectives are used in the two types of schools to help develop self-esteem. It may be that common schools encourage a more egotistical culture to help students develop.

Table 9.10: Year 11 Responses to the statement *How can self-esteem be improved?*

	Common	Catholic
	Total (215)	Total (373)
	% (N.)	% (N.)
Getting rewards and compliments	35.8% (77)	37.3% (139)
Being involved in activities and achieving	17.2% (37)	7.9% (29)
Believing in yourself	15.8% (34)	14.8% (55)
Being positive about yourself	13.4 % (29)	9.6% (36)
Help from others	12.2% (26)	15.5% (58)
Not worrying about what others think	2.4% (5)	4.6% (17)
Being happy	1.9% (4)	3.2% (12)
Finding things you are good at	.9% (2)	5.9% (22)
Not being bullied and treated as an equal	.4% (1)	1.2% (5)

9.3.2 Comparison between Year 9 and Year 11 factors which might affect self-esteem

While Year 9 students recognised the importance of self-esteem in terms of how it impacted on them and could be improved through compliments and encouragement, it was not until Year 11 that students appreciated that participating in a wider range of activities could enhance self-esteem.

9.4 Measurement of self-esteem

9.4.1 Cohort 2 Year 9 the measurement of self-esteem

When looking at the results from the Year 9 students in the first set of questionnaires, as indicated in Table 9.11, the results from the given statements were used to analyse the results according to the Rosenberg scale. This showed similar results from those in Catholic and common schools. The exceptions to this included *I am able to do things as well as most other people* where more students from common schools strongly disagreed with this and *On the whole, I am satisfied with myself* where they also strongly disagreed with this statement. More students in Catholic schools wished they had had more respect for themselves while marginally more students in common schools felt *useless and thought they were no good* at times. The t-test carried out signified no significant differences in results between common and Catholic schools.

Table 9.11: Year 9, Year 1 Responses to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem statements

	School type Total	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD	Sig
		% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)			
I Feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	Common 521	2.5% (13)	7.7% (40)	63.9% (333)	25.9% (135)	2.13	.651	NS
	Catholic 558	.5% (3)	8.8% (49)	68.6% (383)	22.1% (123)	2.12	.562	
I feel I have a number of good qualities	Common 521	1.3% (7)	6.7% (35)	68.6% (357)	23.4% (122)	2.14	.580	NS
	Catholic 558	.5% (3)	10.9% (61)	65.3% (364)	23.3% (130)	2.11	.593	
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	Common 521	31.3% (163)	46.8% (244)	16.5% (86)	5.4% (28)	2.04	.832	NS
	Catholic 558	27.6% (154)	52.5% (293)	18.3% (102)	1.6% (9)	2.06	.721	
I am able to do things as well as most other people	Common 521	2.3% (12)	11.1% (58)	66.6% (347)	20% (104)	2.64	.634	NS
	Catholic 558	1.6% (9)	16.5% (92)	65.2% (364)	16.7% (93)	1.97	.629	
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	Common 521	25.5% (133)	48.2% (251)	21.9% (114)	4.4% (23)	1.95	.806	NS
	Catholic 558	21.7% (121)	53.9% (301)	21.7% (121)	2.7% (15)	1.95	.734	
I take a positive attitude towards myself	Common 521	3.1% (16)	14.8% (77)	63.9% (333)	18.2% (95)	1.96	.636	NS
	Catholic 558	1.1% (6)	18.8% (105)	62.7% (350)	17.4% (97)	1.97	.673	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	Common 521	2.3% (12)	13.8% (72)	60.7% (316)	23.2% (121)	2.05	.662	NS
	Catholic 557	1.8% (10)	19.5% (109)	61.8% (345)	16.9% (93)	1.94	.679	
I wish I could have more respect for myself	Common 516	12.9% (67)	48.9% (255)	28.6% (144)	9.6% (50)	1.65	.823	NS
	Catholic 552	8% (45)	48% (268)	37.5% (209)	6.5% (30)	1.58	.732	
I certainly feel useless at times	Common 521	14.6% (76)	33.8% (176)	38.8% (202)	12.8% (67)	1.50	.895	NS
	Catholic 558	14.5% (81)	36.2% (202)	40.7% (227)	8.6% (48)	1.57	.842	
At times I think I am no good	Common 521	23.8% (124)	36.1% (188)	30.3% (158)	9.8% (51)	1.70	.731	NS
	Catholic 558	24.2% (135)	39.8% (220)	29.9% (167)	6.1% (36)	1.82	.868	

A slightly higher percentage of students in common schools appeared to have higher levels of self-esteem than those in Catholic schools at this stage. This may be due to the growing academic pressure that is incorporated in the values of the school as Morris (2010) exemplifies, that develops specific values and attitudes which

culminates in good academic results. However, the chi-square that was carried out indicated no statistical differences between the students.

Table 9.12: Year 9, Year 1, Results of Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale

		Above 15	14 and below
Common	%	87.1%	12.9%
Total (521)	(N.)	(454)	(67)
Catholic	%	84.6%	15.4%
Total (558)	(N.)	(472)	(86)

9.4.2 Year 11 measurement of self-esteem

When students from cohort 2 were in Year 11 they were given a set of ten statements to respond to a second time and in Table 9.13, more students in common schools agreed or strongly agreed that they were *a person of worth* than those in the Catholic schools and the same applied to the next aspect of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, where students stated they felt they had *a number of good qualities*. Fewer students in Catholic schools believed that they were inclined *to feel a failure* in comparison with those in common schools. More of those in common schools indicated they believed they were *able to do things as well as others*. More students in common schools believed they *had little to be proud of* than those in Catholic schools. Those in common schools indicated a more *positive attitude* towards themselves than those in Catholic schools; they also signalled a higher level of *satisfaction* with themselves. However, students in both the common and Catholic schools testified to wishing for greater levels of self-respect. Results from those in Catholic and common schools in respect of *how useless* students felt at times denoted a similar response, but marginally fewer students in common schools showed they had a sense of *feeling no good* than those in Catholic schools. Although results were similar students in common schools tend to indicate more confidence than those in Catholic schools which could emphasise the ethos of humility that has been discussed previously in the chapter.

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare results from those in Catholic and common schools, but no significant differences were indicated.

Table 9.13: Year 11 Responses to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale

	School Type	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD	Sig
	Total	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)	% (N.)			
I Feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	Common 262	.4% (1)	6.5% (17)	55.3% (145)	37.8% (99)	2.30	.615	NS
	Catholic 455	1.8% (8)	8.3% (37)	52.3% (237)	37.6% (173)	2.27	.696	
I feel I have a number of good qualities	Common 262	.8% (2)	6.4% (17)	65.3% (171)	27.5% (72)	2.21	.575	NS
	Catholic 455	.7% (3)	9.7% (44)	63.5% (289)	26.1% (119)	2.15	.607	
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	Common 262	30.9% (81)	50.7% (132)	14.8% (38)	3.6% (9)	2.12	.783	NS
	Catholic 449	30.6% (138)	53% (238)	14.2% (63)	2.2% (10)	2.15	.750	
I am able to do things as well as most other people	Common 262	1.5% (4)	9.9% (26)	69.8% (183)	18.8% (49)	2.06	.586	NS
	Catholic 453	3.1% (14)	14.6% (66)	62.2% (282)	20.1% (91)	2	.698	
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	Common 262	20.4% (53)	52.5% (137)	23.7% (62)	3.4% (9)	1.92	.765	NS
	Catholic 455	23.3% (106)	51.9% (236)	21.5% (98)	3.3% (15)	1.95	.761	
I take a positive attitude towards myself	Common 262	1.5% (4)	16.4% (43)	65.7% (172)	16.4% (43)	1.98	.634	NS
	Catholic 453	2.6% (12)	20.2% (92)	56.5% (255)	20.7% (94)	1.96	.729	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	Common 262	2.7% (7)	15.3% (40)	67.2% (176)	14.8% (39)	1.96	.636	NS
	Catholic 454	2.4% (11)	18.6% (84)	60.4% (275)	18.6% (84)	1.96	.686	
I wish I could have more respect for myself	Common 262	14.8% (39)	48.9% (128)	30.2% (79)	6.1% (16)	1.74	.800	NS
	Catholic 454	18.5% (84)	46.5% (211)	27.7% (126)	7.3% (33)	1.77	.841	
I certainly feel useless at times	Common 262	16% (42)	37.9% (99)	34.5% (90)	11.8% (31)	1.61	.893	NS
	Catholic 454	20% (91)	34.3% (156)	38.2% (173)	7.5% (34)	1.67	.885	
At times I think I am no good	Common 262	20.6% (54)	45.4% (118)	27.5% (72)	6.5% (17)	1.82	.849	NS
	Catholic 454	26.6% (121)	37.6% (171)	29.2% (132)	6.6% (30)	1.85	.899	

Students in common schools had a slightly higher level of self-esteem at this stage in their development than those in Catholic schools as indicated in Table 9.14. This could denote that academic demands had affected particularly students in Catholic schools. Mundy, Green, Lingard and Verger, (2016) accentuate the increase in emphasis on standards that has not necessarily enhanced situations for students and for many has developed an increase in competitiveness. This may not lie easily with students in Catholic schools who may feel more secure in an atmosphere of co-operation which would be more in line with their value system. However, the chi-square that was carried out indicated that there were no significant statistical differences between the two groups of students.

Table 9.14: Year 11 Results of Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale

		15 and Above	14 and below
Common	%	86.6%	13.4%
Total (277)	(N.)	(227)	(34)
Catholic	%	84.6%	15.4%
Total (455)	(N.)	(385)	(69)

9.4.3 Comparison of the measurement of self-esteem

Year 9 and Year 11

Table 9.15 indicated that self-esteem was marginally lower in Year 11, than in Year 9 for students in common schools. However, self-esteem for students in Catholic schools appears to have remained stable over time. Overall no real difference between Catholic and common schools could be identified when looking at percentage results.

Table 9.15: Rosenberg Results above 15 over time

	Cohort 2	
	Year 9	Year 11
Common	87.1%	86.6%
Catholic	84.6%	84.6%

Few differences could be detected over time between the attitudes that students expressed concerning self-esteem. Year 9 felt self-esteem was how people felt about themselves, while Year 11 considered it was about the way you portrayed yourself. Year 9 recognised self-esteem was affected by the attitudes of others and how much you took notice of their attitude, whereas Year 11 felt it was important to consider how you responded to how other people saw you. Year 11 stressed that self-awareness allowed an individual to see that confidence helped a person to have the courage to participate in activities and your own thoughts about what you could achieve affected self-esteem, whereas Year 9 believed encouragement helped develop self-esteem as well as knowing and accepting yourself.

The responses have indicated that the students have grown through specific stages of development and progressed their way of thinking. Year 9 students were more affected by the perceptions of others while Year 11 had developed more independent ways of assimilating their views about self-esteem as they grew in self-awareness. Harter (1999) describes the importance of peer support in terms of self-evaluation as particularly prevalent in early adolescence.

9.5 Summary

In this chapter I have presented the results of the questionnaire and comments made during the focus group interviews from the second cohort of students. The focus in this chapter concerns the second key research question on whether or not students believed that PSHE helped them develop self-esteem. The tables presented in this chapter indicate levels of self-esteem in both Catholic and common schools and although there were variations in responses, overall both sets of responses were of similar levels.

Year 9 students expressed a view regarding the nature of self-esteem as being concerned with feeling good about yourself and believing in yourself. Self-esteem was concerned with being confident in how you look. Compliments helped students to develop self-esteem. Students in common schools were more positive in their responses to statements about self-esteem with higher percentages of statements responding with 'always', whereas students in Catholic schools replied with the response 'sometimes'. There was an exception in respect of the statement regarding what makes someone unique, where they replied with a higher percentage of responses of 'always' than those in common schools (see Table 9.1).

