ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

THE NATURE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCHOOL CHAPLAINS IN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

JOHN PHILIP CAPERON

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the

requirements of Anglia Ruskin University

for the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology

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Abstract:

This thesis argues that since in our increasingly secularised culture one of the very few direct points of contact between the Church of England and the young is the ministry of school chaplains, theirs is a vital ministry for the Church and its future. The study described in the thesis researched school chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools to establish what chaplains do, how they understand their ministry and how school students themselves respond to chaplaincy.

Originating in the researcher's professional role in support of school chaplains, the research was undertaken on a multi-method basis. Initial scoping interviews were undertaken with school chaplains and headteachers in a range of schools. A full literature review located school chaplaincy within the conceptual contexts of missiology, ministry and chaplaincy. In-depth interviews with school chaplains explored their self-understanding as ministers. A national, internet-based survey of all contactable school chaplains was undertaken to explore issues identified earlier in the study, and a series of focus-group interviews was undertaken with senior school students.

The research revealed that chaplains perceive little awareness within the Church of England of the missional significance of their ministry, although individual chaplains emerged as highly-motivated spiritual professionals committed to the pastoral welfare of their communities, and with a strong sense of their mission as 'God people'. From a wide variety of ecclesial and personal backgrounds and working in very different school contexts, chaplains have multiple, significant functions which are well understood by school students, and exercise a 'ministry of presence'.

The research evidence highlights the need for greater recognition of the ministry of school chaplains and for structures of support and development to resource this vital ministry. The thesis concludes with an outline of policy proposals for the Church in the light of the recent development of a new 'para-chaplaincy'.

Keywords: mission, ministry, chaplaincy, schools

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Chapter 1: School chaplaincy: the professional context and the research imperative

This thesis argues for the strategic significance of school chaplaincy in all types of Church school as a vital ministry of the Church of England. Rooting my argument in the first-ever empirical research carried out into school chaplaincy, I describe the nature of this ministry as its practitioners understand it, and demonstrate the urgent need for the Church to recognise and support school chaplaincy as a key part of its mission to the nation. This narrative-reflective opening chapter sets out my professional involvement in education; my vocation as an Anglican priest; my work with the Bloxham Project, which in partnership with the Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT) commissioned the school chaplaincy research project; the gap in knowledge identified for research; and the process of the research project. I also argue for the particular suitability of the professional doctorate as an academically-disciplined vehicle for structuring the research and reporting its outcomes here. In subsequent chapters, I shall contextualise school chaplaincy in its theological, policy and social milieus; describe the rationale and methodology of the research; present the research outcomes; and set out my conclusions, and the implications of the research for Church of England policy.

A personal history: vocation to teaching

As a Sixth-form pupil in the early 1960s, I became deeply absorbed in the study of English Literature. The world of the imagination was being opened up for me through the works of Shakespeare and the Romantic poets; and a further influence was David Holbrook, whose passion for the teaching of English affected me profoundly (Holbrook, 1961 p.107). I was also living within the context of the Church of England, in an evangelical parish where it was assumed that any intelligent young man should study theology and consider ordination. I was aware of two possible directions for my future life – as a teacher of English or as an Anglican clergyman.

Both directions had a common root in literary texts. For evangelical Anglicans, the centrality of the Bible was fundamental, and preaching was about detailed exposition of the divine text. For students of literature, under the influence of the Cambridge critic F R Leavis (Leavis, 1962), close attention to the potentially transformative literary text was at the heart of the critical endeavour; and Leavis had also inspired the work of Holbrook and other luminaries of English teaching (See: O'Malley and Thompson, 1957). So my dilemma was, in effect, a choice between texts: the Bible or English literature; and it was D H Lawrence who was instrumental in determining my future direction. Reading the recently published and (then) controversial *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (Lawrence, 1960), I was challenged by our young curate about my Christian allegiance: would I stay with the Lord, or go with Lawrence? Leavis and the English teaching world of the time saw in Lawrence a spiritual integrity which the conventional and religious worlds lacked (Leavis, 1955); and he represented personal liberation at a time when the restraints of the past were being set aside. My decision to read English rather than theology at university, and to become an English teacher, stemmed from that conversation with the curate.

This was the early 1960s, a time of intense theological ferment, with John Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich, a leading voice among those exploring new images of God and new understandings of faith (Robinson, 1963). My identity had been formed within evangelical culture with its prohibitions and intensely literalistic approach, and Robinson and the liberal movement he inspired enabled me to find a way of remaining Christian while emerging from evangelicalism and pursuing my English degree. A key figure for me was my university chaplain: a warm, generous Anglican priest who hosted sherry parties and led groups of students on retreat, opening up areas of Christian experience and understanding entirely new and unexpected to me.

I began teaching English in 1967, with religious education as my second subject, and the textual focus and critical approach remained at the heart of my work. Holbrook's insistence on 'education for living' rather than 'earning

a living' (Holbrook, 1961 p.16) was formative; and Arnold's fundamental question 'how to live?' (Arnold, 1924), explored alike by the scriptural writers and those in English literature, remained at the heart of my concern as a teacher over the next forty years, spent mostly in all-ability, comprehensive schools in England. Mid-way though my teaching career, however, I again found myself considering ordination, now prompted by my working alongside an Anglican parish priest whose person-focused approach to ministry was compellingly attractive. I was accepted as an ordinand, undertook a three-year, part-time course of study, and was duly ordained priest in 1984.

A personal history: ministry and school leadership

For the first two years after ordination, I continued to work as head of the large English department at Banbury School, Oxfordshire; I then spent six years as deputy head teacher in a Church of England comprehensive school in Harrogate, also assisting the part-time chaplain in his work before becoming head of a similar school in another spa town, Tunbridge Wells, in 1992. There, I was licensed by my bishop as both head and chaplain, a dual role I continued in for the twelve years of my headship until retirement in 2004. During these years I was also closely involved with the work of the Secondary Heads' Association (SHA – now ASCL, the Association of School and College Leaders), the professional association and lobbying body for secondary school heads and other senior leaders in these schools (See: Association of School and College Leaders, 2011).

Becoming chair of the Professional Committee, I represented the association nationally, advocating both an ideal of good practice rooted in educational professionalism and also those ideals which had initially taken me into secondary education, not least the conviction that it should be a meaningful preparation for life, equipping pupils with the spiritual and moral resources with which to respond to the question 'how to live?'. Retirement from headship left me with a continuing passion for education; initially there were training and consultancy to undertake with ASCL, but in 2006 I applied for a new role and was appointed as director of the Bloxham Project.

The Bloxham Project's origins

The Bloxham Project (Bloxham Project, 2009) is a small educational charity, employing a part-time director and administrator, and working mainly in the independent sector to support the spiritual dimension of education. Overseen by a board of Trustees, its work is largely determined by the particular interests and commitments of the director; so taking on this role, I faced the task of coming to understand the background and culture of the Project, and reviewing what it should be doing for the period of my five-year directorship.

The Project's origins lay in the 1960s, when theological ferment coincided with the disappearance of a deferential society (Brown, 2006). As faith was challenged alongside the older order, both clergy and politicians became the butt of merciless satire. The review *Beyond the Fringe* 'first fell upon London like a sweet, refreshing rain on the tenth of May 1961' comments Michael Frayn (Bennett et al., 1987 p.7). It excoriated not only a tired Tory government but also a Church apparently hopelessly out of touch with the younger generation; Jonathan Miller's vicar – 'Don't call me Vicar, Call me Dick – that's the kind of Vicar I am!' - remains a classic figure of fun: 'Now, let's get down to God. God. Who is he, where is he, and above all why is he – and of course, why is he above all?' (Bennett et al., 1987 p.23). The impact of such satire was to have a profound effect on schools, not least those with a religious tradition.

In the independent schools especially, when bright and confident young men began to query the dominance of daily Anglican worship, and perhaps to see their chaplain less as a man of God and more as a pillar of the establishment, trouble was on the way. *Beyond the Fringe* had also included Alan Bennett's merciless parody of a public school chapel sermon based on the text Genesis 27:11 – 'My brother Esau is an hairy man, but I am a smooth man' – which mocked public school religion as essentially laughable and phony (Bennett et al., 1987 pp.103-4). For those teaching and ministering in these schools, the issue became an urgent one. Further fuel was later added to the fire by

Lindsay Anderson's film *If...* (Anderson, 1968) and Bennett's *Forty Years On* (Bennett, 1969), while Ned Sherrin's satirical weekly TV show *That Was the Week That Was* (Sherrin, 1962) was avidly watched by boys learning the habit and style of satirical critique. Among the consequences were a growing resistance in independent schools to the received pattern of daily Anglican worship, or 'chapel', and even a downright refusal to participate in such worship – the 'chapel strike'.

The Bloxham Conference 1967

In response to all this, a conference on 'Public School Religion' was held at Bloxham School, Oxfordshire, in the spring of 1967. Attended by over a hundred heads, chaplains and other clergy and addressed by leading Church figures, the conference was a moment of significant re-evaluation of what had for a century or more been a clear, established order in the boys' public schools. Edward Patey, dean of Liverpool, spoke on 'Teenage Attitudes to Religion', arguing that fewer and fewer young people encountered the Church, which meant Christians 'sharing our own experience of the adventure of Christian pilgrimage' rather than 'communicating pre-packaged dogma'(Patey, 1967 p.11). Harold Loukes, expert on teenage faith, argued that all schools were now 'initiating into a secular world', and that the nature of a Christian school was therefore problematic; but that such a school 'keeps questions open, looking for an answer' (Loukes, 1967 p.13). The liberal theological mood of the time was evident; and a key issue was whether school worship should any longer be compulsory: the foundations certainly looked as if they were being shaken.

The Bloxham Conference combined this liberal ethos with a rootedness in the catholic tradition of the Church of England: the Bishop of Lewes spoke of Christian education taking seriously 'the fact that humans are sacramental beings', insisting that 'The Incarnation is the centre of human history and the heart of the Christian faith' (Morrell, 1967 p.6). This liberal-catholic tone echoed the thinking of Charles Gore and his colleagues in *Lux Mundi*, originally published in 1889 (Gore, 1921), placing a clear stamp on what was

to become the future direction of the Bloxham Project; a further ingredient was the distinctive, research-based approach of Harold Loukes, author of *Teenage Religion,* the first-ever empirical enquiry into teenage religious thinking (Loukes, 1961). Drawing together these perspectives, the Bloxham Conference marked a distinctive point in the development of thinking about Christian education in the Church of England.

After the conference: the research imperative

What emerged from the conference was a determined intention to move forward on the basis of empirical research. In 1969 the Bloxham Project Research Unit was set up, based at the Department of Educational Studies in Oxford, where Loukes was Reader in Education, and two researchers were appointed, their brief to 'enquire into the ways in which English boarding schools communicate the Christian ideas and values to which they are historically committed' (Richardson and Chapman, 1973 p.xv). Their three-year project involved interviews with around two hundred heads and chaplains, and the development of a questionnaire which was taken to thirty-nine schools in 1971, and filled in by over 2,800 Sixth-Form pupils. In the course of the research over a hundred schools were visited, and the report eventually published as *Images of Life* (Richardson and Chapman, 1973) contains a wealth of material – on God, faith, school religion and a range of personal and social issues - although it does not offer practical recommendations for what might work as effective methods of communication of 'Christian ideas and values'. Instead, *Images of Life* is descriptive, discursive and – one suspects deliberately - inconclusive.

The approach and tone of 'Bloxham', however, were by now clearly established, and characterised the formation of the Bloxham Project as a charity in 1976. The original trust deed set out the object of the charity as:

> ... the advancement of education the advancement of the Christian religion and the promotion for the public benefit of the mental and moral improvement of pupils attending schools in accordance with Christian teaching ... the promotion of study and research therein and

the publication of the results of all such study and research… (Bloxham Trustees, 1976).

The commitment to enquiry, combined with a clear intention to 'advance' education and the Christian religion, indicate the characteristic Bloxham stance of a clear but open faith and an inquiring spirit, which have been at the heart of the Project since its origins.

The mission of the Bloxham Project

This was the inheritance into which I came as the new director. Among my first priorities were to clarify for myself what the current mission of the Project should be, in the light of this inheritance, and to seek an institutional base for the Project – previously located at the director's home. The mission of the Project seemed clearly set out in its origins: the task being to support schools in the Christian tradition in the process of commending Christian faith as a reasonable life-option. The obvious location for the Project seemed to be Oxford – relatively central to the country as a whole, and central to its intellectual and spiritual life; it was also the place where I had undertaken my own training for ordination.

In May 2006 the Bloxham Trustees agreed that an invitation from Ripon College Cuddesdon, just outside Oxford, should be accepted. Cuddesdon – a leading theological college of the Church of England (Ripon College Cuddesdon, 2011) – in several ways matched the Bloxham inheritance. In the catholic Anglican tradition – Charles Gore of *Lux Mundi* had been Bishop of Oxford and had lived at Cuddesdon – and embodying also the liberal spirit of the former Ripon Hall theological college with which it had earlier merged, Cuddesdon had also recently come under the leadership of the Revd Dr Martyn Percy, an academic theologian whose published works encompassed ecclesiology, practical theology and the sociology of the Church.

Moving the base of the Bloxham Project to Cuddesdon in September 2006 was a significant moment. It re-enforced the Anglican centrality of the Project

and at the same time brought it into closer contact with current theological thinking and ministerial practice. At a personal level, the move was instrumental in introducing me to the discipline of practical theology. My earlier ordination training had been based on the traditional, academic model: biblical studies, liturgy, ethics and philosophy before ordination were to be followed by pastoral studies after ordination - practical aspects of ministry were to be learned 'on the job'. And although I had later taken an MA in Theology and Hermeneutics, the theologians were studied from a predominantly systematic perspective; only in my dissertation did I enter the realms of practice, prompted by Matthew Arnold's insistence in his theological writings of the 1870's that 'conduct displaces doctrine' (See: Caperon, 2001).

Encountering practical theology – and independent school chaplaincy

Prompted by the arrival of the Bloxham Project at Cuddesdon to read for the first time Martyn Percy's *Engaging with Contemporary Culture: Christianity, Theology and the Concrete Church* (Percy, 2005), I found my understanding of the Church and of theology beginning to take on a new shape, as the various instantiations of Christian faith were exposed to sociological critique; and I was also introduced to the analytical-reflective approach of James Hopewell's *Congregation: Stories and Structures* (Hopewell, 1987). The 'concrete church' – the actual church in its local manifestations, with its stories, practices and social relationships – began to replace the church of ideals and aspirations. I approached my work as director of the Bloxham Project with a new and enhanced theological perspective.

This work included the organisation and leadership of training events, and coming from a background of school leadership, training and consultancy I found this straightforward, although the predominantly independent school clientele of Bloxham events was new to me. I had certainly not anticipated, however, the real differences of educational culture between the maintained and independent sectors highlighted for me in a number of meetings with independent school chaplains. It appeared to me that some chaplains working in independent boarding schools inhabited an almost closed world, often in

the depths of the countryside, remote from the 'mainstream' culture of church and education I had felt myself part of. One rather sharp exchange in a seminar about child protection and the confidentiality of priesthood made me question the professionality of some of my colleagues working in school chaplaincy, and this raised further issues of accountability and the professional framework for chaplaincy in schools.   My perspective as a former school leader – and chaplain - seemed to come into play at a point where some of those with whom I found myself working were evincing attitudes which I saw as distinctly dated and amateur.

Working with school chaplains was a central aspect of my Bloxham role, and before long I became involved in occasional support of chaplains in dispute with their employers, which led me to question both the employment conditions and working practices of some chaplains. Exploring what was known and thought about their ministry, through reading and discussion, including meetings at Church House Westminster, I concluded that this ministry appeared marginal to the Church's concerns: there was neither any reckoning of the numbers of those working as school chaplains, nor any apparently great interest in their ministry, and while the Church had an adviser for higher and further education chaplaincies, there was no post supporting school chaplains. Nor did there seem to be much public understanding of the nature of school chaplaincy: the then website of the National Society, the educational arm of the Church of England, carried scant information under the heading 'school chaplaincy', except for a page setting out a broad and congested description of the chaplain's role, which struck me as unhelpful and arcane (National Society, 2009).