Year 11 students agreed with comments they had made when in Year 9 by supporting statements about the nature of self-esteem relating to confidence. By Year 11 students emphasised that self-esteem involved the importance of how you feel about yourself. The way you presented yourself to others was also seen to be important as well as how others expected you to be. Students in common schools emphasised self-esteem involved the way you think about yourself, valuing yourself, being happy with yourself and being proud of yourself, whereas students in Catholic schools put more value on being confident, respecting yourself and believing in yourself (see Table 9.2). All students in Year 11 agreed that the nature of self-esteem involved confidence.

Students in both Catholic and common schools agreed that self-esteem involved a certain element of confidence. The focus group interviews acknowledged the importance of self-esteem for all students, the effect it had on motivation and being able to help students sustain their ability to achieve goals.

Year 9 students identified the impact of other people's views as something that affected their self-esteem. Encouragement and support, when something had been

done well, developed self-esteem. How much significance an individual gave to the views of others, was another factor that Year 9 students identified as having an impact on self-esteem. Students wanted to be proud of themselves but they did not want to let this develop as far as being boastful. Compliments had a constructive effect on self-esteem and helped build a positive mental attitude. Compliments also helped motivate students to continue making every effort to succeed. Year 9 students identified receiving most compliments in school. Slightly more students in common schools saw themselves more different than those in Catholic schools. Achievement and recognition were also seen as important in affecting self-esteem

Year 11 students felt self-esteem was affected by confidence. Self-esteem enabled students to engage more positively in a range of activities. Self-esteem was seen to effect motivation and also influenced personal perception of self. This affected how an individual responded to other people's attitudes. An individual could remain positive and withstand negative views, Year 11 indicated, if they had a good level of self-esteem. Receiving support and compliments from parents at an early age, helped establish a good level of self-esteem that supported students through their stages of growing up. Having opportunities to experience situations where students could prove to themselves and others that they were capable also helped build their self-esteem. If other people had a high regard for an individual, this affected levels of self-esteem and built self-belief. Most Year 11 students gained compliments in school and felt their self-esteem was affected by compliments and rewards.

Information in response to the second research question concerning whether PSHE could help develop self-esteem was examined in this chapter. PSHE was regarded by students as a subject where self-esteem could be enhanced through the development of specific topics. In all the schools visited, for example, there was a topic that concentrated on image and how the media developed ideals. This had an

impact on student self-esteem through the way they viewed themselves. PSHE provided a safe place where students could develop an understanding of how they reacted to such phenomena and how they interacted with others. How students felt about themselves and their levels of self-esteem affected their motivation to get involved in activities and how much they were able to achieve. PSHE provided an environment in which they could engage with different opportunities to prove to themselves and to others that they were capable of success. This had a positive impact on their self-esteem.

The data presented in this chapter indicates that over time the self-esteem of the students participating in this research revealed that while for some students' self-esteem in Year 9 was slightly lower, for some students it remained fairly stable. However, overall no real difference between Catholic and common schools could be identified when looking at percentage results.

Chapter 10: Discussion

10.1 Introduction

I started my investigation by identifying research questions that focused on both teachers and student perceptions in order to examine PSHE and personal development in both common and Catholic schools. In this chapter I will reflect on my findings, comment on the limitations of the study and highlight areas that may be useful for further study. In order to gain some understanding about the nature of PSHE in schools I focused on similar topics with both teachers and students, but framed them appropriately for each group. I will reflect on each of the themes, including ethos, PSHE, and self-esteem. Each theme provides answers to the following sub-questions:

How do teachers and students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?

Do teachers and students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

I recognise the analysis could have taken many different paths, for example focusing on the different responses between males and females. However, for the purposes of this study I have focused on specific perceptions which relate to the questions and intentions of this research. Each of the sections below is divided into the areas of focus already mentioned. The questions above are implicitly discussed in each section of this chapter.

A distinctive feature of this research was that it was a longitudinal study that looked at perceptions of PSHE by staff and students in eight secondary schools over a period of two years, which enabled me to investigate staff and student insights

concerning PSHE over the secondary phase. The research set out to investigate some of the issues surrounding PSHE and its implementation. Results from the teacher interviews, student focus group interviews and student questionnaires provided insights into perceptions of PSHE.

Within this chapter I will compare responses from students between and within each cohort and also link these to teacher responses. This chapter will be structured in terms of the emerging themes rather than on the research questions although these will be addressed.

The main issues that arise in the light of this investigation include the perceptions of staff and students concerning PSHE, and personal development in common and Catholic schools as well as the investigation of any differences between the two sectors.

Potentially, PSHE makes a significant contribution to the curriculum in schools, but conclusions from this research can only be tentative, as it was not possible to totally isolate different aspects and factors that impact on perceptions of PSHE. Discourse concerning school ethos provides a context for perceptions and will be considered in the next section.

10.2 School ethos

Taking into account the work of Nucci and Narvaez (2008), in terms of ethos, all schools work towards being distinctive in their own way and this is accomplished as they develop over time and how they attempt to fulfil the needs of the students within the school. By initially focusing on the broader aims and ethos of the schools, it was possible to view the wider context and examine the value given to PSHE. My research found that teachers in both common and Catholic schools stated, during

interviews, that they felt they wanted the ethos of the school to ensure that the students felt they were cared for and that their needs were catered for within the school and aimed to encourage a feeling of achievement.

While teachers in both common and Catholic schools aimed to ensure that students were supported, in order to facilitate students achieving their full potential, teachers in Catholic schools also thought that one of their aims was to include developing Christian values as part of helping them to reach their full potential. Spiritual development in Catholic schools was seen as important for the ethos as well as academic achievement.

Establishing an ethos of a caring community was an element that teachers considered important in order for students to feel part of the school community. Providing praise for students was a method used by teachers to encourage students to succeed. By providing a caring community in which praise was given helped students to feel happy in school and confident that any problems that may occur could be adequately dealt with efficiently. Teachers indicated that it was important for students to feel happy if they were to function to the best of their ability. This belief supported students in developing their confidence and to be able to take advantage of all the opportunities that schools were able to provide.

One of the original features of this investigation was that, as it was a longitudinal study, perceptions of the students were elicited at different points in their school career. The advantage of this was that it enabled me to look at perceptions over time and assess developments or changes. By examining students' views during both focus group interviews and through the use of a questionnaire concerning school ethos, I was able to gain an insight into some of the values that students developed.

In both school sectors, students in Year 7 perceived school ethos as being connected to relationships and behaviour. Students understood the need for them to treat others in a way that they would like to be treated and that they were expected by their school to behave in a polite manner. These younger students in particular were concerned that incidents of bullying should be reduced. Students in Catholic schools, in particular, appreciated PSHE in that it covered the topic of bullying. For students in common schools, the value of PSHE was that it dealt with learning about drugs. Teachers in common schools also commented on the importance of teaching drug awareness.

The importance placed on good relationships between teachers and students was acknowledged to be vital in helping student development. Teachers in Catholic schools, for example, commented on the importance of helping students to appreciate their own value. Students in Year 7 indicated that they appreciated that God was there for them and said they felt supported by this knowledge. They appreciated the extra support provided by the school chaplain. These perceptions influenced the way teachers approached the provision of PSHE in Catholic schools. This might explain why students in Catholic schools were more concerned about bullying than drug awareness.

There were two cohorts of students. During the second visit to schools, those who had been Year 7 students in Cohort One in the first visit were now in Year 9. These students indicated that they understood the ethos of the school to be concerned with helping them to achieve. Common school students appreciated this in a more rounded way than some of the students in Catholic schools, who placed more of an emphasis on ensuring they gained good academic results. Morris (2009) provided evidence that students in Catholic schools achieved as well as, if not better than, students in comparable schools in terms of examination results. More recent results

provided by Johnes and Andrews (2016) for Education Policy Institute substantiated these claims.

From the findings of this research, students in Catholic schools indicated that they appreciated their academic potential. Gallagher (2001) argued that by focusing on potential, students were given hope for their future. Students in Catholic schools articulated that they understood that God was there for them. The school provided a coherent faith community in which values were in the main shared in common, particularly in the early years of secondary school. By Year 9 a minority of students expressed some doubt about the impact of faith in the school but the majority of students still expressed a strong sense of the divine. This would relate to the questioning spirit that often develops during adolescence, which Halphen, Heckman and Larson (2013) describe as part of the process of acquiring new ways of thinking.

I first interviewed students from Cohort Two when they were in Year 9 and they appreciated that their school ethos expected them to develop good relationships and that teachers would support them in resolving any problems they might experience. Good relationships enabled students to concentrate on learning and facilitated the support for each other. Students in all schools appreciated being given rewards and recognised that the wide range of opportunities enabled them to realise they were more capable than they thought they were. Year 9 students in Catholic schools in Cohort Two indicated similar perceptions as those Year 9 students from Cohort One in terms of their appreciation of being supported by God and believed attending a Catholic school added specific meaning to their lives and was an important aspect of the mission of the school.

Most Year 11 students in Cohort Two, on my second visit, indicated that, from their point of view, schools placed greater emphasis on academic achievement and felt

that school ethos was more concerned about examination success. This was not an unexpected finding as these students were in their final year in secondary school.

The students in Catholic schools appeared to have developed a mature and consistent approach to their experience of attending a Catholic school and indicated an appreciation of attending a school with a religious dimension. The students valued time spent in worship as it gave them an opportunity to reflect on themselves and their progress in a positive way. They felt they shared views in common and were able to engage with the wider community of the parish as well as school. Whilst some students expressed more scepticism than when they were in Year 9, a strong sense of belief could still be detected.

The main differences between the schools that could be identified in this research lay in the rationale behind their ethos. Catholic schools, for example, were driven by the understanding that their ethos was based on Gospel values and that Jesus was their role model in terms of how they sought to operate (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977: n.34).

10.3 PSHE

In this section I shall consider student perceptions at different points in their school career concerning PSHE in secondary schools. It was evident from this research, for example, that PSHE helped students in Year 7 to settle into secondary school, to appreciate their skills and talents and to learn to work with others. Students seemed to value and enjoy PSHE as it helped them to feel part of the community of the school. Having pride in the school impacted on the motivation of students in both common and Catholic schools. Students in both sectors throughout their time in school appreciated the importance of developing positive relationships with their peers. This was important because students could work successfully in class and

support each other, whereas if they were not respectful to each other this could impede learning. They were learning about not only themselves but as indicated by Kirkpatrick and Ellis (2004), they were also learning about their social identity, in the same way Lawrence (2000;2006) points out that through such activities they were able to build self-esteem.

There were a variety of considerations when investigating the area of PSHE. One of the aims of the research was to investigate if any differences between common and Catholic schools could be detected in terms of their delivery and commitment to PSHE. Although there were a variety of systems for the provision of PSHE, between my first and second visits to schools, there was an overall reduction in the time allocation given to PSHE in schools. The main reason for the changes may be due to the pressure to provide more time for other curriculum subjects. Content provision of PSHE was determined by schools according to the way they perceived the needs of their students.

Teacher commitment to PSHE varied and to some extent depended on the demands and requirements of individual schools. Some schools tried to reduce workload by organising delivery in different ways, for example employing a carousel system. The use of outside speakers was adopted by schools when appropriate. PSHE was seen as providing students with the skills they would need in life. Training for PSHE was sparse and most teachers felt they would benefit from more training.

Students during my first visit indicated that they enjoyed PSHE and found it useful in helping them to develop ideas, to know how to deal with problems and how they could be resolved. In Year 7 there was a contrast between what students found useful in PSHE in common and Catholic schools. Students in both sectors appreciated learning about life in general. The subject of bullying was of particular

concern. Students in common schools appreciated developing confidence, self-esteem and learning about drug abuse more than those in Catholic schools. Students in Catholic schools were more concerned with organising their work which may indicate more emphasis being given to academic achievement.