The gap in knowledge and the new research imperative

In short, I had encountered a serious and strategically significant 'gap in knowledge'.   It was clear to me that school chaplains as the official representatives of Christian faith in their institutions were at the very edge of the mission of the Church among the young, and yet very little seemed to be

known about their ministry. It was time to ask serious questions about the nature of school chaplaincy; and the establishment at Cuddesdon of the OxCEPT research unit presented the context in which to ask them. In discussion with OxCEPT's newly-appointed director, Dr Helen Cameron, it was decided that a research project was needed into Anglican school chaplaincy – its nature, extent and effectiveness – and that funding for the research should be sought from a range of grant-giving trusts. OxCEPT and the Bloxham Project would collaborate on the new research project; and there was a recognition that this was a return to the very roots of the Bloxham Project itself and to the original trust deed of the charity, with its emphasis on 'study and research' (Bloxham Trustees, 1976).

A bid setting out the need for the research was prepared and sent to funding charities, and donations came from the Dulverton Trust, the Haberdashers' Company, the Mercers' Company, Woodard Schools and the St Gabriel's Trust, with the Bloxham Project also committing funds from its reserves. In all, there was enough funding to support a two-year project, and at this point the search for a post-doctoral researcher began. An initial recruitment advertisement in the 'Times Higher Education Supplement' produced no response; a subsequent advertisement through a web-based agency brought some responses, and a short-list was drawn up. When it came to interviews, however, only one candidate appeared, and in the opinion of the Bloxham/OxCEPT selection panel was unsuitable for appointment.

At this point, early in 2009, it was agreed that a further search might prove equally fruitless, and both OxCEPT and the Bloxham Trustees agreed that I should personally take on the role of part-time researcher in tandem with my part-time role as Bloxham director; this latter role and my own previous experience in school chaplaincy being felt to offer a degree of credibility for the research role.   And although I lacked post-doctoral status, I had some previous research experience: as part of my earlier MSc in Educational Governance I had undertaken a small-scale, qualitative research study among school governors in the Oxford diocese, which had resulted in a feature article

in the 'Church Times' (Caperon, 1985). A two-year research project would occupy the academic years 2009-2011, and I was scheduled to retire from my post with the Bloxham Project at the end of the academic year 2011: the timing seemed appropriate, and although combining the two roles of director and researcher would be demanding, the synergy between them would be positive.

It remained to gather an academic reference group to oversee the research project. The vice-principal of Ripon College Cuddesdon, The Revd Professor Mark Chapman, would represent the College; a lay school chaplain on the board of Trustees of the Bloxham Project, Ms Samantha Stayte, would represent the Trustees;   the National Society was represented by Mr Nick McKemey, its assistant director; Dr Cameron as director of OxCEPT would chair the group; and Professor Geoffrey Walford, professor of Educational Policy at the University of Oxford, who had published widely in the field of educational sociology, would add significantly to the group's expertise. The group met initially in January 2009 to set the direction for the research project, and it was agreed that the first step would be to carry out a scoping exercise through interviews with a cross-section of heads and school chaplains. This was undertaken during the early months of 2009, and by May, when the second meeting of the reference group took place, it was possible on the basis of the data by then gathered to plan the pattern of the research project over the two-year period 2009-11.

A further factor emerged at this point: the National Society would celebrate its bi-centenary in 2011, and Woodard Schools – an organisation overseeing around forty schools mainly in the independent sector but also involved in the new academies movement, and with a strong commitment to Christian education and school chaplaincy - would also in 2011 celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of its founder, The Revd Nathaniel Woodard (Harvey, 2004, Woodard Schools, 2011). Discussion with the leading figures in these two organisations, and with the School Chaplains' Association – a voluntary group rooted in independent school chaplaincy – led to the shared conclusion

that 2011 should also see a major national conference on school chaplaincy, jointly organised by these groups and the Bloxham Project. This conference would, we hoped, not only gather more school chaplains to discuss their ministry than had ever previously been assembled, but also provide the platform for the first airing of the Bloxham/OxCEPT research project's findings.

An academic framework: the professional doctorate

At this stage, the research project was conceived as free-standing, and outside any other academic framework. However, Dr Cameron suggested that the research could be framed within the structure of the newly-developed professional doctorate in practical theology, and I decided to explore this possibility. The centre nearest to me offering the professional doctorate was at Cambridge, where Anglia Ruskin University and the Cambridge Theological Federation had collaborated to develop the programme. Invited to attend one of the programme's seminars in the summer of 2009, I found the day stimulating: whereas my previous experiences of higher degree research work had been predominantly of academic isolation, it seemed that the professional doctorate was predicated on academic community, and that this would be a context in which my recently-discovered interest in practical theology as a discipline could be nurtured. I decided to enrol on the programme, and took up my place at the start of the academic year 2009-10, at the same point at which the main process of the research project was also due to begin.

The two academic years 2009-2011 were very crowded. While continuing to lead the work of the Bloxham Project, including arranging the residential Bloxham Conference in 2010 and continuing to visit schools and organise seminars and training events, I undertook the main body of the Bloxham/OxCEPT research, and in the first year also completed and submitted three Stage 1 papers for the professional doctorate (See Appendices A, B and C). In the second year, a major part of the research project involving a

national survey of school chaplains was undertaken, and I carried out an initial analysis of the results; I was also closely involved in arranging the national school chaplaincy conference in June 2011, and undertook the writing of the interim research report in time for the conference, with copies being forwarded to our funding charities (Caperon, 2011b; see Appendix D).

After the conference, attended by 140 delegates from all school sectors, I dealt with immediate follow-up issues, including sharing the conference outcomes both with delegates and with the wider Church of England through sending copies of the interim report and a conference digest to all members of the Church of England's house of bishops and diocesan directors of education. As I retired from my directorship of the Bloxham Project at the end of August 2011, I turned to the task of analysing the research data further and preparing to write up the research in this thesis. It was at this point that I was faced with the need to explore in more detail the exact nature of professional doctoral study and to clarify the contribution to professional practice and policy that my research and its outcomes represented.

Professional doctoral study: practical implications

During the two years 2009-2011, I had had to balance the requirements of the professional doctorate with taking forward the Bloxham/OxCEPT research project, and there were respects in which it was straightforward to combine the two. I had, for instance, carried out a full literature review in the field of school chaplaincy within the context of the Bloxham/OxCEPT study and it was a relatively simple matter to re-cast some of this material while also pursuing the somewhat different agenda of the doctorate's Stage 1 Paper 1 (Appendix A). Again, one section of the research project – a series of in-depth interviews with school chaplains – lent itself to being written up as a Stage 1 Paper 2, the 'publishable paper': that section of the research had a self-contained nature that made the writing a productive and containable process (Appendix B). Stage 1 Paper 3, however, had the oddity that as a research proposal it had in effect to re-state some of what had been decided in the

context of the Bloxham/OxCEPT research reference group; but in the event, writing the proposal became a genuinely creative process involving having to think beyond the extent of the Bloxham/OxCEPT research (Appendix C).

The move into the framework of the professional doctorate prompted some re-thinking, in retrospect sharpening the research process initially envisaged for the school chaplaincy study and ensuring that it took place in a wider frame of awareness on the part of the researcher. To that extent, participating in the doctoral process itself prompted personal development, as I found myself no longer working simply to a reference group under the supervision of the director of OxCEPT – who was also appointed as my supervisor for the doctorate - but also participating in a wider company of fellow-researchers. I was expected to be able to explain my own research project and its significance to a body of peer-researchers, each of whom was examining an aspect of theology in practice in their own professional role. The doctoral programme thus acted as a stimulus to extend my practical-theological awareness, and to see my research in the broader context of other research also taking place in practical theology.

Professional doctoral study: really doctoral?

There is ongoing debate about the validity of *professional* doctoral study, however. The distinction between 'professional' and 'academic' knowledge can be traced back as far as Aristotle's contrast between *sophia*, or intellectual wisdom, and *phronesis*, or practical wisdom (Aristotle, 2004). In Aristotle's view, 'each is a virtue of a different part of the soul' (Aristotle, 2004 p.161), and he values both highly; but in current discussion the question of the nature of knowledge has become more contested. Some have argued that a new kind of interdisciplinary and problem-derived knowledge has been developed since the mid-twentieth century (Gibbons et al., 1994); and questions of valuation between older ideas of academic *versus* practical knowledge emerge in the debate about different kinds of doctoral degree.

Taylor, for instance, argues that in the eyes of many academic staff and some employers the PhD continues to represent 'the gold standard' and that any other form of doctorate – including the professional doctorate - is at best an inferior award and, at worst, jeopardises the whole meaning and understanding of 'a doctorate' (Taylor, 2008). This, of course, assumes that 'pure' study and research carried out for a traditional PhD are somehow superior to 'applied' study and research for other doctorates; whereas for other writers the contrast between the PhD and the professional doctorate can be seen as reflecting the contrast between professional researchers and researching professionals (Bourner et al., 2001 p.71).

The balanced and analytical approach of Bourner, Bowden and Laing is helpful in clarifying aspects of the *professional* nature of professional doctoral study. The intention of professional doctoral study and research 'to make a contribution to professional knowledge and practice' is a central feature, as is the personal development element in the intended learning outcomes of such study (Bourner et al., 2001 p.71-72); it is even argued that professional doctoral study places 'the highest development of the student at the heart of doctoral study, rather than the highest development of the discipline' (Bourner et al., 2001 p.78). This idea, of a process of study and research which in the pursuit of new knowledge advances both the professional discipline of the workplace and the personal capability of the researcher, appears to me to ring true to my own experience of ongoing study throughout my professional and vocational life, as well as being true of the professional doctorate.

Professional doctoral study: emerging from and returning to practice

Early in my career as a teacher of English I had become conscious of the need to develop my own capability beyond first degree level: questions arose from my teaching which prompted my embarking on part-time research in the nineteenth-century novel and its treatment of religion (Caperon, 1979). Subsequently, the impulse to explore questions related to knowledge, understanding and professional practice led to my involvement in producing

The School as a Centre of Enquiry, a collection of essays and explorations rooted in educational questions arising from the practice of comprehensive education (Newbold et al., 1975); the assumption was that 'professional practice should be informed by research based knowledge' (Scott et al., 2004 p.47); and the key perception of practical theology is of course that theology has no valid existence as a set of ideas separate from practice. The interaction of practice and theory, profession and enquiry is a core principle.

One important, recent contribution to practical theology which illuminates this is the work of the ARCS project. Through its examination of the faith of the 'living Church in the global city' the project identified four 'dimensions' of theology (Bhatti et al., 2008, Cameron et al., 2010): normative theology (what churches teach); formal theology (what theologians do); espoused theology (what people articulate as their belief); and operant theology (what is embedded in a person's practice of their faith). This analysis highlights for me the need to be aware of the possible separation of thought from action, faith from life; and of the need to explore how practice embodies belief. An essentially questioning, reflexive, self-critical approach is also, I believe, a core part of professional doctoral study. Whereas thinkers like Taylor perceive a large element of instrumentality in professional doctoral programmes, arguing *inter alia* that they have simply been a means of increasing the numbers of research students and developing new markets for universities (Taylor, 2008), my conviction is that - in my case at least - professional doctoral study both emerged from, has contributed to, and should contribute further to, the professional context of chaplaincy in schools.

Contributing to professional practice

What is the nature of that contribution? The research project itself has already added to the Church of England's awareness of what a senior bishop described to me in 2008 as the 'crucial but neglected' ministry of school chaplaincy (Saxbee, 2008), and the 2011 conference was the largest-ever

gathering so far of those involved in school chaplaincy, organisers believe. The interim research report presented at that conference has since been widely circulated, and will, I hope, contribute to an ongoing awareness of the potential and significance of this ministry across the Church; it is now freely available on the website of the Bloxham Project. Beyond the writing of this thesis, I hope there will be a realistic prospect of my being commissioned to write a book on school chaplaincy, which would further raise awareness and which could be instrumental not only in making a general case for the strategic significance of chaplaincy in schools but would also support good practice in school chaplaincy by offering guidelines derived from the range of perspectives which the research project has given me.

I believe, therefore, that the research project has already contributed significantly to the profile of school chaplaincy – and my article in the 'Church Times' following the conference will have also enhanced this (Caperon, 2011a). More personally, although I have retired from my role with the Bloxham Project, I continue to contribute to the practice of school chaplaincy informally through mentoring a number of school chaplains, whose work I hope will continue to be enriched by the perspective I am able to bring as a consequence of having undertaken the doctoral study, both the empirical research and the wider reflection and research on ministry and mission it has involved.

The gap in knowledge and the research question

The 'gap in knowledge' identified through my work with the Bloxham Project amounted to an almost complete lack of public knowledge about the ministry of school chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools, and a total absence of any empirical research. Identifying this gap led to the Bloxham/OxCEPT proposal for a research project, at which point the research question was defined as: 'What is the nature, extent and effectiveness of school chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools?' The original intention had been to include in the research a full evaluation of 'the extent' of school chaplaincy, but resources only allowed for the development of a

contact database, whose limitations are set out in Chapter 4. It became evident that it was simply unrealistic to aspire within the period of the research project to any reliable account of school chaplaincy's total 'extent' in Church of England schools. Similarly, the question of 'effectiveness' became seen as altogether too complex to be fully evaluated within the time and resources available, although it was possible to gather significant indicative data, as will become clear in Chapter 7.

Since that initial funding bid, therefore, the research question has been modified; it was defined in my research proposal for the professional doctorate as: 'What is the nature of the ministry being undertaken by school chaplains in Church of England secondary schools?' Although the Bloxham Project's work extends across an ecumenical dimension, it remains rooted in the culture of the Church of England, and the empirical research was limited to Church of England secondary schools. Chaplaincy is also a core feature of Roman Catholic schools, and of some Methodist and United Reformed schools too, and comparison with Roman Catholic practice especially can be helpful, as will emerge later. But the clear focus was on Anglican schools and their chaplains; this I hope justifies the use of the term 'the Church' in the context of this thesis to mean 'the Church of England'.

The thesis as theological reflection

I also want to emphasise at this stage that I understand the writing of this thesis as a process of theological reflection on school chaplaincy in the light of the research project. The empirical research itself was carried out alongside my ongoing professional work with the Bloxham Project, while at the same time I was beginning to explore the wider literature: empirical, professional and reflective elements were interactive. So the following two chapters represent my understanding of the theological, policy and social context for school chaplaincy, not as *a priori* thinking but as experiential, practical theology, emerging from experience and returning to it. Whereas once I would have seen theology as an essentially deductive discipline, I now

see it as emerging inductively from experience and engaging with tradition in a dynamic relation of negotiation. I have two models in mind; Kenneth Cragg's use of the term 'negotiate' in the title of his autobiographically-based reflections on faith and life, *Faith and Life Negotiate* (Cragg, 1994); and Elaine Graham's major contribution in her two volumes on theological reflection (Graham et al., 2005, Graham et al., 2007). The notion of practical theology as 'critical reflection on faithful practice' (Graham et al., 2007 p.1) seems to me important; and I want to place the writing of this doctoral thesis in practical theology as an exercise in 'critical reflection on faithful practice'.

Conclusion

This introductory chapter has set out the personal origins of the school chaplaincy research which I shall subsequently describe, at the same time placing the research specifically as an exercise in practical theology arising out of, and contributing to, the professional context of chaplaincy in schools. In setting out the origins and work of the Bloxham Project, and my own involvement in it, I have also attempted to give a clear insight into that professional context. In concluding this chapter, however, I want to return to the personal commitments with which this chapter opened.

As I explained, my own life has involved two vocations, as teacher of English and Anglican priest. There are clear points of commonality between them: an English teacher is engaged in helping the young acquire the use of English, a grasp of imaginative metaphor and an understanding of life through exploring some of English literature's greatest works; a priest is helping people access the realm of the spiritual both within and beyond themselves through the means of Word and Sacrament. Both vocations deal in language and meaning, 'the word'; and sacrament and metaphor are closely linked. I also want to suggest that both vocations are concerned with 'the all too difficult business of coming to our spontaneous, creative fullness of being', as D H Lawrence put it, (Lawrence, 1921); or to use a term of Stephen Pattison's describing the

aim of Christian pastoral care, with promoting 'human flourishing' (Pattison, 2007).

Although it would be perverse to try 'to claim Lawrence as any kind of Christian', as Jarrett-Kerr makes clear (Jarrett-Kerr, 1961 p.23), the aspiration to human fulfilment is common both to Lawrence – a writer deeply influenced by Christian tradition and imagery - and to Christian faith. It is a question for both of 'life in all its fullness'. For myself, as the autobiographical aspect of this chapter has indicated, a dual commitment to education and to ministry has been central: seeking to promote 'human flourishing' has been at the heart of life. The practice of Christian ministry among the young in the school context – school chaplaincy – is therefore a matter of huge importance to me. Education has been described as the process of bringing young people into the company of worthwhile adults; school chaplaincy might similarly be thought of as bringing young people into the company of faithful practitioners of Christian living.

Chapter 2: Contextualising school chaplaincy: theological perspectives from the literature on mission, ministry and chaplaincy

Introduction

Although I had been engaged in education and ministry for many years before embarking on the research project, I had not previously reflected in any great depth on how school chaplaincy might best be contextualised theologically. Undertaking the research, however, inevitably prompted me to explore a number of theological questions underlying school chaplaincy: What is the nature of mission? How should we understand the ministry of the Church? Where does chaplaincy fit into this picture? Beneath all these, however, was the prior and fundamental question: How can we understand the relation of God and the human world? Following a hint from Martyn Percy's *Engaging with Contemporary Culture* (Percy, 2005 p.190), I decided to ground my exploration of this question in Niebuhr's classic text: *Christ and Culture* (Niebuhr, 1951).

In this chapter, therefore, I shall first engage with Niebuhr's approach, arguing that his conclusions offer a basis for the subsequent theological discussion, which in turn helps inform my analysis of the research data. I shall go on to argue that the Church of England participates in the universal mission of God, the *missio dei*, through its ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care, and that a significant part of this ministry is undertaken through chaplaincy. I shall also survey the limited, current literature on school chaplaincy; introduce some recent contributions to thinking about the nature of chaplaincy; and conclude by correlating these with the insights of the Bloxham Project's functional approach to chaplaincy in schools.

Christ and Culture: Niebuhr's fundamental question

In *Christ and Culture* (Niebuhr, 1951 p.16), Niebuhr explores the relation of the divine and the human, 'Christ' and 'Culture' being shorthand, in effect, for God and the human world. Seeing God as 'the One who creates all worlds, who is the Other of all worlds' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.28), he argues that this 'unconditioned Other' to whom Christ points us does - in Christ - stand in relation to humanity and its culture; but he notes that the nature of this relation is already contested within the New Testament, as it has been subsequently throughout Christian history. Defining 'culture' broadly as the 'total process of human activity' and the 'total result of such activity' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.32), Niebuhr offers five possible paradigms deriving from scripture and Christian tradition to describe this relationship: Christ *against* culture; the Christ *of* culture; Christ *above* culture; Christ and culture *in paradox*; and Christ the *transformer of* culture.

Niebuhr begins by contrasting the two opposing paradigms, Christ *against* culture and the Christ *of* culture. The first rejects human culture as a direct consequence of accepting the Lordship of Christ: '… the counterpart of loyalty to Christ and the brothers is the rejection of cultural society ….'. In this view, 'the world' is to be seen as '… a realm under the power of evil … the region of darkness, into which the citizens of the kingdom of light must not enter …. It is a culture that is concerned with temporal and passing values, whereas Christ has words of eternal life' (Niebuhr, 1951 pp.47-48). Niebuhr locates the sources of this stance in the first Letter of John; in the book of Revelation; and in writings of the second century, identifying Tertullian as a key exponent (Niebuhr, 1951 p.52).

The contrasting view, affirming human culture's achievements and insights, sees Christ as '… the great enlightener, the great teacher, the one who directs all men [sic] in culture to the attainment of wisdom, moral perfection and peace'. This 'cultural' view sees Christ not as a figure who stands against 'the world' but as the fulfilment of the human world's spiritual yearnings and

rational searches for meaning. In this perspective, 'Reason ... is the high-road to the knowledge of God and salvation; Jesus Christ is ... the great teacher of rational truth and goodness....' (Niebuhr, 1951 pp.92, 110). Identifying the Gnostic tendency in the early church as exemplifying this stance, and seeing it developing a dominant position in later nineteenth-century Protestantism, Niebuhr clearly distances himself from it, much as he does from the previous view, as his use of language in characterising each position makes plain.

Neibuhr is dealing in paradigms or ideal types, artificial constructs adopted for the purpose of analysis and argument, rather than the actual stances of particular individuals. However, the two polar positions he initially describes do seem to set out the possible extremes: in binary terms, we may either see Christ as negating human culture or affirming it. The reality, Niebuhr argues, is more complex than this, however; and without denying the Christian authenticity of any of his five paradigms he goes on to sketch out three 'intermediate' stances, the drift of his argument suggesting that the third of these, the 'conversionist' stance, carries most conviction for him. In his chapter 'Christ the transformer of culture' (Niebuhr, 1951 pp.190-229), Niebuhr argues a position whose advocates, he suggests, belong to 'the great central tradition of the church': 'Though they hold fast to the radical distinction between God's work in Christ and man's work in culture, they do not take the road of exclusive Christianity into isolation from civilisation....' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.190). Three theological convictions, Niebuhr says, underlie this 'more positive and hopeful attitude toward culture': a positive valuation of creation; an understanding of the fallen world as 'perverted good, not evil'; and an eschatological view which highlights 'the presence of God in time' (Niebuhr, 1951 pp.193-5).

It is significant that Niebuhr concludes his discussion of the various 'great Christian attitudes' towards culture he characterises with his description of the 'conversionist' stance. Rooted in the theology of the Fourth Gospel, reinforced by the work of Augustine, and reaching its fullest 'modern' expression in the work of F D Maurice, this stance is one which commands

Niebuhr's sympathy more fully than any other he describes. One quotation he offers from *The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice Chiefly Told in his Letters* perhaps expresses this most fully and resoundingly:

> … I know that there is something which must be infinite. I am obliged to believe in an abyss of love which is deeper than the abyss of death: I dare not lose faith in that love. I sink into death, eternal death, if I do. I must feel that this love is compassing the universe…. (Vol II p.575, quoted Niebuhr, 1951 p.226).

Maurice's optimistic but profound universalism clearly resonates powerfully for Niebuhr, and carries conviction for him. He is, however, quick to point out that it is beyond his - or his readers' - capability to say, '*This* is the Christian answer' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.231). It is at this point that Niebuhr shifts from characterising theological standpoints and describing their roots in scripture and tradition, moving instead into practical-theological mode as he declares:

> … the problem of Christ and culture can and must come to an end only in a realm beyond all study in the free decisions of individual believers and responsible communities' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.233).

What Niebuhr does, in effect, is to take the fundamental theological question of the relation of God and the human world; to outline some possible Christian stances to the question; to make clear which of these he most fully endorses; and to conclude with a shift from conceptual, historical theology to practical theology. This is a move which, I believe, any Christian theologian must ultimately make, for theology is not a matter of head divorced from heart, or both divorced from lived experience. Wherever on the spectrum of possible Christian stances towards culture one finds oneself, that place has to be both authentic and coherent: that is, both rational and emotional intelligences must be drawn on, as well as life experience. It is simply not enough to define an adopted position as clearly derived from scripture, tradition and reason: where one stands must also chime with experience, as Niebuhr argues.

Niebuhr's approach has, however, been widely critiqued. T J Gorringe has argued that although Niebuhr's work has 'survived the fifty years since its first airing', the Niebuhrian typology 'has to be dropped' on the grounds that no simple typology is adequate and what is required is a 'more complex mapping of the interrelation of gospel and culture' (Gorringe, 2004 p.16). It is, though, John Howard Yoder, perhaps Niebuhr's most trenchant critic, who interestingly endorses the practical-theological shift Niebuhr makes: Yoder, that is, sees the issue of Christ and Culture, God and the human world, as a practical question of Christian discipleship rather than one of theological conceptualisation. For him, it is:

> ... the problem of how to be in but not of the world ... how not to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds .... It is about how the assumptions, values, perceptions and understandings of society (culture) penetrate us and our understanding of who Christ is, what it means to follow him, and what the mission of the church is (Yoder, 1996 p.10).

For Yoder, the weight of the biblical and apostolic witness to Christ is always in support of a 'transformational' model; but that does not remove from Christians the responsibility to undertake specific, 'concrete discernment' in each situation, rather than rely on any pre-formed response simply determined by an ideal type (Yoder, 1996 pp.87, 89). It is in the practice of Christian discipleship that the dilemmas of Christ and Culture are ultimately negotiated.

Christ and Culture: the contribution of recent missiology

Recent missiology has also explored the key, underlying question of Christ and Culture. In his *Models of Contextual Theology* (Bevans, 1992), Stephen B Bevans offers a five-fold typology of the relation of gospel and culture. His conceptualisation employs a range of stances from the conservative, 'translation' stance (ie that the pre-determined gospel message has to be simply 'translated' into different cultures) to the radical, 'anthropological' view (ie that different cultures may themselves embody divine insights). The

extremes of his spectrum stand, he suggests, for two basic theological orientations, which he calls 'redemption-centred' and 'creation-centred'; the former characterised by the conviction that culture and human experience are in need either of radical or total transformation, and the latter characterised by 'the conviction that culture and human experience are generally good … [and which] approaches life with an analogical not a dialectical spirit or imagination' (Bevans, 1992 p.16). The parallels with the two poles of Niebuhr's spectrum - Christ against culture and the Christ of culture - are clear.

In a similar vein, the missiologist Justo L Gonzales describes in his Foreword to Bevans and Schroeder's magisterial *Constants in Context* how as a teacher of mission theology he identified two basic types of theological student: those who had 'found the truth in the teaching of the church' and who sympathised with the approach of Tertullian among the patristic writers; and those of a more questioning temperament, who 'came with very open minds, looking for answers to the deepest mysteries of life', and who were more attracted by Origen's approach. This, he explains, was the origin of the theological typology adopted by Bevans and Schroeder which proposes three 'classical' models of theology, types A, B and C (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005 pp.xi-xiv; and see below, pp. 29-30).

What is clear from both Niebuhr, Bevans and Gonzales is that polarities of outlook, temperament and disposition can be hugely influential in theology; and that the central question of how one conceives the relation of God and the human world is core to theological understanding, and decisive for an approach to mission. A more 'anthropological' (Bevans), 'Christ *of* culture' (Neibuhr) or Origen-style (Gonzales) stance will have more confidence in human culture and in its potential for divine in-dwelling or insight; whereas a more 'translation' (Bevans), 'Christ *against* culture' (Niebuhr) or Tertullian-style (Gonzales) stance will be culturally suspicious, dubious about the possibility of human culture pointing towards or mediating God. Similarly, as Niebuhr suggests, the nature of underlying attitudes to the doctrines of

creation, the fall and eschatology will lean towards either polarity. What is equally clear is that though pure instances of 'ideal types' may not exist, the drift or inclination of a theological stance on 'Christ and culture' will be decisive: how we conceive of God relating to 'the total process of human activity and the total result of such activity' is a fundamental feature of a theology, and will impact upon our whole understanding of mission and ministry.

Niebuhr's own concluding standpoint is that '... the world of culture – man's achievement – exists within the world of grace - God's Kingdom' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.256). This position, acknowledging the possibility of Christ being present in aspects of culture, but distancing itself from both the 'Christ of culture' and the 'Christ against culture' stances, is an understanding of the human world as existing within the sphere of divine grace rather than basically separated from it or embodying it. It is a stance which, in the light of my own experience of living as a Christian within culture, I find compelling; though clearly other stances - similarly arguable from the core sources of scripture, tradition and reason (See: Chapman, 2012 pp.104ff) – may be persuasive to others, and constitute valid, possible Christian standpoints. Rowan Williams has recently argued that a 'radical' stance, open to the world of culture, underlies both much of the thinking of the Second Vatican Council and of contemporary missiology (Williams, 2012). Such an understanding also, as Bevans argues, takes seriously the sacramental nature of the world (Bevans, 1992 p.9), and, as Niebuhr insists, gives due weight to the doctrine of the Incarnation, a doctrine which touches all human life with holiness (Niebuhr, 1951 p.193).

There is in this congruence of argument a persuasive weight. At the outset of my theological contextualisation of school chaplaincy, therefore, I want to take Niebuhr's paradigm 'Christ the transformer of culture' as my starting point, together with the three 'theological convictions' relating to creation, the fall and eschatology he identifies underlying this stance. I also want to endorse his insistence on theological conceptualisation needing to be

chastened and refined by a practical-theological emphasis on experience. Whilst it is clear that valid theological approaches may derive from various positions between the poles of world-rejection and world-acceptance, my basic position for this exploration of theological perspectives on mission, ministry and chaplaincy is this: that human life and culture are not radically separated from God, but exist within the sphere of divine grace. God and the human world are in relation: culture may mediate divine truth; and Christ may be present within, though not contained by, human culture.

The mission of God: 'missio dei'

In the light of this kind of thinking, the mission of God - *missio dei* - can be seen as a mission prompting both recognition and reconciliation; calling us to recognise the divine presence in human living and the wider world; and calling us also to be reconciled, both with God and one another. It is a mission from unity – the unity of the triune God – towards unity – the unity of human persons with one another and with the Trinity. As Paul Avis has put it: '*Missio dei* speaks of the overflowing of the love of God's being and nature into God's purposeful activity in the world' (Avis, 2005 p.5).

In this understanding, 'the mission consists of the things he is doing in the world' (Taylor, 1972 p.3) rather than Christian 'missionary' effort and activity; and divine grace is not limited to the sphere of the universal Church, the 'ark of salvation', but is everywhere and always prevenient. Similarly, the work of God is not to be seen especially in the religious sphere, or in the exceptionally miraculous, but in the everyday, ordinary miraculousness of life itself: that we are here, that the world is sustained, that despite everything goodness is nurtured and love transforms. There is a constant and eternal movement of creation, redemption and renewal which is the ongoing work of God, who is in all things and through all things: in terms of the Second Vatican Council theology of *Lumen Gentium*,' … he has generously poured out his divine goodness and does not cease to do so' (Abbott, 1966 p.585).

Tracing the origins of *missio dei* theology to the thinking of Karl Barth in the 1930's, Avis goes on to describe its emergence in Roman Catholicism in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and to celebrate its maturity in the magisterial work of Bosch (Bosch, 1991); now, he argues, it 'belongs to the mainstream ecumenical consensus' (Avis, 2005 p.6). A further development in *missio dei* thinking may be found in the analytical work of Bevans and Schroeder, who suggest in their *Constants in Context: a Theology of Mission for Today* (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005) that the essentially missional nature of the Church down the ages has expressed itself in different ways according to how the Church has responded to six key questions:

> (1) Who is Jesus Christ and what is his meaning? (2) What is the nature of the Christian church? (3) How does the church regard its eschatological future? (4) What is the nature of the salvation it preaches? (5) How does the church value the human? (6) What is the value of human culture as the context in which the gospel is preached?' (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005 p.34).

Bevans and Schroeder identify three 'ideal types' of theology which derive their distinctiveness from the different ways in which their 'six questions' are answered. As with the thinking of Niebuhr, there is a case for arguing that 'pure' versions of each ideal type are unlikely to be found; but there is considerable value in their identification of type A, B and C theologies which are respectively conservative/orthodox, liberal and radical/liberationist in emphasis and whose origins may be traced to Roman, Hellenistic and Near-Eastern ways of thinking. Though there are probably elements of the different strands in any theology of mission, that which underlies my own understanding could be described as a combination of type B and type C theology, not seeing mission as saving souls and extending the church – the view of Type A - but rather as discovery of the truth and transformation through mission.

An anthropology for mission: 'imago dei'

One of Bevans and Schroeder's six questions is: 'How does the Church value the human?' Beneath any theology of mission must lie a theological

anthropology, an understanding of the nature and purpose of the human being; and responses to this question have differed widely over time. Alec Vidler describes in his *The Church in an Age of Revolution* how the start of the twentieth century saw an etiolated liberal Protestantism with its assumption of 'the benevolent, altruistic character of man' shudder before the impact of the First World War, and notes that Karl Barth's *Epistle to the Romans* 'fell like a bomb on the playground of the theologians' (Vidler, 1961 pp. 213, 217). It would certainly be hard at this point, almost a century on from 1914 and after the further horrors of Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Rwanda – to name but three instances of humankind's inhumanity - to recover the naïve optimism of late nineteenth-century liberal Protestantism. However, to plunge into theological despair about humankind is a less than balanced response.

John Hick's analysis (Hick, 1974) of the contrasting Augustinian and Irenaean approaches to the problem of evil provides a helpful starting-point for developing an anthropology for mission. In the Augustinian approach, Hick identifies a deep suspicion of humanity, seen as scarred by sin and incapable of virtue. In the Ireanaean approach, however, there is a profound conviction that the image or *ikon* of God is present in humankind. The image of God, *imago dei* :

> … represents his nature as an intelligent creature capable of fellowship with his maker … he is made a person in the image of God' (Hick, 1974 p.217).