Whereas one of the main concerns of Year 7 students in the first cohort was the issue of bullying, by the time they entered Year 9, the focus had become the quality of peer relationships. Throughout, they appreciated learning about how to deal with real life situations that they may have had to cope with outside of school. Students in both common and Catholic schools could look at situations and recognise the consequences of taking different actions before coming to a decision about how to act.

Year 9 students felt PSHE gave them an insight into other people's circumstances. It also gave them an opportunity to think about situations before they experienced them; this helped them to react appropriately. Students appreciated the different approach taken to PSHE compared with other subjects and the way they could develop skills using a more active approach to learning.

By my second visit, it was evident that some schools had given more consideration to the consistency of the provision of PSHE. A reduction in the provision of time for the subject in some schools was observable, some teachers feeling the provision was inadequate. Some teachers felt they were not fulfilling national recommendations for the provision of PSHE. Little consistency across schools was observable. There was a difference in opinion concerning whether the subject should be examined or not between schools. The changes in the quality of the provision of PSHE in schools could be attributed to the change of government in 2010 and the fact that PSHE was no longer anticipated to be a statutory requirement.

The delivery of sex education within Catholic schools had to adhere to Church requirements as part of their provision. The importance of incorporating Christian values in the delivery of sex education was seen as important for these schools.

By my second visit, the concern for issues such as cyber bullying could be observed. Teachers recognised the increase in pressure that students experienced through the growing developments in technology. Social media put an emphasis on the way students developed their perceptions of self.

It was considered that teacher and student relationships needed to be good if staff and students were to be in a position where they could share views on sensitive issues. Building on the work by Brown, Busfield, O'Shea and Sibthorpe (2011), in my investigation I found that the ethos of a school was important in establishing an atmosphere where students felt supported and were able to develop self-belief and confidence through the praise they received from teachers. Teachers recognised the importance of using praise and rewards to help students feel confident and behave in a positive way.

It seemed to me that the caring nature of relationships was emphasised by both common and Catholic secondary schools. It was important to listen to students and share some personal experiences with them when for example dealing with issues such as applying for jobs. I found that teachers in all the schools wanted to encourage students to feel valued as members of the school community. They wanted students to be happy so that they could learn and achieve. This supports the view raised by Fincham (2012) that when students were happy in school they could focus on exploring their ideas without being hindered by worries from outside school.

The findings of this study corroborated the work of Lyles (2016), who indicated that, if PSHE is to be delivered by motivated teachers, training needs to be taken more seriously. In addition, one of the most important findings in this research was that if teachers were to have their confidence boosted in delivering PSHE, it required the development of skills and understanding of the process. This needed more than just understanding the content of the topic to be delivered, but also an understanding of the importance of building students' experience.

All schools that participated in the research found innovative ways of providing training and support for teachers. Time for meetings was often provided by the schools and more experienced staff acted as mentors for newer members of staff. However, there was little formalised training. Only in two out of the eight schools had teachers undertaken the National PSHE CPD programme (accredited through the University of Roehampton).

Formby and Wolstenholme (2012) found there was often a tension in schools between devoting time to academic subjects and providing time for PSHE. This was, furthermore, particularly evident in Catholic schools in this study, where provision for RE was more critical than in common schools. Between visits, there was a reduction in provision for PSHE, but in all schools the subject was retained, as they felt it made a valuable contribution to the school curriculum. Although PSHE is a non-statutory subject at present and schools are not required to have a whole school policy, they are required to make provision for it as part of national curriculum. Under the Academies Act (2010), academies are obliged to ensure a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which would include ensuring provision for PSHE.

In four schools in the study, regular monitoring of PSHE lessons enhanced the value with which it was regarded. The work of Willis, Clague, and Coldwell, (2013)

highlighted the importance of discussing the provision of PSHE with parents, either during parents' evenings or through providing presentation evenings. My research confirmed that there was clear support for their claims in terms of enhancing the regard for PSHE, demonstrating that this ensured teachers took the subject more seriously. In this research it was found that in some schools comment was made about the provision of presentation evenings and staff said they discussed the subject as part of their role as form tutors.

Whilst there is no previous research on comparisons between the delivery of PSHE in common and Catholic school, my research found little evidence to suggest that there was a great deal of difference between the provision and perceptions of PSHE in common and Catholic schools. All schools in this investigation endeavoured to enhance student development through the PSHE programme and there is evidence that they delivered and provided as many opportunities as they could through a range of activities.

The Catholic Church provides specific guidelines for education within its schools (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997: 30). My research found Catholic schools respected this position. Not all those involved in teaching PSHE in Catholic schools were of the faith, but all teachers were aware of the need to be sensitive to issues; for example, sex education, abortion or euthanasia and to provide information within the guidelines provided by the Catholic Church. However, schools also found that it was important to provide students with the information on which they could base decisions they took. It was also found that although non-Catholic teachers abided by the conventions of the Catholic Church, they felt there was little other difference of teaching in a Catholic school.

Eyles and Machin (2015) found that there had been a growth in recent years in educational provision through the establishment of academies. Academies were introduced in an attempt to improve educational standards and as a means of challenging behaviour problems. Students often feel they are expected to conform to standards set by government with regard to gaining academic results. My research found that this resulted in tensions with students and that more could be done to help students appreciate the skills and talents they had and appreciate what made them unique.

When I first visited schools, the second cohort was in Year 9 and at that point students indicated that they felt PSHE was helpful in dealing with real life problems and concerns. PSHE was felt to be a productive subject that dealt with issues that did not appear in other areas of the curriculum. It taught students how to co-operate and get on with others. Support from friends was appreciated and in Catholic schools greater support was appreciated from the wider family. A high percentage of students in all schools stressed that they enjoyed PSHE. Students in Catholic schools found PSHE particularly helpful when trying to make decisions and to learn about life. Students in common schools were more concerned with their futures and learning about drugs than those in Catholic schools. These findings indicated that there were subtle differences between what students appreciated about PSHE in the two sectors.

Year 11 students indicated that they also found PSHE useful and more applicable to life than other subjects. At this stage in their school career, students had a more complete experience of PSHE and it appeared to make more coherent sense to them having been through the whole programme. Students in common schools learnt about social issues but few students in Catholic schools commented on this which may indicate they dealt with such issues in another curriculum area such as RE.

More students in Catholic schools indicated they found focussing on their futures and going on to sixth form more useful. This may again indicate the emphasis given by teachers in Catholic schools on achievement.

10.4 Progress and attainment

While teachers in common schools recognised the importance of students gaining academic qualifications, teachers in Catholic schools also emphasised helping students to fulfil their full potential in their spiritual development. Students in Year 7 in Catholic schools, on the other hand, appeared to emphasise that teachers appreciated their attainment, through rewards for achieving goals in lessons. The focus for rewards indicated by Year 7 on the questionnaire was received more for attainment rather than for working hard or making an effort. This emphasis appeared to make a difference in helping students to achieve more in terms of academic attainment. Student views concerning progress and attainment provided an insight into perceptions about personal development and self-esteem. This provided a wider context in which personal development could be understood.

Working hard and gaining recognition was important for all students. Whilst individual achievement appeared to be more important for students in common schools, being part of the community and sharing in the mission of the school played a more significant role in Catholic schools. Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993), for example, identified the importance of being part of a sharing community for Catholic schools.

Students in Year 7 said they appreciated being praised for gaining good results. This was appreciated more by students in common schools, while students in Catholic schools stated it was important to help others. In all schools students felt they gained more rewards from academic work and far less emphasis was given to rewards gained from other areas of the curriculum such as creative arts or sports. By Year 9

students in Catholic schools indicated they gained a higher proportion of rewards in subject lessons than students in common schools. This may indicate that they are encouraged to achieve more. In the focus group discussions, students from Catholic schools emphasised the importance of doing well in tests in order to gain praise.

All schools focused on achievement but it appeared to be given more prominence in Catholic schools and these students were more likely to appreciate gaining more support from the school in order to achieve results. Students in common schools in Year 9 Cohort 1 placed greater emphasis on a more rounded education, with sports being given greater emphasis. By comparison, students in Catholic schools appreciated being more involved in extra-curricular activities. Students in common schools gained most support from their friends. This contrasted with students in Catholic schools, who indicated they gained more support from the family.

The second cohort of students, when first visited in Year 9, appreciated getting rewards when doing well, for example, in tests. Most students in this cohort wanted school to help them achieve more and whereas a higher percentage of students in common schools wanted to improve their skills and have more fun in lessons, students in Catholic schools wanted to gain good grades. Students in Catholic schools stressed the importance of academic success more than those in common schools. This probably reflects the ethos of the schools they attended. While students in both types of schools indicated that they gained rewards in lessons, a higher percentage of students in Catholic schools recognised gaining them. Students in common schools indicated that they gained rewards from working hard. In Catholic schools, though, it was not the effort that was praised but the actual achievement that was made.

The second cohort of students in Year 9 in common schools placed greater importance on having improvement in their work recognised, whereas students in Catholic schools placed greater emphasis on having their achievement in a subject being rewarded. For students in common schools the important aspect of developing their work lay in improvement. However, for students in Catholic schools, the emphasis appears to be placed on achievement and recognising potential. There is a distinct difference in emphasis between the perspectives of common and Catholic school students. This could be explained through the belief that their talents are God-given and therefore they have a responsibility to use these talents to the best of their ability.

By Year 11, students indicated that they had become more sensitive to teacher reactions and needed more teacher praise and encouragement in order to make progress. While most students recognised that they wanted school to help them, this was more important for students in Catholic schools than those in common schools, who wanted more help to gain good grades, just as they indicated when they were in Year 9. Students in common schools indicated, as they did when they were in Year 9, that it was more important for them to develop skills. Both groups of students stressed slightly different priorities in terms of what they considered to be important.

Within Catholic schools there appears to be more of an emphasis on gaining good results. This may be the product of a more cohesive community that is more supported by parents. Some parents send their children to Catholic schools because they believe the standard to be higher. Rewards may be used more frequently in Catholic schools and this may result in higher results. Although there is contention concerning the results or successes of faith schools and whether their success is owing to intake or not, under the Labour government who were in power between 1997 and 2010, Tony Blair pursued a policy of encouraging the increase in their

number. Blair believed faith schools promoted a particular ethos that supported moral and academic success (Walford, 2008).

Most students agreed that they gained most rewards in lessons, even though this was acknowledged by slightly more students in Catholic schools. More students in common schools indicated that getting more rewards from their tutors and from attending after school clubs. This may demonstrate an appreciation of the wider benefits of education.

When Year 11 expressed their views about how well they expected to do in their GCSEs, more students in common schools thought they would do well. So although Catholic schools placed a greater emphasis on achievement, the students were less confident in their ability to achieve. Whether this was because these students had a more realistic view of their chances of achieving, or because students in common schools were less pressured in terms of results, can only be speculated. When taking account of what had given satisfaction, a higher percentage of students in Year 11 in Catholic schools indicated that getting good results was the most important thing for them. Interestingly, a higher percentage of students in common schools appreciated helping others at this stage.

The views of Cohort Two in Year 11 were consistent with those they held in Year 9 when they examine what they appreciated being told about themselves. In both common and Catholic schools, students appreciated being told they were good students. Having potential was still important for all students but fewer students in common schools stressed the importance of knowing their work had improved.

10.5 Personal development and self-esteem

Developing positive attitudes towards personal development was seen by teachers as important as it helped to mitigate some of the negative impact some students may experience during adolescence. Hannell (2004) described positive thinking as playing an important role in personal development. It was noted, by Millings, Buck, Montgomery, Spears and Stallard (2012) that adolescents can experience depression, especially if they fail to make good peer attachments. Being part of a school community in which everyone supports each other was one way teachers felt that a school could enhance personal development. In addition, the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities was seen by teachers as an important element in supporting personal development. Both teachers and students felt PSHE helped students to identify areas in which they could achieve and enhance their confidence.

Mruk (2006) described perceptions of values and feelings as being part of personal development. My research found that when schools focused on this area in PSHE they were able to help students to come to a better understanding of themselves. Students appreciated in their early years of secondary education, how PSHE helped them to develop ideas and learn how to resolve potential problems. Rewards and praise in lessons helped them to think well of themselves and boosted their self-esteem and their self-respect which were closely interlinked according to Langer (1999).

Schools addressed the issue of self-esteem as identified by James (1890) as an important aspect of personal development through the PSHE programme and through the opportunities that they provided for students. Peer support as well as personal understanding indicated that the development of self-esteem had a positive

impact. Writers such as Coopersmith (1967), Franks and Marolla, (1976) Branden, (1994) and Tafarodi and Swann, (2001) indicate that the development of self-esteem is both internal and external. Through the questionnaires, it was found that students evaluated themselves through the way they thought about their achievements and through their accomplishments; by assessing what they thought they could do, as well as the good qualities they felt they had. Each school provided educational experiences for the students based on their needs. Schools provided a balance between what was demanded by central government initiatives and the local needs of students within school.

Perceptions of Self-esteem

Year 7 students in line with research by Gecas and Schwalbe (1983) indicated that self-esteem was concerned with the way they regarded themselves. A number of students felt that confidence had an effect on self-esteem. Self-esteem could be enhanced through support and encouragement from others and that which they could give to others (Esparza, 2013). Students in Year 7 in common schools thought that knowing their own strengths and weaknesses was slightly more important than students in Catholic schools. The same could be said of knowing and accepting themselves and having a positive outlook on life. However, in Catholic schools students had more of an appreciation of what made an individual unique.

Students in common schools had a greater understanding of their own value than those in Catholic schools, but more students in Catholic schools felt that self-esteem was connected to loving themselves. Even so, more students in common schools than in Catholic schools indicated that they felt liking and respecting who you are and accepting this as well as working to improve their life were important aspects of self-esteem. The findings from this study demonstrated that the students from common

and Catholic schools had different ways of valuing themselves in terms of self-esteem.

The importance of establishing an environment in which students felt safe to express themselves was appreciated by students in Cohort One when they were in Year 9. By this stage, students in both common and Catholic schools recognised that self-esteem was also influenced by their concern about how other people viewed them. The way an individual presented themselves was of concern. It was considered that if a student had low self-esteem, they may be bullied, whereas it was commented in the focus group that high self-esteem may lead to a student being more active and successful as they were more likely to get involved in activities in and out of lessons.

With regard to the interpretation of self-esteem, Cohort One students in Year 9 in common schools, felt self-esteem was more concerned with the way you thought about yourself and they stressed the importance of being a happy person, while students in Catholic schools stressed the importance of being confident, believing in yourself, being proud of your achievements and valuing yourself. This could indicate that students in Catholic schools were influenced by their faith and that rather than focusing on individual gratification such as happiness they valued the person they were. Leary and Baumeister (2000) point out that self-esteem is one way in which students judge themselves.

During my first visit to Cohort Two, when they were in Year 9, felt that self-esteem was concerned with how good they felt about themselves and about believing in themselves. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that more students in common schools felt that self-esteem was concerned with not only being confident in their ability, but also about knowing themselves and their own worth than those in Catholic schools. Students in common schools appeared to feel more confident in themselves

than those in Catholic schools. This extended to knowing their own strengths and weaknesses and knowing and accepting themselves more. Students in common schools at this stage appeared to have a more positive outlook and greater understanding of their own value, indicating that students in Catholic schools were less assertive about themselves. Common school students had greater liking and respect for themselves and greater acceptance of who they were.

By Year 11 students felt that self-esteem was about the way they portrayed themselves and how they responded to others. It appeared that they were less inhibited about the way they presented themselves. Students in common schools stressed that self-esteem involved the way an individual thought about themselves. Students in Catholic schools, on the other hand, felt confidence played a more important role. Students in Year 11 in Catholic schools felt that being truthful with themselves was more important for self-esteem than those in common schools. Students in Catholic schools felt self-esteem was more important than those in common schools. These results show subtle differences in the values that students held about themselves.

Perceptions of what affects self-esteem

Year 7 students felt self-esteem could be developed through being given compliments. Improving self-esteem could be enhanced through teacher praise and in the interviews teachers emphasised the importance of positive encouragement in ensuring that the learning environment was one where students felt able to take risks in order to learn.

Students in Catholic schools said that they gained most compliments in school and from their family, whereas students in common schools gained more compliments

from friends and sport. Even at this younger age, it was evident that Catholic schools placed an emphasis on praising academic achievement. Students assessed how they measured up with others (Abrams and Hogg, 2004) and when comparing themselves with others in Year 7, more students in Catholic schools felt they were equal to others, whereas slightly more students in common schools regarded themselves in a more individual way. This may point to greater conformity within Catholic schools.

When they were in Year 9, self-esteem was considered by the first cohort of students to be very important by more students in Catholic schools than those in common schools. For these students, one factor that affected self-esteem was gaining compliments. A higher percentage of students in Catholic schools demonstrated that they gained most compliments from lessons, quite considerably more than those in common schools. Once more, an emphasis on academic achievement could be observed in Catholic schools. Students in common schools gained more compliments at home and from sports outside of school than those in Catholic schools. By Year 9 students from common schools indicated that they gained more praise from their families than before.

Whilst in Year 7, students in common schools gained fewer compliments from home than students in Catholic schools; this was reversed by the time they were in Year 9. Students in Catholic schools gained more compliments from friends in Year 9, whereas previously, in Year 7, students in common schools had gained more compliments from friends than those in Catholic schools. The importance of home and friends had altered for students in the two sectors. Friends had a higher level of importance in terms of gaining compliments for students in Catholic schools and home had become marginally less important, whereas for students in common schools, friends had become less important and home, more. It is possible that these

findings may indicate that students mature at different ways in the two sectors during adolescence.

With regard to how students compared themselves with others, in Year 7, more students in Catholic schools felt they were equal to others; by Year 9 this had reversed and more students in common schools felt equal to others. This finding may have been connected to the fact that in Year 9 a higher percentage of students in Catholic schools felt they did not compare themselves to others. More students in common schools still felt they were different to others and, compared with students in Catholic schools, a higher proportion felt they were more intelligent. This may indicate an increase in the positive way students in common schools thought about themselves.

When Cohort One students were in Year 9 they considered ways in which self-esteem might be affected. Fewer students in Catholic schools were concerned about what others thought about them than those in common schools. More students in common schools indicated that they were more confident in different situations in school than those in Catholic schools. This may indicate that students in common schools were more confident. However, the fact that fewer students in Catholic schools were concerned about what others said about them, may signify a different way of self-evaluation and a different set of values being adopted by the two groups of students.

Cohort two in Year 9 felt that recognition was a factor that affected self-esteem. Encouragement from friends was a way of developing self-esteem. Being complimented and developing positive mental attitudes were other ways of developing self-esteem. Common school students felt it was important to gain good results. Students in Catholic schools felt helping others and gaining compliments

from hobbies gave satisfaction. This may indicate that students in Catholic schools were developing more social awareness at this stage in their school career.

Year 11 pointed out that the way they felt about themselves was important in terms of motivation and affected their levels of achievement. Opportunities which enabled them to get involved in school activities were important and parental support could affect self-esteem. By Year 11 students in Catholic schools felt that getting rewards and compliments was more important than those in common schools. Being involved in activities and being positive about themselves became more important for students in common schools. Catholic students felt they gained from help from other people. This is important because support for one another was recognised as a factor in enhancing self-esteem.

Measurement of Self-esteem

When levels of self-esteem were assessed, most students in Year 7 had good levels of self-esteem as measured on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (1963). However, more students in common schools demonstrated feeling more useless and thinking they were no good at times than students in Catholic schools. This suggested that students in Catholic schools appeared to feel more confident than students in common schools. This may indicate, too, that students in Catholic schools appreciated themselves and recognised their achievements more. Although by Year 9 the overall percentage of students in the two groups who had good levels of self-esteem had fallen, the difference was only slight. Slightly more students in common schools, felt useless at times and while slightly more students still felt no good at times, the percentage of students agreeing with this statement had declined.

By Year 11, students in common schools in Cohort Two appeared to have higher levels of self-esteem than those in Catholic schools, which may indicate that those in

common schools thought more highly of themselves. Fewer students at this age in Catholic schools felt less highly of themselves in terms of self-esteem than they did in Year 9. But there were more students in common schools who indicated this. Students in Catholic schools may have had lower expectations of themselves or may not have been encouraged to be boastful about their abilities.

The expectations for all students to conform extended to the ways they looked and behaved. It was reported by teachers, that girls in particular were concerned about their looks. Teenagers wanted to fit in, but this could cause pressures that resulted in bullying, not only through verbal comments, but also through social media. My research indicated that pressures on teenagers were increasing in terms of the need to conform. As Erikson (1968) found, there is a tension for all teenagers not only to establish their own unique identity but also to conform to peer pressure.

10.6 Issues emerging from the research

Although few differences could be detected between common and Catholic school perceptions of PSHE, there appeared to be an extra dimension that emerged in the Catholic sector. Sullivan (2001) pointed out Catholic schools placed a focus on collective worship, where morals and values could be drawn from gospel readings. This leads to the cultivation of a shared ethos based on gospel values, which informs the culture shared by those within the school. In this research students attending a Catholic school appeared from the focus group responses to gain support from the spiritual dimension of the school and a conviction that they thought God was there for them.

Figures from the Catholic Education Service (CES, 2016) indicate that about 30% of students who attend Catholic schools are from other faiths or none and 36% (30%

nationally) of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds. It was clear from my research that whilst the ethos remained a consistent theme, Catholic schools were tolerant of a range of views and beliefs held by students and teachers alike. Whilst traditionally there may have been an assumption that everyone in Catholic schools held views in common, it appeared there is now a greater degree of diversity. Whilst students are provided with knowledge about the Catholic faith, they are also educated about other faiths and traditions.

The ethos in Catholic schools had the greatest effect on the values of those who believed in the Catholic faith. This was particularly evident as students progressed through the school. However, it was stated by some students during the focus group interviews in the Catholic schools that they held different beliefs. Moreover, some students in Catholic schools expressed the view that religious beliefs made little or no difference. Therefore, the impact of the school ethos varied according to the beliefs held by individuals.

Morris (2009) and the CES (2014) indicate that Catholic schools have long been recognised for their achievement of good academic results in examinations.

Gallagher (2001), on the other hand, points out that teachers in Catholic schools should also aim to help students respond to the demands of a changing world.

Findings from my research indicated that, whilst all students in both common and Catholic schools recognised the importance of gaining good academic results, some students in Catholic schools felt that academic achievement was sometimes emphasised at the expense of other aspects of school life, such as personal and social education.

Grace (2012) explains that Catholic schools will need to hold fast to the principles of faith that underpin their mission statements, if they are to retain their rationale for

existence and maintain mission integrity. In a radically changing world, it is the values that students develop that will shape the future of society. My research supported the concerns of Grace (ibid) that indicated the blurring of differences between common and Catholic schools.

I found in the research that most students in both common and Catholic schools considered PSHE to be important. Whilst they acknowledged that they needed academic results to gain employment, they were of the opinion that it was partly the development of skills through PSHE that would enable them to progress in the world of work. It was interesting that they expressed the view that, once they had acquired a job, it would be likely that they would use the skills they had developed in PSHE to be able to get on with others and work in a team.