In this way of looking at humanity, the emphasis is on the potential of the human person for ultimate fellowship with God, and on the unique place of Jesus Christ as the incarnation of that possibility; in him, as David Jenkins argues, ' … we are finally confronted with God taking on man's own, true and real image' (Jenkins, 1967 p.96). In the light of this, as David Cairns argues, '… every man [sic] … has a dignity in our eyes because of the personal being that God has given him' (Cairns, 1973 p.284).

Imago dei thinking has been further developed by Jürgen Moltmann, whose threefold vision sees humankind as originally made in the image of God (*imago*

dei); called to the status of the messianic Jesus (*imago Christi*); and destined to eschatological glorification (*Gloria dei est homo*) (Moltmann, 1985 pp.215 ff). In the thinking of the Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas, there is a further development of *imago dei* thought characterised by his linking human personhood with the Trinity:

> Man [sic] acquires personal identity and ontological particularity only by basing his being in the Father-Son relationship ... (Zizioulas, 1991 p.43 and cf. Gunton 1991).

What these writers have done is to nudge from its throne the more negative view of humankind and culture traditionally held in the Reformed tradition and, while avoiding any naïve romanticism about human perfectibility, to reassert an understanding of the human person which highlights the eschatological destiny of humankind and the human potential for relationship with God in Christ. The response to Bevans and Schroeder's question, therefore, is that the human must be valued highly, since the human person bears God's own image, and is called to relationship with and glorification by God. Such a stance may be labelled 'liberal' or 'liberationist'; but cannot be equated with earlier 'liberal' views which in effect dispensed entirely with divine grace. Acknowledging the capacity of the human person for sin and failure, but emphasising more the potential for growth through grace and the work of the Spirit, *imago dei* theology offers an anthropology for mission which is rooted both in the paradoxical reality of human experience and in the conviction of God's loving commitment to humankind in creation, redemption and glorification.

The mission of the Church and its ministry

So far, I have argued that the human world exists within the sphere of divine grace, rather than being radically separated from it: Christ embraces culture, and in Niebuhr's formulation, is its transformer (Niebuhr, 1951 p.190ff). I have argued also that the eternal mission of God – the *missio dei* – is an intentional outpouring of divine goodness in the world through the activity of

the Holy Spirit; and that the image of God - the *imago dei* - is present in the human person, awaiting its eschatological perfection in Christ. Given all this, what is the mission of the worldwide Church, and how is ministry related to that mission?

In an early essay on ministry, Paul Avis suggests that '... the Church's mission means the whole church bringing the whole Christ to the whole world ... ' (Avis, 1999 p.4), which apparently assumes that Christ is a possession of the Church to be brought to the world, rather than to be discerned as already at work within it. In his later *A Ministry Shaped by Mission* (Avis, 2005), however, Avis corrects this earlier emphasis and argues that:

> The prevenient reality of *Missio Dei* means that Christians are not in the futile business of attempting to bring an absent Christ to an abandoned world. God is already ahead of us in mission (Avis, 2005 p.7).

In the light of this, it could be said that the mission of the Church is to discern where God is at work in the world, 'already ahead of us in mission'; to celebrate and in the name of Christ to support and continue that work; and to bring to the world the good news of God's love through its life of worship and service.

This understanding implies a 'missiological identity' between Christ and the Church (Avis, 2005 p.8), with the Church replicating the mission and ministry of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This view has been powerfully expressed in the thinking of Alan Richardson:

> The ministry of the Church is the continuation of the apostolic ministry of Christ himself. In this present age ... his ministry to the world is fulfilled through the instrumentality of his resurrection body, the Church. All true ministerial acts of the Church are *gesta Christi*, the acts of Christ, the Head of the body. Christ is still the one who commissions and sends the pastors of his flock; he is the celebrant at every Eucharist, the minister of every act of loving service that his disciples perform in his name (Richardson, 1958 p.291).

In Richardson's thinking, the words 'mission' and 'ministry' have become almost interchangeable: the mission of the universal Church, we might say, is not to bring Christ to the world, but to *be* Christ to the world, and to embody his mission in its ministry.   As Avis writes in *A Church Drawing Near: Spirituality and Mission in a Post-Christian Culture*, the mission of the Church '... is a mission that is executed through the ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care' (Avis, 2003 p.200).

Mission and ministry: the current Anglican debate

Accepting Avis's definition of the Church's ministry as embracing the ministries of word, sacrament and pastoral care, and assuming also that this ministry is the corporate ministry of the whole Church – encompassing both lay and ordained members – how might we understand and value chaplaincy? The locality-based parish system of the Church of England, offering a 'Christian presence in every community' (Church of England, 2011), regrettably over-dominates Church thinking about the nature of mission and ministry, and leaves the many varieties of chaplaincy – a ministry rooted in associational rather than geographical communities - marginalised from the core awareness of the Church.   However, it is important to realise that chaplaincies – as 'place of work' ministries - have a long pedigree. As Karl Rahner emphasises:

> ... the Church's mission has never simply moved between the local community and the local parish as its beginning and its end ... besides the territorial basis there have always been other sociological facts forming the natural foundation for Christian communities   (Rahner, 1963 p.58).

Despite chaplaincy's long history, however, and the Church of England's significant (but as yet unquantified) involvement in chaplaincies in the health service, the armed forces, the universities and further education, in prisons and in schools, and in an increasing variety of community contexts, recent thinking about mission and ministry in the Church of England has almost ignored chaplaincy.   Instead, it has attempted to respond to the increasing

mobility of the population, its de-rootedness from 'parish', and to the fashioning of 'community' in the workplace, in leisure occupations and in other associational networks principally by focusing on 'new ways of being church'. The report *Mission-shaped Church* (Cray, 2004) set out an agenda in which the emphasis is on 'church planting' and on 'fresh expressions of church', but – remarkably – its index fails to mention chaplaincy.

The result has been a strategically dubious focus on new-style groupings – 'fresh expressions' - rather than on the potential of existing ministries, notably chaplaincies. *The Future of the Parish System* (Croft, 2006), offers a more balanced picture. This collection includes a piece by Martyn Percy offering a more reassuring socio-cultural picture than that painted in the earlier volume, with an encouragement to ' … have faith in the resilience of God and the church…' (Percy, 2006b p.14); and even a piece on 'Doing traditional church really well' (Gamble, 2006) – suggesting, perhaps, that the radical discontinuities posited by *Mission-shaped Church* were being questioned.

Mission-shaped Questions (Croft, 2008) began seriously to explore some of the theological issues raised by and implicit in the thinking of the 2004 report. Despite an introduction which airily dismisses the missional heritage of the Church – 'The Church of England is no longer messing about when it comes to God's mission' (Croft, 2008 p.ix) – this collection effectively explores a range of theological questions central to the nature of the Church, including the role of sacramental ministry and the nature of catholic ecclesiology. It is as if the realisation had emerged that the inherited thinking of the Church about its nature was relevant to the 'unexplored territory of the future' (Croft, 2008 p.198). Others, though, offered a binary contrast between 'inherited' and 'emerging' models of church, arguing for the entire 'reimagining' of ministry itself (Heywood, 2011).

Critique of the 'fresh expressions' movement and the idea of the 'emerging/emergent church' came in *Evaluating Fresh Expressions* (Nelstrop

and Percy, 2008).   The notion of the 'mixed economy' Church - in which 'traditional' parish churches are complemented by a range of radical 'fresh expressions' - is here seriously challenged, not least in Martyn Percy's contribution (Percy, 2008).   Percy, now more overtly critical of the new movement, sees it as ' ... a form of collusion with the post-institutionalism that is so endemic in contemporary culture ...' (Percy, 2008 p.31); and he is now prepared to say that:

> ... church is actually it. That parish ministry is still the cutting edge. And that without the institution of the church, all we'll have left is multi-choice spirituality, individualism and innovation. And that this simply won't be enough to sustain faith in future generations (Percy, 2008 p.39).

With the publication of *For the Parish: A Critique of Fresh Expressions* (Davison and Milbank, 2010), the reaction against 'fresh expressions' became both intense, robust and even conclusive; here was a reassertion of 'the parish' as the true context for Anglican ministry – with, interestingly, again no mention of chaplaincy in its index. It is extraordinary that in the first decade of the twenty-first century, a major public debate on mission and ministry in the Church of England was carried out with almost no reference to the potential or significance of chaplaincy – that wide-ranging genre of extra-parochial ministry in which a significant proportion of the Church's ordained ministers and other representatives are engaged with large numbers of those who otherwise would have no contact with the Church, either as 'parish' or as 'fresh expression', 'inherited' or 'emerging' church.

Ministry and mission: the Church of England and chaplaincy

What can explain this sidelining of chaplaincy? The dominance since the early medieval era of a parochial model of ministry into which successive generations of clergy have been inducted can account for much. There has not, however, been a total absence of Church thinking about chaplaincy. A 1983 working party report on chaplaincy helpfully affirmed that 'All ministries are derived from Christ' (National Society, 1983 p.13), but focused on the pragmatics of ensuring the Church of England met the expectations of modern

employment practice rather than on theology. Whilst this report calls sensibly for both the recognition and integration of chaplaincy ministry into the mission of the dioceses, its major legacy lies in the lamentable coining of the term 'sector ministry' to describe chaplaincy:

> We believe the term 'sector' to have a sociological connotation that makes sense. It refers to a slice of social life which contains ideas, values, concepts, activities with common roots and outlets in public life (education, for example, or industry) (National Society, 1983 p.14).

It is hard to know what to make of this. Searching round for a term that would cover the range of chaplaincies, the working party came up with one which inevitably led to an image of chaplaincies as related to slices or parts of life rather than to its whole. Terminology can be determinative, and 'sector ministry' may well now carry an indelible implication of part rather than whole, edge rather than centre. In what was the first book-length study of chaplaincy, Giles Legood adopted the term in his title *Chaplaincy: The Church's Sector Ministries* (Legood, 1999), and it seems that it may have stuck, since although a recent book on chaplaincy is simply entitled *Being a Chaplain* (Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011), the term creeps into the title of its Section 5: 'Chaplains' Stories: Other Sectors'.

What both these studies offer, however, is serious reflection on the nature of chaplaincy in a wide range of contexts. Legood notes the paucity of interest in chaplaincy:

> ... even recently-published histories of the last hundred years of church life have largely ignored the work, witness and contribution made by clergy not working in parochial or congregational appointments (Legood, 1999 p.ix).

It is, however, clear that chaplaincy is a numerically growing ministry, a point recently emphasised by Paul Ballard (Ballard, 2009), although at the time of writing there is – significantly - no reliable quantitative information available. Legood also helpfully sets out some of the core ministerial tasks which are shared by both chaplains and parish clergy, who are '...concerned

with pastoral care, spiritual nurture, leading worship and helping the laity in their mission in the world' (Legood, 1999 p.xi). Legood's book offers a positive evaluation of chaplaincy ministries, and, in an essay by Paul Avis, an emphasis on the representative function of the chaplain, and on the significance of ordained chaplains,

> ... who have the calling, training and commissioning to minister word, sacrament and pastoral care in the name of Christ's church and who are the publicly identifiable agents of the church's mission (Avis, 1999 p.13).

Threlfall-Holmes and Newett adopt a similar structure to Legood, covering a wide range of chaplaincies through a series of personal narratives from practitioners, and adding further support for the distinctive ministry of chaplaincy. They see chaplaincies as a major part of the mission and ministry of Christian churches, at the 'cutting edge' of mission, importantly noting that:

> Chaplains may be marginal to the churches, but they are often in places where the 90 per cent of the UK population who do not regularly attend church will be found (Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011 p. xv).

The question of the 'marginality' of chaplaincy is one they pursue, commenting that those working in chaplaincies:

> ... find they are perceived to have marginalised themselves, placed themselves outside the boundaries of the parish system of the Church ... (Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011 p.138).

The question of the relation between chaplaincies and parish ministry remains central; and Threlfall-Holmes and Newett rightly argue that chaplaincy should now be regarded as 'a normative and valuable part of the mission of the Church' (Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011 p.139). That they feel obliged to do this, however, makes clear the ongoing failure of the Church fully to understand or to accept the ministry of chaplains in their many and various contexts.

Mission, ministry, pastoral care and chaplaincy: converging ideas

Before I review the small amount of available literature on school chaplaincy, a summary of the stance taken so far on questions of mission, ministry, pastoral care and chaplaincy will be helpful. The starting point is the conviction that the world and all that is in it is the sphere of God's gracious activity; that Christ is both above and within culture. Grace is prevenient, and mission is not about bringing grace – 'salvation' – to the world, but rather about discerning, announcing and collaborating with the divine grace already active: participating, that is, in the mission of God to the world. Part of that mission is to bring human beings to their fulfilment, and to this end the Church is called to minister to people through the means of word, sacrament and pastoral care. One of the distinctive ways in which that ministry is exercised is – despite the Church's inherited pattern of parochial organisation – through chaplaincy.

Chaplaincy in schools: earlier Anglican literature

What has been written about school chaplaincy? The earliest Anglican study is J B Goodliffe's *School Chaplain* (Goodliffe, 1961), which describes in a reflective, autobiographical style the author's ministry at the independent Cheltenham College and Cheltenham Ladies' College. 'Chaplaincy' in this context includes teaching Divinity, understood by the author as a chance to think with pupils rather than simply to indoctrinate them; leading (compulsory) daily worship in the school chapel; and pastoral work arising from the perceived needs of 'bewildered, hurt and lonely' young people (Goodliffe, 1961 p.viii). Goodliffe highlights the representative function of the chaplain: '… we represent the Church in their eyes … the chaplain, they know instinctively, should be a man of God' (Goodliffe, 1961 p.17); and he is concerned to ensure that all pupils should have 'a genuine religious experience' (Goodliffe, 1961 p.13). His book is animated by profound pastoral and missional concern, and is rooted in theological reflection – the

author's practical experience in teaching, liturgical leadership and pastoral care being at the heart of his narrative.

Not until 1987 was there further published work. From a very similar context to Goodliffe's, Roger Marsh, then chaplain at Marlborough College, contributed an article on school chaplaincy to *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care* (Campbell, 1987). Marsh's understanding of the role is developed in a slightly different direction from Goodliffe's. Although Goodliffe would have recognised Marsh's formulation – the chaplain as:

> ... a living reminder of the Christian foundation and ethos, responsible for worship and initiation into the Christian faith, a prophet and a conscience, and a competent teacher in the classroom ... (Marsh, 1987 p.245).

- Marsh's distinctive emphasis on the chaplain holding a 'prophetic' role 'over and against the system' (Marsh, 1987 p.244) is new, a product perhaps of rather different experiences in chaplaincy in the years after Goodliffe's publication. Goodliffe would also, one suspects, have aimed at being rather better than 'a competent teacher', although it is clear that both a teaching and a catechetical role is assumed by both writers.

In 1999, as part of the Legood volume mentioned earlier (Legood, 1999), David Lindsay contributed a brief essay, again from the independent sector, although from a day rather than boarding school context (Lindsay, 1999). Lindsay notes the potential tension between the teaching and pastoral roles expected of the chaplain, and follows Marsh in seeing the chaplaincy role as 'almost prophetic'; he refers, tellingly, to the chaplain's most important function as:

> ... to preach the gospel of undeserved and unlimited love and acceptance to an institution that runs on a doctrine of justification by works' (Lindsay, 1999 p.120).

In the following year, 2000, the Bloxham Project published a pamphlet setting out for the first time a rationale for independent school chaplaincy together

with practical managerial guidance on procedures for appointments, contracts and conditions of service (Cameron, 2000). Again assuming a joint teaching and ministerial role, this pamphlet highlights the chaplain's public, institutional, representative and symbolic rather than pastoral role.

Chaplaincy in schools: Roman Catholic approaches

There is a distinctively different emphasis in Roman Catholic writing. In *Wasting Time in School: Secondary School Chaplaincy – a Story and a Handbook* (McKeone, 1993), Sister Mary McKeone describes her chaplaincy in comprehensive schools in the north-east over a twelve-year period from 1980. Not involved in teaching - so much part of the Anglican chaplain's role as understood by Goodliffe and Marsh – Sister Mary identifies her task as 'wasting time in school', 'lavishly' giving 'quality time to pupils in quiet listening' (McKeone, 1993 p.9). Her emphasis is on pupil worship, prayer groups and retreats, on pupils' spirituality and its development; and she sees chaplaincy as 'walking alongside the pupils', 'helping them to reflect on their lives and experience in an informal, friendly way'. Her aim is to listen and reflect with pupils ' … in such a way that they will deepen their perception of God in their lives …' (McKeone, 1993 p.16, pp. 97-8).

This approach represents the characteristic Roman Catholic understanding of school chaplaincy. Set apart in its theology and organisational pattern from the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales promotes clear, positive views on school chaplaincy. The Catholic Education Service has produced careful guidance on the employment of lay chaplains in Roman Catholic schools, but the practical is balanced by a keen theological awareness:

> Chaplains become companions to every member of the school and college community to help them to embrace and further the memory of Jesus and his Word' (Catholic Education Service, 2004).

Similarly, individual dioceses provide guidance with a clear theological grounding on the practice of chaplaincy in their schools:

> The chaplain recognises the face of Christ in each member of the community and treats them with respect as people who share in the life of God and are unique and of infinite value ... (Diocese of Portsmouth, 2009 p.2).

In this understanding, the chaplain's task is one of 'spiritual accompaniment', of 'challenging members of the community with the gospel'; of offering 'a prophetic message that can challenge norms and assumptions' (Diocese of Portsmouth, 2009 p.3). The notion of 'spiritual accompaniment' is at the heart of the only PhD thesis on Roman Catholic school chaplaincy I am aware of, with the author depending strongly on both authoritative Vatican documents and on the Emmaus narrative of Luke 24 for her argument (Glackin, 2004). This approach is also echoed in publications by the Association of Catholic Chaplains in Education (See: ACCE, 1996, ACCE, 2008).

At the Heart of Education: School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care (Norman, 2004), throws some interesting light on the practice of Roman Catholic school chaplaincy in Ireland. Chaplains, whether priests, religious or laypeople, report their main activities as:

> ... one-to-one counselling, providing liturgical celebrations, supporting other staff, bereavement support, addressing the causes of student indiscipline, meeting with and visiting parents, and hospital visitation... (Norman, 2004 p.192).

The volume also contains the results of a qualitative study of pupils' experiences and perceptions of school chaplaincy (Murphy, 2004). The researcher perceives a '... depth of respect and genuine feeling exhibited by pupils towards their chaplain ...', and importantly goes on to suggest that:

> ... the findings indicate that the chaplain may be a pivotal force in the personal development of pupils ... (Murphy, 2004 p.211).

Recent Anglican approaches

From an Anglican perspective have recently come the booklet *Fresh Experiences of School Chaplaincy* (Tregale, 2011) and brief contributions to

Being a Chaplain (Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011) by chaplains in two Church schools, one independent and one maintained (de Lange, 2011, Swinton, 2011). Tregale writes from her current experience as an Anglican priest in a post combining parish ministry and chaplaincy in a church comprehensive school, where she tentatively describes herself as 'exploring what it means (or could mean) to be a chaplain' (Tregale, 2011 p.5). She considers a range of roles which, she suggests, chaplaincy encompasses – priest, pastor, prophet, missioner, discipler, servant, teacher – and whilst herself coming from a clearly evangelical perspective employs the Jesuit writer Avery Dulles's seminal *Models for the Church* (Dulles, 1974) in her discussion of the range of possible chaplaincy tasks. She considers three main 'models' of chaplaincy in schools: as service provider, prophetic voice and 'fresh expression', and concludes that team approaches are required for effective chaplaincy, which needs to develop in a variety of ways rather than according to a single model.

The two brief contributions to *Being a Chaplain* offer a sharing of personal experience rather than any real reflection or analysis, although the personal narratives emerge from more centrally Anglican perspectives than Tregale's. Swinton emphasises the need to minister to everyone, as part of the Anglican church's role as 'the nation's pastor and priest', and his context is that of the vibrant, multi-ethnic, inner-city school (Swinton, 2011 p.20). De Lange similarly highlights the role of chaplain as 'the vicar of the school' – despite her own status as a lay reader rather than a priest - in the very different context of her independent school in the north-east (de Lange, 2011 p.17).

Thinking about chaplaincy: three key voices

Despite the institutional Church's marginalising of chaplaincy, and the dearth of specific writing on Anglican school chaplaincy, some theologians have highlighted chaplaincy's particular significance. Stephen Pattison's voice is distinctive; from his initial, critical engagement in 1988 with what was then known as 'pastoral theology' in *A Critique of Pastoral Care* (Pattison, 1993) through to the essays collected in *The Challenge of Practical Theology*

(Pattison, 2007) and beyond, his powerful commitment to pastoral care and its expression in chaplaincy, and his vision of it as a committed expression of Christian faith in the facilitation of human growth and development have remained consistent. For Pattison, pastoral care is not '… a minor and trivial activity of personal niceness to people without purpose, skill or theological significance …', but ' … attending to and nurturing God's world, and all that is in it, for God's sake …' (Pattison, 2008 p.9).

Writing retrospectively in 2008, Pattison says his own 'transformative, inclusive vision' of pastoral care had been:

> … informed by a determination to encounter and nurture the divine wherever it was found in human individuals and communities …. It was enacted often in the context of chaplaincy and social engagement … and enriched by interdisciplinary understandings of the human situation and possibilities, as well as by insights from the theological tradition (Pattison, 2008 p.8).

Pattison's understanding of the chaplain's pastoral care is not to be confused with secular models.   Although the pastoral commitment to 'human flourishing so that people attain their God-given potential' (Pattison, 2007 p.18) could appear only marginally theological, Pattison's earlier and fuller definition of pastoral care is clearly and determinedly both theological and Christian; it is:

> … that activity, undertaken especially by representative Christian persons, directed towards the elimination and relief of sin and sorrow and the presentation of all people perfect in Christ to God … (Pattison, 1993 p.13).

This echoes, rather than the secular concept of 'value-free pastoral care' (Goodliff, 1998 p.97 cf., Rogers, 2001), the long Christian tradition of 'spiritual care' in which the pastor is seen as a 'physician of souls' (Purves, 2001, Bonhoeffer, 1985).

A second distinctive voice on chaplaincy is that of the community theologian Ann Morisy. In her *Journeying Out: A New Approach to Christian Mission*

(Morisy, 2004), Morisy highlights the reduced religious literacy of the early twenty-first century, and suggests an approach to ministry which is about working within and yet venturing beyond the limited religious understanding of the unchurched person. The task, she says:

> … is to work or engage with people to build their confidence in the intimations they have of an enduring reality and the non-material aspects of life … a ministry of awakening, helping people to see beyond the daily round of worldly commitment, to awaken in them a sense of their eternal origin and destiny (Morisy, 2006 p.152).

The work of chaplaincy, she suggests, is to 'open the conversation of Spirit' with those who do not share the Church's symbolic understandings of faith, and who do not have access to the 'high, symbolic repertoire' that links us to the transcendent (Morisy, 2006 p.152). The chaplain needs to 'develop the skill of code-switching', that is, must be able to move from the language and symbolism of faith to the everyday; the chaplain 'works at the level of the imagination', to help people see beyond the routine and discover that 'within our ordinary experiences there are rumours of angels and traces of ultimacy' (Morisy, 2006 p.153).

Morisy writes of enabling people to 'embrace the possibility of God', assuming that there is 'a deep capacity for sensing God'; her understanding of the human person is one of potential – an essentially Irenaean insight – and she considers appropriate liturgy, 'apt liturgy', to have the capacity to 'link heaven and earth' (Morisy, 2004 p.154, 156). The chaplain has in this view an essentially priestly role, helping bridge the gap between earth and heaven, using imagination and sensitivity to work alongside others, prompting spiritual awareness and potential. This is a process of 're-enchanting' people's view of the world, helping them 'explore their sense of there being more to life than meets the eye' (Morisy, 2006 p.126-7). For Morisy, the role of 'community chaplain' involves:

> … being priest for the everyday … representing, and occasionally speaking about, God's alongsideness in relation to daily life – whether

the moment is filled with delight, stress or struggle...' (Morisy, 2006 p.129).

Morisy's thinking about mission interestingly develops from a traditional, Reformed basis, where 'unless an awareness of sinfulness is fostered the need for salvation is irrelevant' (Morisy, 2006 p.133), to one where an   emphasis on 'Jesus bearing our sins on the cross', although it is 'both true and relevant ... is also implausible and inaccessible' (Morisy, 2009 p.56).   In her more recent understanding, the heart of gospel for this age is about:

> ... the everyday relevance and cathartic and energising nature of the story of Jesus who shows us how to live' (Morisy, 2009 p.116).

A further voice on chaplaincy is that of practical and pastoral theologian Paul Ballard. In an essay in 'Crucible', Ballard notes that chaplaincy is a growing ministry, and describes it, in a context where 'life is dispersed, and we move from one sphere to another', as '... not an aberration of ministry but an attempt to express the relevance of the gospel to every facet of life.' To this extent the chaplaincy model of ministry, he argues, '... has a clear appeal since it is characterised precisely by entering into and working with social structures.' And this, he says, '... sets chaplaincy firmly within contemporary models of mission' (Ballard, 2009 pp.19,20).   Relating his understanding of chaplaincy to the notion of the *missio dei*, Ballard argues that:

> In and through its ministry, the Church seeks to witness to Christ as the truth of God in the world. The chaplain is caught up in this tension of the 'now' and the 'not yet' of the Kingdom in the particularity of the immediate, working it out with others, as circumstances demand and allow (Ballard, 2009 p.20).

Ballard identifies the chaplain's primary context as the world and not the Church, whereas the parish minister works mainly in, with and for the structures of the Church; chaplaincy's distinctiveness is its situation within the structures of the wider society, a situation comparable to that of the 'embedded' journalist:

> To be embedded, however, does not obliterate the primary reason for their presence. There is an inherent tension in the task, of having a dual allegiance both to the people whose lives they share and to the wider point of reference they represent … (Ballard, 2009 p.21).

This, as Ballard points out, is precisely the tension of the Incarnation: of being in the world so entirely that there is identity, and yet being 'not of this world' so as to be free to serve it. In this respect, says Ballard, the chaplain's dilemma of dual allegiance is not peculiar, '… but makes explicit what is ever true' (Ballard, 2009 p.22). Ballard's illuminating 'location' of chaplaincy concludes with an affirmation of the chaplain as 'the pivotal public theologian', having an essentially 'prophetic' task: to shed meaning and light and to be ' … a positive presence, representing the possibility of hope and change' (Ballard, 2009 p.23).

School chaplaincy: connecting theological and functional insights

These three key voices offer important insights into chaplaincy which ring true to experience, and together offer a vision of chaplaincy as a style of ministry particularly suited to the current time. How might we relate these theological perceptions with the various dimensions of lived chaplaincy in schools? While director of the Bloxham Project, I revised and re-wrote the Bloxham Project's *School Chaplaincy Review* (Caperon, 2009), designed to assist school heads and chaplains in the process of reviewing a chaplain's work. Basing my analysis on discussion with and observation of the chaplains I worked with, and drawing also on my experience of staff review as a school leader, I initially developed a five-fold functional analysis of the school chaplain's role, later revised to a six-fold analysis to incorporate the teaching dimension of chaplaincy. The different functional aspects of a school chaplain's role, I suggested, could be set out as follows:

Pastoral: caring for the whole community
Liturgical: leading prayer and worship
Spiritual: leading the spiritual life of the community
Missional: commending the Christian faith and supporting other faiths

Prophetic: 'speaking truth to power'

Pedagogic: teaching about faith, and Christian catechesis.

There are several ways in which these theological and functional insights into chaplaincy intersect. Pastoral care, 'attending to and nurturing' others 'for God's sake' (Pattison, 2008 p.9) is at the core of Pattison's concern, and a school chaplain's care for a community may be seen as directed towards human flourishing, fullness of life. Pattison's emphasis on the spirituality of pastoral care resonates with Morisy's insight about enabling people to 'embrace the possibility of God', and with a chaplain's function in leading spiritual life in the community. Her powerful advocacy of the potential of 'apt liturgy' to 'link heaven and earth' can be seen to highlight the significance and skill of liturgical leadership; and a missional role commending Christian faith and supporting all faiths seems to chime with her insight about the chaplain being 'priest for the everyday', speaking of 'God's alongsideness' . Ballard's illuminating idea of embeddedness might well be taken to describe the school chaplain's prophetic role as one within but not bound by the values of the institution and thus able to 'speak truth to power'; and his notion of the chaplain shedding meaning and light, witnessing 'to Christ as the truth of God in the world' chimes with what I describe as the pedagogic function of a school chaplain: the chaplain as a teacher offers illumination, above all 'teaching' what he or she is.

Conclusion

Beginning with an exposition of the thinking of Niebuhr on the fundamental question of how we may understand the relation of God and the human world, and adopting the stance, supported by a range of missiological thinkers, that '… the world of culture … exists within the world of grace ….' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.256), this chapter has developed a foundational approach for understanding mission, ministry and chaplaincy, and has also reviewed the relevant literature on chaplaincy in the Church of England context and on school chaplaincy in particular. In addition, it has explored the work of three recent

writers on chaplaincy as contributions towards a theology of school chaplaincy, and has related these insights to the functional understanding of school chaplaincy developed by the Bloxham Project.

The empirical research to be discussed in the later chapters will bring to bear on the ministry of school chaplaincy the distinctive, clear and original voices of practitioners working in all sectors of the school system; this will contribute the vital, triangulating factor to the theological and functional insights into school chaplaincy so far outlined. The 'living, human document' of school chaplains' own testimony will therefore very significantly shape the eventual understanding of school chaplaincy this thesis presents. At this stage in the argument, however, it is helpful to recognise the way in which the theological insights into chaplaincy of Pattison, Morisy and Ballard resonate with aspects of the observed realities of the chaplain's role in school. Here are theologians whose thinking emerges from reflection on practice and helpfully illuminates it.

Schools, as purposeful, associational communities, are contexts in which chaplaincy may be thought a natural and highly appropriate style of ministry; and the following chapter will explore the Church's 'official' understanding both of schools and school chaplaincy in the wider context of secularisation and also what we know about the spiritual condition of the young in the early twenty-first century.

Chapter 3: Contextualising school chaplaincy: Church of England policy and the wider context of secularity

In this chapter I shall describe the stated mission of Church of England schools and the Church's understanding of chaplaincy within them. I shall consider the secular nature of the wider society in which schools and young people are now situated, reviewing some recent studies of youth spirituality. In this secular context, I shall argue, the concepts of religious socialisation, spiritual capital, and the 'chain of memory' are important for understanding the mission both of Church schools and of school chaplaincy. First, however, it will be helpful to clarify the use of the term 'Church of England secondary schools'.

Defining 'Church of England secondary schools'

It is important to be clear about the field of research. The school chaplaincy research project was limited to the secondary phase of education, that is, ages 11-18. It covered both secondary schools and academies in the publicly-funded sectors; and in the independent sector schools admitting at both 11-plus and 13-plus.   Church schools in the maintained sector usually declare their affiliation by the use of an evident signifier in the school's name; in the burgeoning academies sector, however, into which very many former maintained Church of England schools are transferring or have already transferred, there may be less public indication of Church adherence.   Some Anglican trusts such as Woodard (Woodard Schools, 2011), and some Church-related organisations such as the United Learning Trust (ULT) sponsor academies (United Church Schools Trust, 2011); and increasingly, former Church of England maintained schools - now academies - are sponsored by their Dioceses. Both Woodard, ULT and Diocesan academies were included in the research project, and were regarded alongside Church maintained schools as *de facto* Church of England secondary schools.

In the independent sector, Church of England adherence is not always clearly signalled, despite the fact that 'English schools were the creation of the Church' (Curtis, 1948 p.48), since 'The Church had from time immemorial dominated education in England' (Newsome, 1961 p.2). In effect, English independent schools remain largely if loosely linked to the Church of England, except where they are specifically sponsored by other religious bodies such as the Roman Catholic Church. For the school chaplaincy research project, all independent schools having an Anglican chaplain were regarded as *de facto* Church of England schools, whether or not the Church had any formal and ongoing role in their governance, and irrespective of the prominence given to Church adherence in the school's marketing materials. For the purposes of the research project, therefore, the term 'Church of England secondary schools' means those secondary schools, either maintained, independent or academies, whose foundation includes a clear Anglican element and/or whose regular staff includes an Anglican chaplain.

The Dearing Report: a stated mission for Church of England schools

But what are these Church schools for? It is remarkable that, despite the thirteen-hundred year pedigree of Church-based education in England, the first-ever policy review began in 1999, when the Church Schools Review Group was set up under the chairmanship of Lord Dearing. Arguing that '... the Church of England's schools are at the heart of the Church's mission to the nation ....' (Dearing, 2001 p.ix), the Report goes further in asserting:

> ... the crucial importance of Church schools to the whole mission of the Church to children and young people, and indeed to the long-term well-being of the Church of England ...' (Dearing, 2001 p.xi).