The recent report by The Children's Society (2017) commented on the concern about the levels of happiness of students in the UK. Although my research was not directly concerned with student happiness, this could be considered as an indicator that there are anxieties about students' levels of self-esteem. During the focus group interviews some students in Catholic schools indicated that they valued prayer time, which provided a time for reflection and brought about a calm atmosphere in which students could relax. The distinctive Christian perspective that each individual is unique and made in the image of God was something these students recognised. Whilst all schools wanted to help students to fulfil their potential and be happy with themselves, it could be inferred from what the students in Catholic schools said that they had an additional reason to be more self-accepting. This could impact on their level of self-esteem.

During the interviews with staff, it was clear from my research that some teachers in a Catholic school saw that the ethos of the school was an important factor in not only

ensuring the acquisition of academic results, but also concerned caring for the spiritual and moral development of students. In both common and Catholic schools, the importance of relationship education was stressed in terms of the ethos of the school. However, Catholic schools gave an additional focus to liturgy, for example, in starting the day with prayer. In both common schools and Catholic schools, teachers emphasised getting the best out of students, helping them to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, gaining good academic results and the pursuit of excellence.

Aspects that were different in Catholic schools when compared with common schools included the fact that Christian values in Catholic schools were emphasised as being the basis of the way the PSHE programme was approached and delivered. For example, the approach to sex education had to take into account the views of the Church on this topic. Moreover, non-Catholic teachers of the subject were careful to ensure they presented the Catholic perspective accurately. Historically, the perception has been that the Catholic Church has imposed its views on the faithful and therefore it might have been expected that teachers would be more careful to conform to Church dogma. Whilst this was evident, it was also found, paradoxically, that teachers wanted to ensure students were fully informed about even the most sensitive issues.

Both common and Catholic schools put an emphasis on charity work and placed importance on understanding that some people were less fortunate than others. This helped students to understand the wider world they lived in. Developing a sense of being part of a wider community was considered to be important in enhancing self-esteem. For example, research by Village and Francis (2016) linked the impact of attending a Catholic school with an influence on student values. O’Keeffe and Zipfel (2007) emphasised being part of a Christian community. This appeared to be an

important aspect of attending a Catholic school. It should be noted that the study by O’Keeffe and Zipfel (2007) focused on Citizenship Education and whilst their results are corroborated by the findings of my study, it should be noted that, in my view, by comparison, PSHE supports the development of the individual whilst Citizenship could be regarded as more utilitarian. Some students in my research felt that this sense of belonging to a particular value-laden community had both positive and negative aspects to it. As students attending a Catholic school, they felt they might be identified with a specific set of expectations that set them apart from the rest of society. If they did something they felt less than proud of, not only would others know about it, but so too would God. Therefore, it was unlikely that they would be able to escape the consequences of their actions.

Several teachers in Catholic schools felt that there was no difference between being in a common and Catholic school. They emphasised the view that the students were ‘citizens of the world’ rather than members of a religious faith. Responses from teachers in both Catholic and common schools identified specific topics that were studied as part of their PSHE programme that satisfied the particular needs of the students in their school. For example, if knife crime was not an issue for their students, although they may cover the topic, a particular emphasis was not given, whereas if drugs were an issue in the local area, more time was spent on this topic.

In some of the common schools an emphasis was given to helping students to understand that all teenagers had to deal with similar issues. Long (2012), for example, finds it was important to help challenge myths that students develop about themselves being abnormal and provide them with information so they understood that the feelings they had were normal. What worried individual students, worried all students. For example, they would not be the only student to feel a certain way i.e. being worried about body changes. Increasing dissatisfaction with particularly girls’

teenage body image is reported by Ashikali, Dittmar and Ayers (2016). The school helped students to see they were no different to other teenagers. Students were helped to understand that they shared common feelings with others of the same age. The term 'normalising' students was used by one of the schools to express this concept.

It was recognised from my research that the method of working in groups in PSHE helped students enhance their social skills. Blake and Pant (2005) also emphasised that PSHE could develop the sense of feeling included through the development of empathy and confidence to interact with others. All students started PSHE from the same position. From the research, it was seen as an advantage to students that they all started from an equal position, that all were able to contribute in some way or other to the discussions and that all views were respected. Students were not in the main ranked or assessed in the subject. However, some teachers advocated the formal assessment of students in the subject.

One positive impact of the PSHE programme on self-esteem was that students became more socially aware. PSHE helped students build their confidence to participate in activities and that had a positive impact. In my research teachers expressed a concern about the growing impact of cyber bullying. The importance of helping students to be able to make informed choices was an important way that PSHE helped enhance the development of self-esteem in both common and Catholic schools. In all schools the importance of PSHE was identified as providing a space where students were able to discuss issues that were directly pertinent to them and this was a subject area where students could relate topics directly to their own lives, which in turn impacted on their self-esteem.

The importance of developing a positive psychology by focusing on an individual's strengths was emphasised by Boniwell and Ryan (2012), as it enables students to thrive. PSHE helped students to develop a belief in their own ability and to be positive about the school and themselves. My research found that, especially for younger students, self-satisfaction was not always enough. It appeared that having achievement recognised and gaining praise was important to them as well. Gaining recognition for achievement acted as a motivator for some individuals. My research indicated that students felt PSHE gave them a safe place where they could assess situations, examine their feelings on issues and make possible decisions about future events that may occur. It was an environment within which they could examine how to resolve issues that occurred such as getting into conflicts or breaking up with friends. Students felt PSHE enabled them to cope with problems they faced.

The following issues emerging from the research highlighted ways in which the two sectors could be compared. The comparative measures of results from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale indicated little difference between students in common and Catholic schools, this highlighted that the discrepancies between the two sectors were minimal. However, significant differences were detected when it came to looking at how students in Year 11 responded to issues of what they hoped to do after GCSEs. Students in both common and Catholic schools gained support from different adults in school such as form tutors, heads of year or subject teachers. While schools in both common and Catholic sectors had a plethora of adults available to help students, often including, for example, support staff and counsellors, Catholic schools also had chaplains who were available to give support.

Another issue emerging from the study was that PSHE was a vital component of the school curriculum and its status needed to be enhanced owing to the importance that it has on a practical level in the lives of young people. Weare (2015), for example,

specified that home and school need to work together to ensure students' well-being. We no longer live in a society where we can take for granted that such skills will be provided from within the family context.

Students come from a diversity of backgrounds and PSHE has the potential to help them to understand and appreciate the varied range of experiences of others with whom they come into contact. The subject was shown to be appreciated by over 80% of students in both common and Catholic schools. The PSHE programme facilitated the development of skills and the understanding of the consequences of decisions, which helped students to make the most appropriate choices available to them. This research identified that, if teachers are to be enthusiastic, motivated, and consistent in delivering a programme of PSHE to students, there is a need for school leaders to provide a clear and consistent programme of training for the delivery of PSHE.

10.7 Limitations of the Study

This research was initially planned as a longitudinal study in order to assess the impact of the introduction of statutory PSHE and the personal development in terms of self-esteem in Catholic and common schools. However, although it transpired that PSHE was not made statutory, the research was still pursued to examine perceptions of PSHE and personal development in Catholic and common schools over a period of time.

It is impossible to assess how serious and how reliable students were when completing questionnaires and participating in interviews. Responses have been assessed as indicated on the forms but it was not possible to establish the reasons for some questions remaining unanswered. Questionnaires were administered by form tutors and the researcher was unable to control the exact administration of the questionnaires and was reliant on the schools to facilitate the completion of

questionnaires in the most appropriate manner. However, as focus group interviews were carried out by the researcher and comments from students supported topics that were referred to on the questionnaire sheets, it is possible to have some confidence in the results.

The conduct of interviews is subject to variations according to individual circumstances, with regard to time and place and the mood of those who participate (Cohen and Manion, 1994). However, every precaution was taken in this research to alleviate any of these external factors that may have affected the outcome of the interviews by co-operating with each school regarding the arrangements. As Black (1996) indicated it is vital that the interviewer tries to elicit valid and reliable responses from those being interviewed.

This was an independent research project that was conducted without external funding. As there is a paucity of research in this area, there was a demand for original enquiry in this area. In retrospect, the construction of some questions could have been more explicit in order to achieve greater clarification on some issues, particularly during interviews. But it must be borne in mind that time was limited both for teachers and students and gaining access to participants is increasingly difficult in the present constrained educational climate. Morris (1996), for example, asked the question what was distinctive about the school the students attended as a way of looking at the ethos of schools and it may, in retrospect, have been appropriate for me to have included this question in order to shed greater light on the ethos of the schools in this study. Nevertheless, the research provided some useful insights into this area of development in both common and Catholic schools.

The research could be replicated using the same method. However, results may differ, because people, time and situations change. It may therefore not be possible

to make clear generalisations that would be applicable across other educational systems in other countries. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this enquiry would increase interest, which would lead to further research in this area. This research focused on secondary schools in England at a particular time and this has to be taken into consideration when assessing findings.

Whilst this research achieved many of its objectives, it has been hard to isolate different factors that impact on perceptions of PSHE and personal development, such as friends and family. It is a complex area that is open to a wide diversity of interpretations. This field of research is by its nature subjective and therefore, for a researcher poses challenges which can be problematic and this makes it more difficult to draw specific conclusions.

There are many interpretations of reality and consequently a qualitative approach through the employment of interviews to elicit data seemed to be an appropriate method to adopt. One potential problem that the researcher had to resolve was that of the selection of participants for the investigation. This process was in many ways beyond the control of the researcher as it depended on the goodwill of the schools who agreed to take part. However, the research and its findings provided a valuable basis on which to evaluate perspectives towards PSHE and personal development in schools. School is only one factor in addressing personal development, but, as this research indicates, it is an important and vital one in terms of enhancing student motivation and self-belief as part of their personal development as also pointed out by Mackay (2011).

10.8 Contribution to Knowledge

In this section, I shall draw attention to significant aspects of new knowledge that emerged from this study, which set out to explore perceptions of PSHE and personal

development through PSHE in both common and Catholic schools. The intention was to examine to what extent any differences if any could be detected in the approaches taken. Overall, little significant difference could be detected between the two sectors. However, it was found that there were differences in the underlying values that existed in the rationale of the work of the schools.

One insight that has emerged from this study is that students in all the participating schools have acknowledged and appreciated the contribution that PSHE made to their educational experience. They understood how valuable it was in helping them to know how to make decisions in difficult situations. Through discussions with students during the focus group interviews they indicated they were able to develop an anticipation of situations they may encounter and decide how they could deal with any problems that may arise.

Significantly, in a longitudinal study I was also able to investigate teacher and student perceptions of PSHE and personal development over time. It was also possible in particular to look at student perceptions at different times during their educational career.

It was evident from this study that there were questions concerning whether all teachers in Catholic schools were aware of the distinctive nature of Catholic education. This may have been evident from previous research, but with the continued reduction of the number of Catholic teachers working in Catholic schools, it highlighted the problem of sustaining the Catholic ethos and nature of Catholic schools.

It was recognised by teachers that there was a need for constant pastoral support for students in their education. This was a theme that emerged from teacher comments.

The degree to which students felt valued affected their ability to achieve and reach their full potential. Significantly, a growing concern that was drawn from the study was the impact of social media on students' personal development.

Different values could be identified between students in common and Catholic schools. Students in Catholic schools appreciated being part of a wider community and were concerned with the person they could become their and academic potential. Students in common schools, on the other hand, did not recognise receiving as many rewards as those in Catholic schools. Students in common schools appeared to be less dependent on their schools providing as much support and help for them. They appreciated achievement in sport more than students in Catholic schools, who got more satisfaction from being involved in extra-curricular activities. These differences draw attention to different values held by students in the two sectors.