Church schools clearly matter to the Church, but it is also clear – and regrettable - that the Report largely excludes from its consideration schools in the independent sector.

The Report's introduction affirms the need for all (maintained) Church schools 'to be distinctively and recognisably Christian institutions'; identifies a lack of

secondary school provision by the Church; and seeks to encourage better integration between parish and school, with 'the school at the heart of parish life' (Dearing, 2001 p.2-3): an aspiration probably best suited, in reality, to parishes with schools in the primary phase. It argues significantly that:

> Church schools reach out to the young in far greater numbers than regularly attend church, and ... through the young the Church is reaching out to parents and communities who would not otherwise engage with it ...' (Dearing, 2001 p.3).

Dearing also crucially defines the purpose of the Church in education as: '... to offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the Church of England, in an increasingly secular world ...'; and it recognises clearly the contemporary multi-faith context within which the Church exists, quoting Archbishop Runcie's encouragement to:

> Nourish those of the faith; encourage those of other faiths; challenge those who have no faith (Dearing, 2001 p.4).

Despite its best-remembered recommendation that the Church should establish a further hundred secondary schools within seven or eight years, Dearing is not simply an expansionist report; it also gives serious consideration to what the mission of Church schools is, although there are ambivalences in its stance. Those attending these schools (some 900,000 children) are being given, the Report argues: '... the opportunity to know Christ, to learn in a community that seeks to live by his word, and to engage in worship...'; the justification for Church schools '... lies in offering children and young people an opportunity to experience the meaning of Christian faith.' (Dearing, 2001 p.10-11). For 'Church schools are places where a particular vision of humanity is offered ....' (Dearing, 2001 p.11); and this means a mission:

> ... to proclaim the gospel; to nourish Christians in their faith; to bring others into the faith; and to nurture and maintain the dignity of the image of God in human beings ...' (Dearing, 2001 p.11).

Despite talk of 'bringing others into the faith', or of 'the opportunity to know Christ', however, the Report distances itself from evangelism: 'Church schools

should be places where pupils and their families can 'have a basis for choice about Christian commitment'; but not places where they are 'expected to make a Christian commitment' (Dearing, 2001 p.12). This ambivalence – are Church schools a locus for evangelism? - runs right through the report's thinking.

The nature and purpose of Church of England schools

Seeing Church schools as the Church's major opportunity to serve young people (Dearing, 2001 p.12), the Report distinguishes between their 'domestic' or 'nurture' function – to offer education in a Christian context to the children of members of the Church of England – and their 'general' or 'service' function – to offer 'an education grounded in faith' to the wider community out of a concern to 'serve all humanity as children of God' (Dearing, 2001 p.13). Central to this understanding of the dual purpose of Church schools is the notion of school ethos, that 'Christian values and principles will run through every area of school life', and that pupils will 'not only learn about religion but … experience it as a living tradition and inheritance of faith' (Dearing, 2001 pp.13, 12). This offering of faith 'as a gift to be experienced' is further glossed in this way:

> The gift is Christ … [as] a community of faith the Church school should in its best expression reflect the nature of the Trinity, a life shared and defined by reference to others (Dearing, 2001 p.13).

Dearing is asking the Church to ground its educational work in theology rather than in a quest for territory; and the theological imperative is also felt in sentences like the following: 'A Christian understanding of life perceives God's creative, redemptive and transforming purpose in the whole of human activity' (Dearing, 2001 p.17); this enabling the Report to argue, in the multi-faith context of the early twenty-first century, for both the Christian distinctiveness of Church schools and for their inclusiveness, against the oppositional stances of the British Humanist Association and the National Secular Society. Theological intention is also plain in the Report's

'commitment to developing the potential of each child as an individual, made in the image of God' (Dearing, 2001 p.18).

The Dearing Report and school chaplaincy

What place, however, does Dearing give to chaplaincy in Church schools? Still thinking predominantly in terms of primary education, it seems, the Report first mentions chaplaincy like this:

> The distinctive identity of a Church school is enhanced by its relationship with a parish church ... and for many secondary schools by ... a chaplaincy ... (Dearing, 2001 p.19).

Chaplaincy, that is, may 'enhance' the identity of Church schools, but is not an essential; the Report admits the need for 'a much clearer understanding of the role of Church schools within Christian ministry' – but makes no direct contribution towards that understanding.   Chaplaincy is mentioned for the second time in the Report in the brief section on Anglican independent schools (Dearing, 2001 p.31-32); here, while it notes that a characteristic of schools which are 'Anglican by association' is 'the maintenance of an Anglican chaplaincy', Dearing is more concerned with the need to 'reappraise the place of Anglican independent schools within the Church's ministry', admitting that:

> There is a real need for the Church to re-engage with these schools, fostering a sense of belonging, and working with them to a more explicit recognition of both ordained and lay ministry in these schools, through chaplaincy, governance and the education they offer (Dearing, 2001 p.31).

Dearing's fuller reflections on chaplaincy in Church schools are set out in Chapter seven, whose title 'The ministry, the Church and the parish' reflects the traditional, parochial focus noted in my previous chapter.   Arguing that all parish clergy should be 'well-equipped for ministry in and through schools', the Report goes on to set out 'the contribution of the clergy' to a Church school in the parish, suggesting that the possibilities include: pastor to staff,

pupils and families; ex-officio governor (and, if elected, Chair of governors); leader of collective worship; consultant over collective worship and RE; chaplain and (voluntary) teacher (Dearing, 2001 p.55). What is remarkable about this list is that 'chaplain' comes almost last, and that chaplaincy is seen as a separate role from pastor and leader of collective worship: one has to ask, has Dearing really considered school chaplaincy at all?   Only his Paragraph 7.11 specifically concerns chaplains:

> A significant number of Church schools have a chaplain and we have seen how valuable this is, even though financial considerations may mean that it is likely to be for a limited number of hours a week or combined with a teaching appointment. Our attention has been drawn to the helpful practice in some Church secondary schools of having a voluntary year group chaplain (clerical or lay) ... (Dearing, 2001 p.56).

The implications of this are clear: chaplaincy in schools is not a high priority, and part-time or voluntary arrangements are likely to be favoured, for financial reasons.

Bizarrely, however, the Report goes on to commend chaplaincy in the (then) Church Colleges of Higher Education, as if this were its natural place. Higher Education chaplaincy is concerned for 'the whole corporate life of the institution'; shows 'pastoral concern for all members of the institution'; and plays a key part in 'the realising in human beings of the image of God' (Dearing, 2001 p.71).   Here, the report reveals an insightful understanding into some aspects of chaplaincy as this thesis has set them out. But it is quite extraordinary that chaplaincy in Church schools is so substantially ignored in this major educational policy document: the image of school chaplaincy as a marginal, almost disregarded ministry, is clear.

Beyond Dearing: the Church's latest thinking

If the Dearing Report was largely uninterested in school chaplaincy in Church of England schools, the recent review of its findings in the light of changed educational circumstances (Chadwick, 2012) does little to repair that impression.   Focused on structural and strategic issues in the current,

marketised context for English schools, the review does note the Church's regrettable emphasis on institutions rather than what happens within them, and also highlights the significance – though not the content – of a distinctive Christian ethos in Church schools.   However, the only mention of school chaplaincy is in a section (4.27) which commends the 'sharing of facilities' between independent schools and other Church schools, by which is meant, apparently, that the 'chapels and chaplains' of the independent schools should be made available to other Church schools. And for chaplains in maintained Church schools and academies, there will be little encouragement in the Report's comment that:

> … the [independent school] chaplains' experience of working with young people can be shared to mutual advantage with the increasing number of Church secondary school chaplains (Chadwick, 2012 p.24).

It is as if the Church of England, looking at the Church school of the future, is still unable to see any particular future significance in the ministry of school chaplaincy.

The wider context for Church schools: secularity and secularisation

The Dearing Report was clearly aware of both the multi-faith and increasingly secularised nature of the society in which Church schools are set. But just how secularised is that society? In order to understand the nature of the wider social, cultural and intellectual context which Church schools and their chaplains inhabit, it will be helpful to consider both secularisation and the multi-faith dimension.

Secularisation, 'the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance', as Bryan Wilson defines it (Wilson, 1966 p.xiv), is a long-standing if contested notion. David Martin has famously altogether disowned the term, arguing that since it is a 'tool of counter-religious ideologies' it should be 'erased from the sociological dictionary' (Martin, 1969 p.22). At a 'commonsense' level, however, it is clear that something has been going on; the Victorian religious census of 1851 found that

half the population attended church or chapel, whereas estimates of 'regular' church attendance in the first decade of the twenty-first century indicate between 6% and 15% of the population (Evangelical Alliance, 2011, WhyChurch, 2011, Brierley, 2006, Brierley, 2011).

Probably the most devastating proponents of the secularisation thesis are Steve Bruce and Callum Brown, writing early this century (Bruce, 2002, Brown, 2001). Bruce offers a compelling secularisation paradigm which sees the Reformation as the fountainhead of religious decline, and arguing that his construct:

> ... does not require secularisation to be universal or even, ... [that] it is not thinly-disguised Progressivism; [that] it is a set of associated explanations rather than a single theory .... What the paradigm does require is a long-term decline in the power, popularity and prestige of religious beliefs and rituals (Bruce, 2002 p.43-4).

Similarly compelling is Brown's thesis, which argues for a catastrophic break in religious continuity in the 1960s:

> From 1956 all indices of religiosity in Britain start to decline, and from 1963 most enter free fall ... what is taking place is not merely the continuing decline of organised Christianity, but the death of the culture which formerly conferred Christian identity upon the British people as a whole (Brown, 2001 p.188, p.193).

This sweeping and somewhat despairing vision – supported by Gordon Lynch's valedictory *After Religion* (Lynch, 2002) - is, of course, challenged, not least by the work of Grace Davie, who argues for the persistence of 'believing' without 'belonging' (Davie, 1994). Supporters of her thesis point, among other things, to the results of the 2001 Census, in which 72% of respondents nominated their religion as Christian (UK Government, 2011); and at face value this does seem to question Brown's notion of the 'death' of Christian culture – although the religious outcomes of the 2011 Census will be revealing. It is also worth mentioning the work of Voas and Crockett, however, who conclude that:

Believing without belonging was an interesting idea, but it is time for the slogan to enter honourable retirement' (Voas and Crockett, 2005 p.28).

A different kind of challenge to the Bruce/Brown thesis is offered by Jane Garnett and her colleagues (Garnett et al., 2006), who argue that:

> Christian Britain ... has not died. Rather, it has been transformed ... Christianity continues to enjoy a numerical base and cultural influence which, though greatly diminished, do not justify the application of the terminal metaphor of death .... Christianity has continued to infuse public culture and to be adopted in identity formation .... Our findings support the view that the cultural strength of religion must be separated from its institutional strength (Garnett et al., 2006 p.290).

What we might conclude from this brief survey is that while the facts of institutional commitment measured by church attendance and other indices of religiosity are clear and indicate huge decline in institutional religion, the decline of Christian *culture* is harder to quantify. If Brown's metaphor of death is unjustified, an alternative might be that of an ongoing, somewhat lingering existence, without clear prognosis.

Is there 'implicit religion' ?

Despite a strong impression of increasing secularity, some writers have posited, in what can be seen as an extension of Davie's 'believing without belonging' thesis, the existence of an ongoing 'common' or 'implicit' religion, with the (generally derogatory) term 'folk religion' sometimes being used. Edward Bailey in particular has argued for the concept of implicit religion, a notion accepted by Davie (Cf. Davie, 1990), suggesting from his own empirical studies that there is widespread evidence for 'everyday transcendence' in the lives of those who do not formally practice a religion, and that what in small-scale societies may be described as a 'sense of the sacred' or in historical societies as 'an encounter with the holy' can best be described in contemporary society as 'a commitment to the human' (Bailey, 1990 pp.495-6). However, as Davie points out, it is ironic that sociologists appear to know

so little of the beliefs of the non-practising majority population: What exactly is the nature of British 'implicit religion' (Davie, 1990 p.457)?

It has to be said that twenty years on, this remains a substantially unanswered question. The most recent attempt in the area, Nigel Rooms's *The Faith of The English*, speaks confidently of '... this innate English spirituality, sense of fairness, and desire for a better life...' (Rooms, 2011 p.120) but rests its case on no new empirical work, disappointingly relying instead on popular anthropological observation (Fox, 2004) and on the analysis of 'characteristic' English story and attitudes. Some discussion of the issue has tended to be at a speculative rather than empirical level; for example, public responses to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997, and to the Soham child murders in 2002 have been discussed in terms of implicit or ongoing religious belief and the perceived need of people to find a public, ritual or 'religious' expression for their feelings of shock and loss (Castle, 2004, Fox, 2004). There is still much to be done if the socio-cultural and belief context of our wider society is to be properly understood.

The multi-faith dimension

One important area is that of the multi-faith dimension. There are clearly sensitive issues around questions of nationality in this context, and the words 'English' and 'British' have been occasionally hi-jacked by far-right, anti-immigrant and racist groups: claiming a Christian heritage, the English Defence League displays on its website escutcheon the sign of the Cross, its motto *in hoc signo vinces* (See: English Defence League, 2012). The full range of religious adherence both overt and implicit across the racial and religious spectrum of contemporary Britain remains, however, sociologically unquarried. Peter Brierley names 'the increase of other religions' as one of his *21 Concerns for 21st Century Christians* (Brierley, 2011), and his estimates of Muslim and Hindu numbers are presented as an implied threat to Christian faith – 2.8 million Muslims and 1 million Hindus, plus another possibly 1.05 million other non-Christian religious adherents by 2020, he suggests.

Quite what the projected scale of the future multi-faith element in UK society implies for understanding the ministry of the Church of England generally, as well as specifically in its schools, is uncertain. However, it is clear that Church schools across the spectrum do include significant numbers of children from other than Christian cultures, and that chaplains in Church schools minister in what is undeniably a multi-faith culture, whatever the precise religious composition of the individual school.

The spiritual revolution?

One school of sociological thought perceives both a decline in overt religiosity and a rise in 'spirituality', often seen as an eclectic phenomenon drawing on a range of practices from different faiths and quasi-religious traditions. Notoriously hard to define, spirituality has been seen as '… the source out of which scientific curiosity, philosophy and ethics grow, as well as religion….'(Hay, 1998b p.15); and the pedigree of this understanding goes back to William James (James, 1985) via Alister Hardy and David Hay (Hardy, 1979, Hay, 1998a). A recent researcher in this tradition, Kate Hunt, frames the question, 'What happens to 'the God bit' in people when the common opinion is that institutional religion is outdated?' Hunt's small-scale research looked at '… people for whom the spiritual realm is a reality, but who feel alienated from the religious tradition of this country …'(Hunt, 2003 p.159); her data has the ring of actuality, and when her subjects speak of what it means to be spiritual, there emerges a strong sense of connectedness with others and with self, entirely separate from the doctrines of formal religion. However, there are lingering echoes of Christian belief when her subjects try to speak of God, although formal religion is seen by them as narrow and rigid (Hunt, 2003 p.164).

Moving from Hunt's small-scale research to the larger canvas of the Kendal study, Heelas and Woodhead explore in *The Spiritual Revolution: why religion is giving way to spirituality* 'how traditional forms of religion, particularly Christianity, are giving way to holistic spirituality' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.x). They argue that 'We can no longer evade the challenge of

assessing and explaining the growth of ... 'spirituality'....' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.1). Their research leads them to the conclusion that we are living through a 'spiritual revolution'; basing their theoretical approach on Charles Taylor's notion of 'the massive subjective turn of modern culture' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.97), they distinguish between 'life-as' approaches, characterised by external systems of motivation and moral control, and 'subjective-life' approaches, characterised by inner, personal validation of action. Traditional religion lies in the former category, whereas 'New Age' spiritualities lie in the latter, although they note that religious approaches which adopt a 'subjective-life' stance will be more likely to flourish, emphasising 'the sacralisation of unique subjectivities' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.31).

Although Heelas and Woodhead depend to a large, even excessive, extent on macro-level analysis, their theoretical conclusions and projections are worth consideration. Whilst it is doubtful whether 'New Age' spiritualities and their associated penumbra of personal therapies will continue to enjoy the numerical appeal across the country the authors find in the not-altogether-typical context of Kendal at the turn of the century, the drift of their analysis seems well-based. As Carette and King have pointed out, the move to subjective spiritualities is clearly now associated with larger political and economic forces, and may be almost irresistible (Carrette and King, 2005); but since September 2001 there has also been evidence of a worldwide resurgence of religious faith (See: Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2010), which has to some extent shaken the previously confident narratives of both secularisation and spiritualisation. On balance, though, it seems likely that the 'congregational domain' – formal, English denominational Christianity - will continue to shrink, while Heelas and Woodhead's 'holistic milieu' appears less likely to effect the 'spiritual revolution' the authors predict (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 pp.129ff); regrettably, there is little indication of what is likely to happen within British Muslim, Hindu and other religious cultures.

What remains particularly telling, however, is the predictive section of Heelas and Woodhead's final chapter. Their confident, concluding assertion that 'we are living through a period of unique change' may be overconfident, but their comments on churchgoing and the young are particularly relevant:

> The average age of a churchgoer is now higher than the average age in the population, and the number of young people, under 19, attending church, has halved in the last 20 years …. [In addition] … a significant and growing proportion of the children of churchgoers cease to attend as soon as they are able to do so… (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.140).

The results underpinning this are drawn from Peter Brierley's survey of 2000; the results of the 2005 survey show less Christian adherence (Brierley, 2006), and the 2010 results, reported in 'The Tablet' in 2011 less still (Lamb, 2011, Brierley, 2011). What appears clear is that even if we reject the 'spiritual revolution' claim, the authors have assembled a compelling macro-analysis of the cultural forces which are linked to ever-reducing church attendance, notably among the young. The Church is an alarmingly ageing community.

Young people's religion and spirituality

What empirical evidence is there about the impact of secularity on the young and their response to religion and spirituality? Following Harold Loukes's pioneering *Teenage Religion* (Loukes, 1961), there has been a range of further studies, the leading scholar associated with these being Leslie J Francis. His *Teenagers and the Church* (Francis, 1984) explored the relationship between the young and the institutional Church; and his subsequent *Teenage Religion and Values* (Francis and Kay, 1995) drew on large-scale survey work in schools with Year 9 and Year 10 pupils to present a picture of what those surveyed via confidential questionnaires felt both about religion and a range of social and moral issues. His quantitative research approach has clear limitations – it is very much about aggregate numbers and large statistics rather than individual stories; but in later works Francis develops his approach to reflect more directly the 'pupil voice' (Francis, 2001, Francis and Robbins, 2005). His

conclusions about the declining influence of religion among the young are clear.

In contrast to these attitudinal surveys there has been a range of more qualitative approaches. For his *Buried Spirituality* (Rankin, 2005), Phil Rankin undertook unplanned encounters with groups of young people, during which he asked his respondents whether they saw themselves as spiritual, and what they understood by that term. Although there are evident methodological problems with Rankin's work, he does interestingly describe a negative set of responses to religious institutions while at the same time intuiting from his discussions with the young that:

> ... there is clear evidence of something 'buried' among young people, something that they know about but don't often have the opportunity to reflect upon (Rankin, 2005 p.50).

Making Sense of Generation Y (Savage et al., 2006) explored through a small sample of young people aged 15 to 25 their responses to the popular arts and spirituality. The authors focus on the ways in which young people experience and envision themselves through popular culture, their research question in effect being whether people can find in popular culture 'a locale in which to encounter God' (Savage et al., 2006 p.30). They also posit the notion of two kinds of spirituality, 'formative' and 'transformative' – broadly, that which is common to all and that which has the potential to change the life of the individual person concerned (Savage et al., 2006 p.12); and they argue that while the Church does not have any meaningful contact with the majority of young people, it still has the capacity to help those it does engage with towards transformative spirituality (Savage et al., 2006 p.16).

Finding that '... traditional religious concepts and stories ... did not seem to constitute part of the young people's frame of reference', the researchers coined the phrase 'the happy midi-narrative' to describe the 'storyline' of their young people's world view: 'the universe and the social world are essentially benign and life is OK' (Savage et al., 2006 p.37-38). This world

view foregrounds friends and family, has little space for or interest in transcendence, and sees personal happiness as the key life-goal:

> … young people are happy to find meaning in their day-to-day world with family and friends, and engaging in popular culture' (Savage et al., 2006 p.53).

This is a picture of an effectively secularised generation, content without religion, unconcerned for 'spirituality' and apparently unaware of any 'God bit' (Cf. Hunt, 2003).

Young people's religion and spirituality: more recent research

More recently, Sylvia Collins-Mayo and colleagues have produced *The Faith of Generation Y* (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010). The authors' research explored, with young people who were 'un-churched' or 'de-churched', the nature of their 'everyday faith', looking particularly at whether the Christian youth work in which they participated raised their 'Christian consciousness' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.x). Drawing on the work of Francis and Kay, the authors suggest that 'growing up means becoming indifferent to religion', since young people 'get socialised into an adult world where Christianity is largely irrelevant to day-to-day living' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.7). However, as the writers note, there is a significant core of the young who attend annual youth events such as 'Soul Survivor': Christianity, they suggest, is therefore 'unlikely to disappear entirely' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010).

The young, they point out, are faced with the task of 'the construction of selfhood' in the context of the instability and fragmentation of the private realm: 'young people have to choose', they say, and 'the Christian memory is very faint' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.17-18). Their picture of the young is of a generation unconnected to religious tradition or practice, and which is self-reliant, deriving what support is needed for the business of living from 'family and friends'. Yet there is also what the authors call 'immanent faith', an idea they develop alongside the notion of 'bedroom spirituality' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.33); 'immanent faith' is a working, day-to-day trust in

family, friends, and the authentic, reflexive self; and 'bedroom spirituality' is an essentially privatised, non-doctrinal practice of individual prayer or thoughtful reflection. There are echoes of 'implicit religion' here.

In summary, the writers note that young people have generally disengaged from Christianity: 'I love me and my family and friends. No other Gods. I believe in myself' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.33). They also note that among youthful occasional churchgoers, 'benign indifference' would best describe their attitude to Christianity, although their church attendance gave some access to Christian ideas and practices, as did attendance at school assemblies and seasonal services (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.86), these memories resourcing the 'bedroom spirituality' which they describe. In terms of the impact of Christianity on the lives of this group, belief as doctrine or religious practice was unimportant to them, but a responsible, ethical life was still of significance. Only 'faint traces' of Christian belief and practice persisted (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.89).

In *Religion and Youth*, the major collection of essays and papers which she edited with Pink Dandelion (Collins-Mayo and Dandelion, 2010) Collins-Mayo and her fellow-authors explored the varieties of ways in which young people engage with religion in late-modern society. In effect, the collection consolidates rather than fundamentally changing the sociological material available. Perhaps the most characteristic comment is that recorded by Abby Day in her piece 'Believing in Belonging':

> I believe in things like love and stuff like that, feelings, more so than religious things. I don't have any beliefs on that side at all' (Day, 2010 p.99).

Together with the quotation from Collins-Mayo above, this may be taken to exemplify the self-reflexive stance of the young: not without 'immanent faith', but with little sense of the religious tradition or its potential value for personal life. The key messages are about the profound disconnection of the

young from the religious tradition and the ineffectiveness of cross-generational faith transmission.

Key concepts for understanding chaplaincy in Church of England Schools

Given this picture of the impact of secularisation on the young, of their disconnection from religious tradition, and their predominantly self-reflexive stance, what are the implications for Church schools and for chaplaincy? This chapter will close with a consideration of three relevant concepts: religious socialisation; spiritual capital, and the 'chain of memory'.

Religious socialisation

Although the Dearing Report does not use the term, 'religious socialisation' is in fact the notion underlying much of its consideration of the function of Church schools. When the report says that 'Christian values and principles will run through every area of school life', and that pupils will 'not only learn about religion but … experience it as a living tradition and inheritance of faith' (Dearing, 2001 pp.13, 12), it is in effect saying that the school is intended as a context for religious socialisation; and there is an assumption that the school's 'distinctive ethos' will be effective in achieving such socialisation. There is, however, limited evidence in this whole area, and it has been argued that there is:

> … a distinctive and pressing need for further research on the impact of a Christian school's ethos on students' beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and spiritual development. (Walford, 2009);

a view spelled out by Elizabeth Green in her booklet *Mapping the Field* (Green, 2009).

However, 'ethos' is an increasingly significant term. Maintained Church schools have been required since 1998 to include in their Instrument of Government 'a description of the ethos of the school' (Her Majesty's Government, 1998 Sch.12.1 (1) (g)); but 'ethos' is by no means a

straightforward concept. Caitlin Donnelly notes that it is 'a fashionable but nebulous term … very resistant to satisfactory definition' (Donnelly, 2000 p.134). Her own analysis distinguishes between the formally declared ethos of a school and what is 'located in the realms of social interaction'; and she argues that this is always dynamic, a process rather than a state. In his study specifically exploring the educative importance of ethos, Terence McLaughlin notes the Government view that 'schools with a strong sense of identity or ethos perform best' (McLaughlin, 2005 p.306), but argues that the concept of ethos is notoriously difficult to analyse. Seeing it as 'the prevalent or characteristic tone, spirit or sentiment' of a school, whose influence is seen in 'the shaping of human perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, disposition and the like' (McLaughlin, 2005 p.311-2), he goes on to suggest that ethos has clear resonances with Bourdieu's notion of *habitus*:

> … the deep-structured cultural dispositions within a community or an institution, which are part of primary socialisation and habit-formation …' (McLaughlin, 2005 p.314).

We can thus see ethos as a key element in religious socialisation, but the term 'religious socialisation' is scarcely self-explanatory. Jordi Collet Sabe (Collet Sabe, 2007) contrasts an older, 'classic' model of socialisation, centred on transmission –the passive reception by pupils of a content-based 'package' of instruction - with a newer model of 'complex' socialisation, in which the pupil is an active participant. In educational terms, we could say that the older model equates to catechism, the newer to learning through ethos, the social, emotional and value context of the school – in short, just what the Dearing Report speaks of. Collet Sabe's understanding of the late-modern religious context sees it as having a 'dynamic of subjectification of beliefs' where '… all the worlds share contingency, relativity and doubt …' (Collet Sabe, 2007 p.100,103); and his argument is that in this context, the nature of religious socialisation has adapted from the older, catechetical model.

A related perspective is that of Paul Vermeer (Vermeer, 2009), who argues that the socialising task of denominational schools is not so much to transmit

faith but rather to facilitate the formation of personal identity. Vermeer is emphatic that:

> All denominational schools can and should do is to present a religious perspective as a valuable and meaningful way of interpreting one's life story, of answering the questions: 'Who am I?' and 'Who will I be in the future?' (Vermeer, 2009 p.211).

This is a way of looking at religious socialisation that echoes the thinking of Dearing about providing a 'basis for choice' for Christian commitment (Dearing, 2001 p.12); but greater understanding of the part played by school ethos in the intended process of religious socialisation is needed, and a further dimension of this is the specific part played by school chaplaincy. The Bloxham/OxCEPT research offers some preliminary indications, as will become clear.

Spiritual capital

The term 'spiritual capital' needs clarification. Heelas and Woodhead use the term 'sacred capital' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.133), in relation to people who have been 'brought up with a religious faith' at home, at school or at church: so 'sacred capital' refers to the understanding of faith people have acquired through any of these key agents of socialisation. This use is derived from Pierre Bourdieu, who in contrast to Marx's definition of 'capital', uses the term to refer not only to economic wealth, but also to the non-material resources of status, prestige, valued knowledge, and privileged relationships: all goods, both material and symbolic, that are seen as worthy of being sought after in a particular society.

Bourdieu places religion concretely – materially – in the world of culture and social struggle; in effect, in a competitive marketplace. It is from this context that his concept of 'sacred capital' arises: in the competitive world of religion, he suggests, there is a struggle over material and symbolic resources, and specifically over 'sacred capital'; so for Bourdieu, 'sacred capital' represents the (contested) authority to exercise religious power over others

(Urban, 2003 passim.). Berger and Hefner propose the notion of 'spiritual' as opposed to 'sacred' capital: 'Spiritual capital might be thought of as a sub-species of social capital, referring to the power, influence, knowledge, and dispositions created by participation in a particular religious tradition' (Berger and Hefner, 2003 p.2).

The term 'spiritual capital' has also been used by Chris Baker and Hannah Skinner in their *Faith in Action*, a report on their research project into the engagement of churches with civil society in Manchester (Baker and Skinner, 2006). Their definition sees 'spiritual capital' as 'the motivating basis of faith, belief and values (sometimes expressed in tangible forms as worship, credal statements and articles of faith, or more intangibly as one's own 'spirituality') that shapes the actions of faith communities', and distinguishes it from 'religious capital', defined as 'the concrete actions and resources that faith communities contribute as a direct result of their spiritual capital'(Baker and Skinner, 2006 p.5). *Faith in Action* highlights the distinctive, faith-inspired contributions which churches contribute to their local communities in an era of change and regeneration; the authors argue that:

> … spiritual capital … is … a resource that individuals and faith groups can access for their own personal well-being, but also 'donate' as a gift to the wider community'. It refers to the 'values, ethics, beliefs and vision which faith communities bring to civil society at the global and local level (Baker and Skinner, 2006 p.11-12).

In the context of Church school education, I propose a specific and rather different understanding of 'spiritual capital' as: 'the attitudes, values, ethics, beliefs and vision acquired by pupils as a consequence of their life in the school community'. I suggest also that one of the intentions of a Church school is to endow its pupils with spiritual capital – not to convert them to personal faith, but to provide sufficient understanding of faith and faith-based attitudes, and sufficient personal experience of faith practices such as prayer and worship, to enable them to grasp the significance of religious ideas, to be religiously literate, to be sensitive to the faith stance of others, and to acquire respect for faith practice.

In this sense, spiritual capital is a good – not (*pace* Bourdieu) a competitive good, but a good with transformative potential, a 'gift' (as the Dearing Report has it) for those who have the opportunity of a Church school education. Equally, it is not unrelated to a notion of 'cultural capital': the transmission of 'Christian cultural capital' would be another way of describing the process I have in mind. Clearly, some 'spiritual capital' will be passed to pupils through the process of learning about religions and faith in the context of Religious Education; some will be passed through the customs and practices of the school community; but a key role is potentially that of the school chaplain, who as liturgical leader as well as pastoral minister will be the chief public representative and exemplar of – and apologist for – Christian faith within the community.

The 'chain of memory'

The third concept of special relevance to the role of Church schools and of chaplaincy within them is the notion of corporate memory, described in her analysis of religion by the French sociologist Danièle Hervieu-Léger as the 'chain of memory' (Hervieu-Léger, 2000). What is particularly refreshing about Hervieu-Léger's work is that it brings to bear on the crisis of religion in late modernity a clear analytical intelligence that notes both loss and reconstruction of religion, doing justice to the full complexity of the religious situation. Her definition highlights two key features of religion, that it is both individual and corporate, and that it is continuous across generations.

> ... a religion is an ideological, practical and symbolic system through which consciousness, both individual and collective, of belonging to a particular chain of belief is constituted, maintained, developed and controlled (Hervieu-Léger, 2000 p.82).

At the core of Hervieu-Léger's argument is the view that 'collective memory' is mobilised in religion. She writes:

> At the source of all religious belief ... there is belief in the continuity of the lineage of believers ... affirmed and manifested in the essentially

religious act of recalling a past which gives meaning to the present and contains the future. The practice of *anamnesis*, of the recalling to memory of the past, is most often observed as a rite … the regular repetition of a ritually set pattern of word and gesture … with the recall of the foundational events that enabled the chain to form … (Hervieu-Léger, 2000 p.125).

The heritage of Christian faith and ritual might have been specifically designed for the situation in which individuals now find themselves in Hervieu-Léger's reading of late modernity:

> … individuals are adrift in a universe without fixed bearings. Their world is no longer one they can construct together. Self-fulfilment is now the chief aim, the subjective unification of fragmented experience that corresponds to different sectors of activity and different social relations. Given such a context, the deliberate choice of invoking the authority of a tradition, by becoming incorporated in to a continuing lineage, constitutes one possible, post-traditional way of constructing self-identity among others, all of which call upon an individual's affectivity and are fed on his or her search for community, and his or her memories and longings (Hervieu-Léger, 2000 p.165).

Although she notes the strength of affective and expressive styles of Christian belief, the clear drift of her argument is that institutional, historical religion has the potential to call people into a meaningful relationship both with one another and with those who have preceded, and will succeed, them in the 'chain of memory'. And her implied 'ideal type' of rite of anamnesis is the Eucharist: it is arguable therefore that one of the chief tasks of Church schools is to enable pupils to enter meaningfully into the Eucharist so as to become incorporated in the 'chain of memory' (Cf. Williams, 2004). The core, foundational rite of Christian faith has huge inherent significance and the role of school chaplains in making the Eucharist accessible and meaningful to pupils is a vital responsibility, one which is to do with forging links between those who participate in the rite today and those who have done so in the past.