While friends were the main source of support for students in common schools, those in Catholic schools in the main gained most support from their family. PSHE helped students in Catholic schools evaluate right from wrong and all students were able to recognise the support it gave in terms of assessing real life situations. Self-esteem was seen by students in common schools as being concerned with the way you presented yourself and being happy while students in Catholic schools saw it as concerned in the main with confidence and valuing yourself. This reinforces the point made earlier about distinctive values that underpin education in the two sectors.

10.9 Implications

There are a number of implications that arose from this research which will be addressed in this section. The interviews, which were undertaken as part of this research, indicated that some new teachers (two out of the four interviewed) did not

appear to understand the difference between working in a Catholic school and working in any other school. The induction of new staff is important because they need to understand the ethos of the school and this can impact on effective, co-ordinated PSHE delivery. New teachers need to understand the aims of the PSHE programme so that they use appropriate methods to deliver the skills and understanding for this subject.

Within the Catholic school it is vital to both conform to the requirements of society in terms of PSHE provision but also to remain faithful to the rationale for their existence. Finding the balance between these two perspectives can be challenging in terms of PSHE in Catholic schools. The implication for Catholic schools is that they need to conform to the demands of a modern secular society but ensure they enhance the promotion of the spiritual nature of the school.

There appears to be an increasing concern over teenage behaviour in connection with, for example, 'sexting' (BBC, 2016, online) and the use and abuse of the Internet including cyber-bullying (DfE, 2014). Another concern related to teenage behaviour is mental health (PISA, 2015, online). Comments made by teachers in this research indicated growing concerns about pressures that teenagers face in relation to family situations and academic pressures that have an impact on their mental health.

This research highlighted the need to ensure improved provision of training for PSHE teachers. This could contribute to the raising of the profile of PSHE in secondary schools. This could also encourage the development of skills that would enable all teachers to employ a variety of methods that would be appropriate for the delivery of lessons.

10.10 Suggestions for further research

Following this enquiry, in this section I will make recommendations for future research. It is suggested that it would be useful to conduct further investigations into the distinctive nature of Catholic education. This could aid better understanding by all teachers working in Catholic schools. Research into how Catholic schools induct new staff, especially non-Catholic staff, into the school is needed so that they can fully appreciate the ethos and distinctive nature of the school. There is a need for school leaders in Catholic schools to ensure that induction programmes for staff incorporate the purpose and rationale for the existence of Catholic schools.

If PSHE was made statutory it would be recommended that research be conducted to ascertain the extent to which it would make a difference in terms of enhancing the status and provision of the subject for all students. This would ensure there was a greater balance in the curriculum, where greater emphasis could be put on the development of student skills rather than concentrating on more academic studies.

Further research into how the government could provide advice for schools on how to address the issues of mental health in young people would be helpful. It is recommended that the government conduct research into the impact that PSHE can make in supporting students to cope with the challenges of modern life. PSHE is a vehicle through which such issues can be discussed and where appropriate behaviour can be debated.

I consider the relationship between attendance and self-esteem to be an important aspect of PSHE that arises from my findings. In relation to this, research into the connection between attendance and self-esteem may provide an insight into the relationship between these two factors. Research into the impact of the development

of a module focusing on the development of self-esteem as part of the Key Stage 3 PSHE curriculum in all schools would be useful in establishing the extent to which it could improve rates of attendance.

A further recommendation would be to compare the experience of students in single sex schools. This study did include students who attended single sex schools but I did not specifically compare their experiences. It would therefore be useful to examine in detail data related to how self-esteem is affected in different situations. For example, further to the Children's Society Report (2016) that adolescent girls, in particular, were unhappy with their appearance, there would be value in more research into ways of improving girls' self-esteem.

10.11 Summary

This research began with the overall aim to investigate teacher and student perceptions of ethos, PSHE, and self-esteem in Catholic and common schools. The key questions addressed were:

- 1) How do teachers and students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?
- 1) Do teachers and students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?

Whilst the research indicated that there were differences in values and ways staff and students responded to the nature and interpretation of PSHE within schools, the importance of enhancing the status of the subject was consistent across all the schools that participated in the study. Both common and Catholic schools wanted to offer the best provision they could for students, but for Catholic schools the provision of PSHE was informed by a distinctive commitment to a lifelong spiritual component.

When considering the first of the two key questions in the research 'How do teachers and students perceive the ethos of their respective schools impacts on PSHE?' it was noted that the ethos of the school had an important impact on the way that PSHE was developed in schools. For example, caring for others such as the disabled or elderly was highlighted. Over the two year period during which this investigation took place, the time allocated to the subject in most schools was reduced. This was due to pressure on curriculum time. Nevertheless, schools did find ways to retain the subject. However, training for teachers was minimal. Students felt the school ethos impacted on PSHE, for example, with the expectation of good behaviour, particularly in terms of how their relationships with others should be conducted.

The second research question: 'Do teachers and students believe that PSHE helps the development of student self-esteem?' was addressed by students through the way they felt that the development of self-esteem was addressed in the PSHE programme. It was felt that self-esteem could be developed through the recognition of achievement and by providing encouragement. Developing self-esteem was seen as important not only for motivation but also for enabling students to access opportunities on offer in and outside school. Without self-esteem students felt they would not engage with activities.

Whilst the research indicated that there were differences in values and ways staff and students in common and Catholic schools responded to the nature and interpretation of PSHE within schools, the importance of enhancing the status of the subject was consistent across all the schools that participated in the study. Both common and Catholic schools wanted to offer the best provision they could for students, but for Catholic schools the provision of PSHE was informed by a distinctive commitment to a lifelong spiritual component. PSHE is currently undergoing some significant changes that are commented on below.

Development of PSHE

In July (2018) the Education Secretary, Damien Hinds announced that all schools will need to teach students about both physical and mental health. From September 2020, Health Education as well as Relationships and Sex Education will be compulsory in secondary schools. It is envisaged that students as part of the PSHE programme will be taught about a healthy lifestyle as well as how to build resilience and wellbeing (DfE, 2018). These changes arise from the increasing concern of the government about young people's physical and mental health. By supporting the development of skills such as confidence, resilience, self-esteem and self-control, it is seen that this may help reduce health problems.

It is also seen as desirable that young people are able to stay safe on-line and PSHE is seen as a means whereby students can learn how to navigate places online without harm. In order to achieve these goals, all schools are required to publish details of their PSHE provision and programme as part of their curriculum provision (PSHE Association, 2018).

As part of the PSHE programme, an area of increasing concern in the rapidly changing world for students is economic awareness. This aspect of the programme helps students to develop an understanding of the world of work and the way business functions and contributes to the overall prosperity of the country. As future consumers, students will need to manage their money effectively. This provision equips students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need in order to make the most of the changing opportunities in the work place. It helps them to understand the world of work, the diverse opportunities in the work place and how they can contribute to the prosperity of the country. By helping students to make a link between what they learn in school and how they will be able to use this

knowledge in the future helps students to be more motivated in their studies. By developing economic awareness within PSHE, students are able to gain an understanding of their potential by helping them to overcome limitations caused by, for example, stereotyping or discrimination.

It is important for students to build realistic plans for their future and be aware of career opportunities, as well as being adaptable. By developing skills of assessing risks and rewards, students will be able to take positive steps in making the most of their capabilities through future career choices. In the future, students will need the skills to be able to cope with change and to be enterprising through making appropriate decisions. For example, they will need to develop ways of thinking critically about how they manage money. These skills are important if students are to be positive and are to be able to develop their self-esteem. In order to prosper in the future, students will need to be 'economically literate' (PSHE Association). PSHE plays a significant part in helping students to become aware of these skills and abilities in relation to aspects of preparing them for the world of work (QCA, 2007). The PSHE programme helps students to evaluate advertising prompts provided by financial services and to become aware of how they may be influenced by the language used.

Recent trends

As society changes and develops, it appears that PSHE in secondary schools becomes even more important for students. Recent trends highlight the contemporary relevance of the work undertaken in this study. Adolescence is a time of change for young people when they have to come to realise who they are and how they relate to the world. Due to changes in examination regulations greater stress is being placed on students because achievement is increasingly being measured by results based on final summative assessments (OECD, 2018). Under the Equality

Act (2010), schools have to ensure equality for all, including concerns of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation. The SRE curriculum needs to cover content and ensure that it is inclusive by not only helping students to form good relationships between themselves, but also understand any kind of prejudice including homophobia. The curriculum needs to facilitate access for all students to teaching whatever their inclination whether they be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

The state of the nation's health is under continual scrutiny and concern about many issues, for example, obesity. The Good Childhood Report (The Children's Society, 2018) emphasises the growing concern over students struggling with their identity and the numbers that are self-harming. Pressure to fit in and be accepted by their peers has affected more girls than boys. Girls in particular are concerned with the way they look, which was demonstrated by girls in my study. Girls are turning to self-harm as one way of coping with pressure. The report also identified a growing number of young people who are attracted to the same sex or both sexes and these young people are also inclined to self-harm (The Children's Society, 2018: 42). PSHE in schools provides an opportunity where these issues can be addressed with students.

Evidence provided by the Good Childhood Report (ibid) drew attention to young people's well-being. It embraced issues such as their happiness, their relaxation, their health, education, environment and their state of mind. While the report indicated that girls said that they struggle with their appearance to fit in more, boys did not have the same issues; overall young people indicated a rise in happiness with school (ibid: 30). Interestingly, while the examination process may be stressful, the indications were that there was greater satisfaction with their time spent in school. Concern for the mental health of young people of secondary school age has resulted in the encouragement of developments such as mindfulness programmes (Sawyer at

al., 2012). Mindfulness can be defined as the ability to stay in the present moment and stop the mind from wandering. Students are able to bring the mind back to the focus of attention and disengage from unwanted mental processes (Kang et al, 2018: 164). This ability to pay attention and to be present to all kinds of experience can encourage an open mind, curiosity and kindness, through mindfulness meditations. Mindfulness training involves using attention in a focused and intentional way (KuyKen et al, 2017). Some mindfulness programmes enable young people to train their minds in an experiential way through short practices focusing on the breath and body. These programmes can be useful in helping adolescents overcome depression and can form a valuable part of the PSHE programme.

PSHE has been the focus of this study because it is regarded as a vital element of the educative process. The PSHE curriculum provides an opportunity to address issues with students that can help them cope with the many challenges of personal development during adolescence. We live in a fast changing world where many opportunities are presented to students in school. Within PSHE students are given the chance to gain a better understanding of themselves and to develop their self-esteem. This enables them to have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Brown et al (2011: 119) point out that PSHE is 'a values-based part of the curriculum', which I see as an important counterweight to the current trend of emphasizing the content-based core curriculum. PSHE hopefully will remain a vital subject in a more broad and balanced curriculum for students in the years to come.

PSHE was regarded by students as a subject where self-esteem could be enhanced through the development of specific topics. In all the schools visited, for example, there was a topic that concentrated on image and how the media developed ideals. This had an impact on student self-esteem through the way they viewed themselves. PSHE provided a safe place where students could develop an understanding of how

they reacted to such phenomena and how they interacted with others. How students felt about themselves and their levels of self-esteem affected their motivation to get involved in activities and how much they were able to achieve.

PSHE provided an environment in which students could engage with different opportunities to prove to themselves and to others that they were capable of success. This had a positive impact on their self-esteem. It is evident from this research that PSHE and self-esteem are essential elements of education that students need if they are to fulfil their potential.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interviewing Senior Leaders and their perspective of the development of self-esteem in their school.

Rationale for questions in brackets

1. What are your responsibilities in the school?
(Finding out the perspective that they are coming from)
2. What are the whole school aims in teaching PSHE?
(Looking at how PSHE is seen to fit in on a Whole School Aims).
3. How do you decide on the delivery of PSHE?
(Looking at how policy is put into practice).
4. What impacts on the whole school approach to be taken on the development of PSHE?
(What implications government initiatives have on the school?)
5. How do you measure the success of the whole school implementation of the new PSHE orders?
(Trying to see how the school is preparing for the implementation of the statutory proposals)
6. What are the differences in the delivery of PSHE in a Catholic school?
(Evaluating the focus on the impact of being a denominational school)
7. Who deliverers the new PSHE orders?
(Looking at analysing the practical delivery issues)
8. What has been the history of PSHE delivery in the school?
(Evaluating how has the school arrived at where they are now)

9. What has been the impact of the introduction of the new PSHE orders?
(Looking at impact of development of government directives)

10. How do you assess the development of self-esteem?
(Analysis of assessment of self-esteem from the school perspective)

11. How do the new PSHE orders fit into the rest of the curriculum?
(Evaluating how the school delivers PSHE across the school)

12. Are there any particular issues for the development of self-esteem in this school?
(Analysis of any specific concerns that are individual to the school)

13. How motivated are staff who have been involved in the delivery of PSHE?
(Evaluation of the kind of support SLT get from staff)

14. How do you provide for staff training?
(Seeing if a real emphasis is put on the development of PSHE)

15. Is self-esteem developed in areas other than PSHE?
(Evaluating how self-esteem is assessed across the curriculum)

16. How does the ethos of the school enhance student self-esteem?
(Analysing if links are made between ethos and student self-esteem)

Appendix 2

Interviewing Teachers who deliver PSHE (rationale for questions in brackets)

1. Why are you involved in the delivery of PSHE?
(Evaluating role in the delivery – form tutor, passion about the subject)
2. What are your aims in teaching PSHE?
(Looking at what staff perceptions are about PSHE)
3. What do you include in the PSHE programme?
(Analysing if school follow a specific programme or add points that they feel are relevant to their group)
4. What are the differences in the delivery of PSHE in a Catholic school?
(Evaluation of teacher perception about school ethos)
5. Do you have a belief system that impacts on your delivery of PSHE to students?
Evaluation of teacher perspective that comes from for their delivery of the subject)
6. How do you monitor and assess the development of self-esteem?
(Analysis of the practical way teachers evaluate student self-esteem)
7. How do you know what impact the PSHE programme has?
(Analysis of how teachers view the success of PSHE)
8. How do you try to develop student self-esteem?
(Analysis of awareness teachers have about the development of self-esteem)
9. What ensures the most positive student response to PSHE?
(Evaluation of what teachers feel works with students)
10. What training have you received to help you deliver the PSHE programme?
(Seeing if schools support the work of PSHE Development)
11. How useful has the training been?
(Evaluation of how teachers regard input into PSHE)

Appendix 3

Questions for Focus group with students

1. Can you explain what PSHE is?
2. Is PSHE important?
3. Are there things you enjoy about PSHE?
4. Is it useful to life?
5. Is there anything you don't you like about PSHE?
6. What could be done to improve the subject?
7. Are there any topics that you would like to see included in PSHE?
8. What is self-esteem? What builds people's self-esteem?
9. Are there subjects that help build people's self-esteem? If so how do they achieve that?
10. How can others help people to develop their self-esteem?

11. When do people develop their self-esteem?

12. (Catholic schools only) Does it make a difference being in a church school in relation to self-esteem?

13. How are achievements celebrated?

14. What do people learn about their personal qualities, skills and achievements in PSHE?

15. What do people think about themselves and their abilities?

16. Does the school put an emphasis on having good relationship?

Appendix 4

Theresa Fogell

(Contact details supplied)

5th May 2010

Headteacher

School address

Dear ,

I am studying for a PhD at the London Institute. My work is being supervised by Professor Sue Hallam and Dr Lynne Rogers. I was wondering if your school could help by being one of the schools I use to research the development of self-esteem and PSHE.

My research would include interviewing two senior members of staff, one with a curriculum responsibility and one with a more pastoral one, although I realise that most roles do not fall neatly into these areas exactly. I would also wish to interview two members of staff who are responsible for the delivery of PSHE, one who had the longest and one who had the shortest service in order to get an overview of perspectives about PSHE and the development of self-esteem before the summer holidays.

The interviews would be followed up with questionnaires given to students in Years 7 and 9 in the autumn term. Then I would interview six students from each year group as part of a focus group in order to follow up the questionnaires and gain a deeper understanding of student views. Then when these students are in Years 9 and 11, I would re-issue the questionnaires and conduct two focus groups again in order to ascertain developments.

I do hope your school will be interested in being involved in this research. I do not work on Mondays so am available to conduct interviews or I could be available on other days in the afternoon from about 3pm but these details could be finalised later on. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Theresa Fogell (Mrs)

Appendix 5

Dear Parents

Your school has kindly agreed to take part in my research project on perceptions of PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and self-esteem in the curriculum. I am a student at the London Institute of Education and the research is being undertaken as part of my degree. The findings will form part of a PHD thesis.

Students are invited to take part in completing a questionnaire on two occasions and a small number will be invited to take part in a focus group interview.

None of the identities of those taking part will be revealed and the information is being used solely by me the researcher. I have been CRB checked. Names will appear on the questionnaire only for the purpose of matching the two questionnaires.

This will enable me to look at views across time and look for any changes in ideas expressed. Names will not be used as part of the research. I am working with eight schools in total and am looking to see if there are any views in common or not.

When interviewing staff on my first visit I looked at aims of the school. The school is helping young people to reach their potential and become successful and useful members of society. Pastoral care is a focus and young people take part in PSHE lessons which is one aspect that I am investigating as part of developing self-esteem.

If you wish to ask any further questions about this research or wish to withdraw your child from taking part at any point during the research, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school.

Yours faithfully

Theresa Fogell (Mrs)

Appendix 6

Consent Form for Taking Part in Focus Group Interviews

I agree to take part in a Focus Group Interview as part of a research study about self-esteem. I understand that my identity will not be revealed and my details will not be given to anyone else for any purpose. The information gained from taking part in this Focus Group will be used solely to help the researcher to improve the questioning and format of Focus Group Interviews. I understand that I may leave the group at any point and return to my class and ask to have my contribution withdrawn.

Signed:

Dated:

Appendix 7

Draft Student Questionnaire

Name _____ Sex: Male or Female School _____ Form Group _____

Date _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Your help is really appreciated. DO complete it as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers just your own views. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for anything other than for research purposes.

The first part of the questionnaire is looking at how you feel about yourself.

1. Look at the following statements and tick if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9. I certainly feel useless at times.				
10. At times I think I am no good at all.				

2. Which subjects have helped you with making choices in your life?

3. If you have concerns about life who do you get support from -

Your form tutor Your subject teacher Your friends Your parents
Your brothers/sisters?

4. What have you enjoyed most in PSHE?

5. What have you found most useful in PSHE?

6. What has helped you most when you have had to make decisions?

7. How would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?

8. Where do you feel you have achieved in school?

9. How do you compare yourself to others?

10. How concerned are you about what others say about you?

11. How much recognition do you need to feel good about yourself?

12. Are you confident in different situations in school or out with friends?

13. Are you truthful with yourself?

14. How often do you achieve goals you set yourself?

15. What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?

16. What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?

17. Tick as many of the following as you feel :

I believe self-esteem means:

- Believing in yourself and knowing your own worth
- Being confident in your ability
- Understanding your strengths and weaknesses
- Knowing and accepting yourself
- Being able to recognise what makes someone unique
- Having a positive outlook on life
- Understanding your own value
- Loving yourself
- Liking and respecting who you are
- Accepting who you are and working to improve your life

18. Where do you feel most valued in school?

19. Who has influenced you most in school?

20. When do you get most compliments?

Appendix 8

Student Questionnaire

Name_____ Sex: Male or Female School_____ Form Group____ Date_____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Your help is really appreciated. Please complete it as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers, just your own views. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for anything other than for research purposes.

The first part of the questionnaire is looking at how you feel about yourself.

1. Look at the following statements and tick if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
b) I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
c) All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
d) I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
e) I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
f) I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
g) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
h) I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
i) I certainly feel useless at times.				
j) At times I think I am no good at all.				

2. If you have concerns about life, who do you get support from? (Please tick the appropriate boxes):

Your form tutor Your subject teachers Your friends Your parents

Your brothers/sisters

3. If you have enjoyed PSHE ,what have found most useful?

.....

4. Has PSHE helped you when you have had to make decisions in your life?

.....

5. Would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?

6. Where do you get most rewards in school?

7. Tick as many of the following as you feel appropriate:

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) I am concerned about what others say about me				
b) I need recognition to feel good about myself				
c) I am confident in different situations in school				
d) I am confident in different situations outside of school				
e) I am truthful with myself				
f) I achieve goals I set myself				

8. Do you compare yourself to others? Yes No

9. How do you compare yourself to others?

10. What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?

11. What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?

12. When do you get most compliments?

12A. Tick as many of the following as you feel appropriate:

I BELIEVE SELF-ESTEEM MEANS:	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) believing in yourself and knowing your own worth				
b) being confident in your ability				
c) understanding your strengths and weaknesses				
d) knowing and accepting yourself				
e) being able to recognise what makes someone unique				
f) having a positive outlook on life				
g) understanding your own value				
h) loving yourself				
i) liking and respecting who you are				
j) accepting who you are and working to improve your life				

You may be invited to take part in a follow up interview, but you are under no obligation to accept the invitation.

Thank you for your time and for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 9

Student Questionnaire Year 11

Name_____ Sex: Male or Female School_____ Form Group____ Date__

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Your help is really appreciated. Please complete it as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers, just your own views. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for anything other than for research purposes.

The first part of the questionnaire is looking at how you feel about yourself.

1. Look at the following statements and tick if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
b) I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
c) All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
d) I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
e) I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
f) I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
g) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
h) I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
i) I certainly feel useless at times.				
j) At times I think I am no good at all.				

2. What have you enjoyed and found most useful in PSHE?
.....

3. Would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?
.....

4. How would you like school to help you achieve more in your life?
.....

5. Where do you get most rewards in school?

.....

6. How do you expect to do in your GCSEs this Year? (Please tick the appropriate boxes):

Gain 10+ GCSEs at C and above Gain 5+ GCSEs at C and above

Gain below 5+ GCSEs at C and above

7. Put one tick for each of the following statements as appropriate:

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) I am concerned about what others say about me				
b) I need recognition to feel good about myself				
c) I am confident in different situations in school				
d) I am confident in different situations outside of school				
e) I am truthful with myself				
f) I achieve goals I set myself				

8. What do you hope to do after GCSEs? (Please tick the appropriate box):

Go to college to do A levels Got to college to follow a non A level course

Find a job

9. What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?

.....

10. What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?

.....

11. Where do you get most compliments?

.....

12. Please explain what you think self-esteem is in your own words

.....

You may be invited to take part in a follow up interview, but you are under no obligation to accept the invitation.

Thank you for your time and for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 10

Cohort 1 Student Questionnaire Year 9

Name _____ Sex: Male or Female School _____ Form Group _____ Date _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Your help is really appreciated. Please complete it as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers, just your own views. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for anything other than for research purposes.

The first part of the questionnaire is looking at how you feel about yourself.

1. Put one tick for each of the following statements as appropriate.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
b) I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
c) All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
d) I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
e) I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
f) I take a positive attitude towards myself.				
g) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
h) I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
i) I certainly feel useless at times.				
j) At times I think I am no good at all.				

2. How well are you doing in school (Please tick the appropriate box):

Very well Satisfactorily Could achieve more

3. Are you happy with the option choices available for your courses next year?

.....

4. Would you like school to help you achieve more in your life, if so how?

.....

5. Where do you get most rewards in school?
.....

6. Put one tick for each of the following statements as appropriate:

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) I am concerned about what others say about me				
b) I need recognition to feel good about myself				
c) I am confident in different situations in school				
d) I am confident in different situations outside of school				
e) I am truthful with myself				
f) I achieve goals I set myself				

7. Do you compare yourself to others Yes No

8. If yes how do you compare yourself to others?
.....

9. What good things have you done that have given you satisfaction?
.....

10. What is the most positive thing you have been told about yourself in school?
.....

11. Where do you get most compliments?
.....

12. Please explain what you think self-esteem is in your own words:
.....

12a. How do you think self-esteem can be improved?
.....

12b.. How important do you think self-esteem is?
.....

You may be invited to take part in a follow up interview, but you are under no obligation to accept the invitation.

Thank you for your time and for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 11

Questions for Focus group with students

1. Can you explain what PSHE is?
2. Is PSHE important?
3. Do you enjoy about PSHE?
4. Is it useful to your life?
5. Is there anything you don't you like about PSHE?
6. What could be done to improve the subject?
7. What do we learn about keeping healthy in PSHE?
8. Is it important to keep healthy?

9. Are there any topics that you would like to see included in PSHE?

10. What is self-esteem? What builds people's self-esteem?

11. Are there subjects that help build people's self-esteem? If so how do they achieve that?

12. How can others help people to develop their self-esteem?

13. When do people develop their self-esteem?

14. (Catholic schools only) Does it make a difference being in a church school in relation to self-esteem?

15. How are achievements celebrated?

16. What do people learn about their personal qualities, skills and achievements in PSHE?

17. What do people think about themselves and their abilities?

18. Does the school put an emphasis on having good relationship?

Appendix 12

Dear Tutor

I would like to start by thanking you for taking the time to distribute these questionnaires. I would like to introduce myself, my name is Theresa Fogell and I am a teacher undertaking studies that will lead to a PhD. The completion of these questionnaires by students will be most helpful as they will be helping me to complete a PhD about PSHE and the development of self-esteem.

I would like your students to know that I am asking them to complete the questionnaire as part of my studies about PSHE and self-esteem.

Please let them know that I am interested in their ideas and points of view.

All their answers will be treated in the greatest confidence and will only be used by me for research purposes and individual names will not be used. However I have asked for names on the forms so that in two years' time when I will ask for the forms to be completed again, I will be able to match up their responses, so please let them know it is important that they fill their names in clearly.

Question 1 is about how they feel about their self-esteem and they should give one tick on each line. This is a recognised evaluation system.

Question 2 is about who they turn to for support.

Questions 3 and 4 are asking about PSHE

Question 5 is about what support they would like to be available in school

Question 6 is concerned with where they get rewards

Questions 7 onwards are about self-esteem.

I have provided a space at the end of the questions for students to make any further comments that they may feel are relevant.

Please thank the students on my behalf for filling in the questions on the forms. If you wish to contact me for any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me,

Theresa

(email supplied).

Appendix 13

Theresa Fogell
(Contact details were supplied here)

5th May 2010

Dear (Name was inserted here),

Introduction for those participating in interviews

Thank you for agreeing to give up your time and help me with my research. I am at present studying for a PhD at the London Institute. My work is being supervised by Professor Sue Hallam and Dr Lynne Rogers.

The purpose of the interview is to investigate perceptions of PSHE in key stages 3 and 4 and self-esteem. I will take notes and with your permission I will record the interview. I would like to stress that everything you say will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Individual names of people and schools will not be identified. No-one else will have access to this information other than for the purposes of this research.

We will look at three areas, I'll start with asking you a bit about yourself and the school, then I'll look at PSHE and then personal development in terms of self-esteem.

Again many thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. You will be free to terminate the interview at any time should you so wish and withdraw your contribution but I hope you will enjoy the experience. I look forward to meeting you and conducting the interview.

Yours sincerely

Theresa Fogell (Mrs)

APPENDIX 14

St Mary's PSHCE PLANNER

YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settling in. What is school about – Yr. 7 booklet • Behaviour in the classroom • Planning homework • Yr. Council Elections • Voting, what happens if you do not vote • Local Government issues – local democracy week October – active citizenship • Friendship & Rules for Friendship • Bullying/cyber bullying • Emotional change • Personal safety • Caring for the Environment, active citizenship • Personal Hygiene • Healthy lifestyle – leisure time • Smoking • Study skills • Rich World, Poor World • Refugees • Personal Finance, spending needs, banking and budgeting • Citizenship end of year assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skills for situations - Communications, assertiveness - Friendships - Family - Love • Bullying, Gangs • Values, making decisions • Drugs education, medications, solvent abuse, The Law, Police talks • Smoking • What is work, jobs in school, local jobs • Young consumer • Financial planning • Balancing the books • Human rights & basic needs • Rights and Duties of Children and Young people • Human rights and their denial • Family rows • Citizenship end of year assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Image <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What is beauty -Self Esteem -Self Image • Emotional Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anxiety - Worth - Dealing with worry • Study skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Goal setting /target setting progress file -Action planning • Preparation for Optics • Alcohol Education • Drugs Education • Connections • Careers education, Fast Tomato • Young carers • Volunteer Groups • Minorities in Britain • Homeless people • Running away • European & World Politics, a Global community • Citizenship end of year assessment

YEAR 10	YEAR 11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving on – what do I want to achieve • Different forms of intelligence • Smart targets • Debating – 4 weeks • Bite size revision • Personal qualities 1. Decision making • Personal qualities 2. Healthy eating • Drugs taking • Alcohol abuse • Human rights/respecting others • HIV/AIDs • Preparation work experience • Health and Safety video • Response to work • Diary/dressing for work • Managing conflict • Media in Society • Dealing with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploitation in relationships - Loss - Bereavement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress management • Into sixth form • Study skills • Exam preparation • Review of mock exams <p style="text-align: center;">Rotations – 2 lessons each SPRING TERM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview preparation • Cultural diversity • Preparing CV • Healthy eating • Managing money • Planning gap year past 18 • Politics • Reflection & Mass by class over 6 weeks • World conflict • Different types of relationships, girl, boy, same sex. Civil partnerships/parenting

APPENDIX 15

TOWNHEAD SCHOOL PSHE AND CITIZENSHIP

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Year 7

- Police Presentation – Pupils are introduced to our school’s Youth Crime Reduction Officer (YCRO) with the presentation emphasis placed on theft, although some references to drugs are made.
- Boys Stuff – A personal hygiene lesson
- Bullying including cyberbullying

Year 8

- Taking responsibility – a lesson designed to develop knowledge and understanding about rights and responsibility
- Mobile phone tariff – to develop an understanding of personal finance
- Hospice – a visitor gives a presentation on coming to terms with bereavement and loss

Year 9

- Police presentation led by YCPO on alcohol and solvent abuse and the law
- Human rights – a presentation delivered by someone who served in Kosovo – based on the European Convention of Human Rights
- Alcoholics Anonymous – presentation from the AA on how to tell when drinking is becoming a problem

Science lessons delivered through Key Stage 3 to include :

- Alcohol – Knowledge about alcohol and its effects on the body, both short term and long term. Attitudes to drinking
- Smoking – the effect both short term and long term on the body and health. Peer pressure and smoking
- Drugs – the different types of drugs and their effect on the body and health. Attitudes to drug use and how we are influenced. Drugs and the law.

Year 10

- Presentation by a Trust about Personal Safety and risk
- Democracy – dealing with the responsibilities attached to living in a democratic environment

- Over Here – A lesson based on immigration to the UK
- Teenage cancer Trust – A presentation from a guest speaker on illness and young people

Year 11

- First Aid – concerning how to act in an emergency
- A-Z Mental Health – using a DVD as a resource, this lesson explores emotional issues connected with depression and ill health
- Fire service – Rush. Delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service and explores issues related to road accidents
- Lovewise – delivered to individual form groups by Lovewise on the moral and spiritual elements of sex and relationships with the emphasis on relationships

APPENDIX 16

ST OLAF'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CITIZENSHIP

CURRICULUM MAP

PDC at KS3

Students in Year 7-9 undertake a programme of study called the Key Steps Award which is accredited by ASDAN. Each student has the opportunity to work towards achieving a certificate in each of the KS3 years. These certificates show that the student has worked on and successfully completed a range of personal challenges based on the following :

Identity, Health, Community, Citizenship, Environment, Personal Finance, Enterprise, Values and International studies.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Term 1 Developing as a citizen/understanding self	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Introduction to PDC 2.Anxieties and worries 3.Identity 4. School and National community 5.Puberty – growing and changing 6.Personal finance – managing pocket money 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievements and targets 2.Self esteem 3.Managign your time 4.What are my rights 5.Criminal justice system 6.Respecting differences 7.Government 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Looking ahead and subject options 2.Decision making and consequences 3.Personal finances (stocks and shares) 4.War and conflict 5. Local government
Assessment	Shod we introduce CCTV cameras into classrooms and corridors to stop bullying in schools?	Should Britain abolish the monarchy?	Should Britain raise the voting age limit?
Term 2 Keeping Healthy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Dangers of smoking 2.Short and long term effects of smoking 3.What is healthy eating? 4.Healthy eating plans 5.The importance of exercise 6.Fairtrade week 7.Water and the developing world 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol 2.The effects of alcohol 3.What is gambling? 4.Help for gamblers 5.Persoanl hygiene 6.Growing and changing 7.Web safety 8.Cycle safe 9.First Aid 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Drugs 2.Cannabis 3.Drugs lesson Challenge 9&11 4.Holocaust Day 5.Binge drinking 6.Mental health-depression 7. Mental health-stress 8.Forced marriages 9.Relationship breakdown 10.Domestic abuse

	8. Rail Safety		
Assessment	Does charity do more harm than good?	Should government raise the price of alcohol?	Should cannabis be a class B drug?
Term 3 Developing relationships	1. Relationships with others-family 2. Rights and responsibilities 3. International communities and cultures 4. Study skills and review of Year 7	1. Personal Finance (Bank accounts) 2. Racism 3. Ugandan link 4. Study skills and review of Year 8	1. The role of the media 2. Child Poverty 3. Homelessness 4. Study skills and review of Year 9
Assessment	Are parents responsible for our behaviour?		

PDC at KS4

Students in KS4 study complete certification in AQA Preparation for Working Life 4800. The contents of the course cover five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' that are most important to young people 1) Be Healthy, 2) Stay Safe, 3) Enjoy and Achieve, 4) Make a positive contribution, 5) Achieve economic well-being.

The major areas covered are:

- Study skills
- Education for personal relationships
- Health Education
- Careers Education and guidance
- Personal Finance
- Citizenship

	Year 10	Year 11
Term 1 Developing as a citizen/understanding self	1. Personal skills 2. Identity and influences on identity 3. Applying for jobs 4. Interviews (CV and interview preparation) 5. Personal finance (wages and debts) 6. Coursework	1. Independent research skills 2. Personal skills 3. Peace One Day 4. Alcohol abuse and peer teaching 5. Practice interview preparations
Assessment	Mock Paper AQA Preparation for working Life	War assessment linked to Peace one day – Causes and consequences of war

Term 2 Keeping Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Preparationfor AQA Preparation for Working Life and peer assessment 2. Personal Finance (Nat West visitor) 3. Diet and exercise 4. Drug and alcohol abuse 5. Sexual health 6. First Aid 7. Hazard Identification 8. Gender and equality 9. Health campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender and equality 2. Sex and relationship 3. Contraception 4. STI 5. HIV/AIDS 6. Teenage pregnancy 7. What is crime? How can we tackle it? 8. Death Penalty 9. Crime study 10. Life of David Gale
Assessment	Health campaign	Crime study
Term 3 Developing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation for work experience 2. Equal opportunities 3. Exam preparation 4. Dragon's den – enterprise activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study and revision skills 2. Equal opportunities in the workplace 3. Preparation for post Year 11
Assessment	AQA Preparation for working life exam	NA