Conclusion

Despite the Church's inability in the context of the Dearing Report to take seriously the potential of school chaplaincy, the concepts of religious socialisation, of spiritual capital and of the 'chain of memory' offer important ways of seeing how the ministry of chaplaincy may be hugely significant in the development of the young. A chaplain is potentially a key personal agent of religious socialisation, and his or her contribution to the formation of the young in the context of the Church school is potentially a central one. Given the strong sense in the empirical literature on youth spirituality that the young have little idea of the religious tradition or its potential value for personal life, a clear 'spiritual deficit' is evident, disconnecting the young from the resources of faith and reinforcing the case for taking religious socialisation seriously. If religious socialisation may be seen as part of the function of the school's whole culture, chaplains have the particular task of planning, arranging and leading corporate worship – one of the key elements in the articulation and public celebration of the school's spiritual values and beliefs. It is, I believe, arguable that the impact of regular, corporate worship on the young – designed to be accessible and yet able to 'link heaven and earth' – may be both long-lasting and formative in the development of values, attitudes and behaviours; and thus the personal role of a chaplain in the process of religious socialisation may be very considerable.

Similarly, although a chaplain may not individually be responsible for endowing pupils with spiritual capital, this being again a function of the whole culture and corporate life of the school community, his or her role as a religious representative, a teacher of the faith, a catechist and apologist, will play a key, personal part in the transmission of the Christian cultural and spiritual inheritance among pupils. And when we consider the 'chain of memory', it is arguable that an ordained chaplain may through the celebration of the Eucharist be in a position to link pupils culturally and spiritually into that chain, as they experience the *anamnesis* of the liturgy. It is as if the whole mission of Church schools could be potentially actualised

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and embodied in the life and ministry of the school chaplain.   The following chapter will set out the philosophy, rationale and methodology of the research which explored these issues.

Chapter 4: Researching school chaplaincy: philosophy, rationale and methodology

In my first three chapters I set out the professional context, origins and intentions of the school chaplaincy research; located school chaplaincy within the theological context of mission, ministry and chaplaincy; and examined the policy context of Church of England schools and the wider context of secularity, proposing the particular significance of the sociological concepts of religious socialisation, spiritual capital and 'the chain of memory' for understanding Church schools and the task of school chaplaincy. I shall now move to the rationale and methodology of the research; first setting out a broad philosophical stance, drawing on Polanyi's notion of 'personal knowledge', and then refining that stance in relation specifically to qualitative research in practical theology, where the work of Swinton and Mowat forms a significant element in the argument.   I shall also consider the implications of 'insider research' and defend my methodology against critiques of this approach.   Taking an interpretive or hermeneutic stance, I shall describe the research methods chosen, explaining the processes of data-gathering and analysis, and concluding with an affirmation of the truthfulness of the research data which subsequent chapters will discuss.

The nature of knowledge: the contribution of Michael Polanyi

Polanyi's rejection of the positivistic approach to knowledge, which understands it as an objective reality uninfluenced by the action or perception of the knower, is a core foundation of qualitative research. In his *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Polanyi, 1962) Polanyi sets out to enquire into 'the nature and justification of scientific knowledge', beginning by 'rejecting the ideal of scientific detachment' and seeking 'an alternative ideal for knowledge'.   Knowing, he asserts, is '... an active comprehension of the things known, an action that requires skill ....'; it involves '... the personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding' (Polanyi, 1962 p.vii).

In a passage which powerfully undermines the supposed 'objective' nature of scientific knowledge, Polanyi argues that:

> ... personal knowledge in science is not made but discovered, and as such it claims to establish contact with reality beyond the clues on which it relies. It commits us, passionately and far beyond our comprehension, to a vision of reality. Of this responsibility we cannot divest ourselves by setting up objective criteria of verifiability – or falsifiability, or testability, or what you will. For we live in it as in the garment of our own skin... (Polanyi, 1962 p.64).

How, though, can the embracing of a notion of 'personal knowledge' be prevented from sliding into mere subjectivism? For Polanyi, this is about intellectual commitment:

> It is the act of commitment in its full structure that saves personal knowledge from being merely subjective. Intellectual commitment is a responsible decision, in submission to the compelling claims of what in good conscience I conceive to be true (Polanyi, 1962 p.65).

However, this is not to dismiss the importance of verification. Polanyi goes on to argue that '... it is justifiable ... to speak of the verification of science by experience'; and he is careful to differentiate between verification and '... the process by which other systems than science are tested and finally accepted ... a process of validation.' Both verification and validation, he argues,

> ... are everywhere an acknowledgement of a commitment: they claim the presence of something real and external to the speaker. As distinct from both of these, subjective experiences can only be said to be authentic ... (Polanyi, 1962 p.202).

The robust architecture of Polanyi's intellectual system is compelling, and underlies the position taken in this chapter: that in social science research, and specifically in using qualitative research methods in the pursuit of an understanding of the nature of school chaplaincy, it is not verifiability but validity which is the key criterion. At the same time, his warning that

subjectivity can yield only authenticity is one which should chasten the researcher in pursuit of the truth.

Practical theology and qualitative research

'The focus of the practical theological task is the quest for truth…', say Swinton and Mowat (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.25), and they go on to argue that the quest for truth is best pursued in a practical theological context through qualitative research (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.28). But 'truth' is not some abstract ideal for them, since the aim of practical theology, they suggest, is to 'change the world' through 'the development and maintenance of faithful and transformative practice in the world' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.25). They adopt as their description of qualitative research the formulation of Denzin and Lincoln:

> Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach … qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998 p.3, quoted p.29, Swinton and Mowat, 2006).

In a sentence which echoes aspects of Polanyi's thinking, they say that qualitative research assumes that '… human beings are by definition 'interpretive creatures''; that is:

> … the ways in which we make sense of the world and our experiences within it involve a constant process of interpretation and meaning-seeking (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.29).

Seeing the world as '… the locus of complex interpretive processes in which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences including their experiences of God' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.30), the writers go on to identify 'narrative-as-knowledge', arguing that

> … for the qualitative researcher, narrative knowledge is perceived to be a legitimate, rigorous and valid form of knowledge that informs us about the world in ways which are publicly significant. Stories are not

simply meaningless personal anecdotes; they are important sources of knowledge (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.38).

At this point I want to highlight the strong affinity between the approach taken by Swinton and Mowat and my own pattern of thinking as a former teacher of English: the notion of the 'human truth' of imaginative literature, of its capacity in story, poem, novel or play to reveal what has previously been hidden or unknown, is central to the 'humanistic' tradition of English studies. As L C Knights, a distinguished exponent of this tradition, puts it:

> … literature is a form of knowledge, an irreplaceable way of arriving at truths that are of the highest importance to us if we are to remain, or try to become, adequately human (Knights, 1981 p.217).

What links Swinton and Mowat's insistence on the validity of story, and Knights' conviction that literature is a form of knowledge - capable of both authenticity and validity - is a fundamental belief in the significance of the personal narrative, the individual story. This is at heart a humanistic stance, trusting the person, even when interrogating the narrative with suspicion. It is a stance shared by the Australian practical theologian Terry Veling, who in his *Practical Theology: 'On Earth as It Is in Heaven'* (Veling, 2005) commends an 'artful' and interpretivist, hermeneutical approach.   Veling argues that theology is:

> … a practice that requires a transformation from the technique of a method into the artfulness of a craft … at some point we must move beyond the world of methodological application into the riskier and yet more creative world of artfulness (Veling, 2005 p.26).

Citing Gadamer in *Truth and Method* (Gadamer, 1989), Veling writes of his concern:

> … to reclaim the practice of interpretation as an art concerned with truth rather than simply a method concerned with determining or replicating a "correct" outcome or a "correct" reading. As if reading a poem, for example, or a passage from scripture, could ever be reduced to a purely detached and unmoved theoretical investigation (Veling, 2005 p.27).

The fundamental claim being made is that truth is accessible both through the human arts and through inter-personal enquiry, through the imaginative depiction of human lives and through listening to, interrogating and interpreting the narratives – the testimony – of individual people. As Veling suggests, drawing on the thinking of David Tracy, 'to be human is to be a skilled interpreter' (Veling, 2005 p.23); and, it is further arguable, this process of 'skilled interpretation' is what as human beings we bring to the living of our spiritual and inter-personal lives: we interpret in the light of our accumulated understanding of life the words of the religious tradition as well as the words and actions of those among whom we live. But this is not in essence a subjective or individualistic enterprise; as the English critic F R Leavis insisted, it is a question of 'the common pursuit of true judgement' (Leavis, 1962 p.v), of asking the question 'This is so, is it not?'; that is, interrogating 'data' with a questioning and open mind.

The implications of this stance for qualitative research in practical theology are well spelled out by Swinton and Mowat:

> Qualitative research seeks to create deep and rich insights into the meanings that people place on particular forms of experience. In order to access those experiences, it is necessary to engage in forms of deep conversation that will elicit this knowledge. Such conversation is necessarily deep, intense and rich … (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.63).

As will become clear in the following description of the rationale and research methods employed in the school chaplaincy research project, the approach throughout was predominantly qualitative, in an attempt to discover through 'artful' and respectful interpretation of data, what meanings are placed on their experience by those both engaged in and receiving this ministry.

'Insider research' and validity

There is, however, one further preliminary question: whether the fact that the research was carried out by someone working within the professional context – as an 'insider' - compromises its reliability; and the definition of 'insider' in this context needs some clarification. Pauline Rooney argues in a

helpful overview article that 'insider research', where the researcher has a direct involvement or connection with the research setting,

> ... has been the cause of much debate and scrutiny. Questions that frequently arise include: What effect does the researcher's insider status have on the research process? Is the validity of the research compromised (Rooney, 2005 para1)?

Rooney suggests a range of contexts in which a researcher can be categorised as an 'insider': professionals may carry out a study in their work setting — 'practitioner research'; researchers may be a member of the community they are studying or they may become an accepted member after a period with the community. Collaborative research — where researcher and subject are both actively involved in carrying out research — exemplifies the `blurring of boundaries' between researcher and researched which may prompt allegations of invalidity; but such boundaries are entirely obliterated when the researcher becomes the subject of study, as in personal narrative, or auto-ethnography. It is important, given this range of possible 'insider' contexts, to be clear about the 'insider' status of my own school chaplaincy research.

This was clearly not 'practitioner research' in the strict sense, since as the researcher I was not directly studying my own work, or seeking to bring change to bear in it through targeted action research. Similarly, although in a general sense the research was carried out collaboratively, that is, with the collaboration of school chaplains, it could not be considered 'collaborative research' in Rooney's definition. The research was also clearly not auto-ethnography, although the fact that I had myself earlier been licensed and practised as a school chaplain meant that some of my own experience and understanding was inevitably brought to the research project. Of Rooney's options, the nearest to describing the school chaplaincy research is where the researcher '... may be a member of the community they are studying or ... may become an accepted member after a period with the community.' From my first acquaintance with school chaplains as a group, at the conference of the (then) largely independent school based School Chaplains' Conference in 2006, I found myself warmly accepted as an 'insider'; and increasingly over

my years as director of the Bloxham Project I was both accepted within the professional community of school chaplains and able to contribute to it.

Nonetheless, Rooney's questions about the validity of 'insider research' are worth noting; she asks:

> Will the researcher's relationships with subjects have a negative impact on the subject's behaviour such that they behave in a way that they would not normally?
> Will the researcher's tacit knowledge lead them to misinterpret data or make false assumptions?
> Will the researcher's insider knowledge lead them to make assumptions and miss potentially important information?
> Will the researcher's politics, loyalties, or hidden agendas lead to misrepresentations?
> Will the researcher's moral/political/cultural standpoints lead them to subconsciously distort data (Rooney, 2005 para 3)?

I have noted above Polanyi's warnings about subjectivity producing 'authenticity' rather than 'validity' (Polanyi, 1962 p.202). In a similar way, Rooney's questions are chastening to the researcher; in particular, I had clearly to be aware of the possibility that my own 'tacit knowledge' or my cultural and theological standpoint could lead to the misinterpretation or distortion of data.

This further, important question of misrepresentation or bias is well explored by Hammersley and Gomm (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997). Considering the concept of bias, they note the danger of a researcher interpreting data in terms of a theory they are developing, a possibility they note can arise through the questions asked in an interview, or as a result of the way they are asked. They argue:

> ... qualitative inquiry ... is often thought to be particularly prone to [bias], not least because here, as is often said, 'the researcher is the research instrument'. Thus, one widely recognized danger in the context of ethnography is that if the researcher 'goes native' he or she will interpret events solely from the point of view of particular participants, taking over any biases that are built into their perspectives (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997 para. 1.8).

However, whilst this danger is identified, they also reassert the foundational values of the research enterprise, arguing for the importance of 'judgement' about the plausibility and credibility of evidence, and of the key place of 'communal assessment', and they insist that:

> ... once researchers are engaged in their work they must be primarily concerned with producing knowledge ... [and] ... while they need to take account of ethical and strategic considerations that relate to other values, truth is the only value that constitutes the goal of research (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997 para 4.12).

If indeed truth is the only value that constitutes the goal of research, the researcher must, even while submitting findings to the 'communal assessment' of the research and wider communities, ultimately use his or her own judgement with integrity: research is not simply an intellectual, but also significantly a moral enterprise. To this extent, the rigorous moralism of the Leavis school of thought about literary criticism – 'the common pursuit of true judgement' (Leavis, 1962) – is one which should characterise the research endeavour. Nor is 'going native' to be seen as necessarily an impediment to the pursuit of truth. In their important contribution to the 'insider research' debate, Brannick and Coughlan argue 'in defence of being native' (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007).

Brannick and Coughlan challenge the view that insider researchers are native to the setting and therefore prone to being too close for valid research, and show convincingly how insider research, in whatever research tradition it is undertaken, is not only valid and useful but also provides important knowledge which other approaches may not be able to uncover. In their view:

> ... insider research is not problematic in itself and is respectable research in whatever paradigm it is undertaken (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007 p.71).

In summary, my methodological stance derives from the notion of 'personal knowledge' first identified by Polanyi; is supported by the work of Swinton and Mowat on practical theology and qualitative research; and is underlined by Veling's work in the hermeneutical tradition of Gadamer. At the same

time, it has parallels in the literary-critical thinking of Knights and Leavis, with their emphasis on the significance both of the truth-telling capacity of story, and of the 'common pursuit of true judgement'. As 'insider research', it is able to bring an understanding of the context of school chaplaincy, whilst being committed to 'producing knowledge' about this ministry rather than justifying a pre-determined theory. This stance acknowledges the commitment of the researcher to the value of truth, and the necessity of a self-critical reflexivity in the researcher, particularly in the process of the analysis and interpretation of research data.

School chaplaincy research: the overall research rationale

Having set out my methodological approach, I now turn to the rationale, research design and methods employed in the research. The fundamental intention, as I made clear earlier, was to throw light on the practice of chaplaincy in Church of England schools in all sectors of the education system. The research rationale was developed with the Bloxham Project/OxCEPT research reference group, which met on five occasions between January 2009 and February 2011. I wanted to ensure that the research process enabled practitioners working in school chaplaincy to have for the first time a voice, so that their own, experienced understanding of the nature of their ministry and its significance could be articulated and shared.   This rationale required exploration of the personal narratives of practitioners; and the research design, in line with the research practice commended by Swinton and Mowat, incorporated a range of methods focusing in this direction. Swinton and Mowat, citing both Flick (Flick, 1998) and Denzin and Lincoln (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998), argue that:

> ... qualitative research is best done when it utilises multiple approaches ... the use of multiple methods is an important part of the process of validating qualitative research (Swinton and Mowat, 2006 p.50).

My aim was to secure through using a range of methods data offering deep insights into the practitioner perspective.

It was agreed with the research reference group that I should initially undertake a series of scoping interviews to identify some of the key issues for school chaplaincy. Subsequently, the research would continue with a full literature survey; a series of in-depth interviews with individual school chaplains in a cross-section of schools in all sectors; and a national on-line survey of all contactable school chaplains, incorporating a strongly qualitative element. Finally, in order to sample the 'client perspective' on school chaplaincy, focus-group interviews with school pupils would be undertaken.

The initial scoping interviews

The initial scoping interviews took place in February and March 2009, in three independent schools (two boarding, one mainly day); in three maintained Church of England secondary schools; and in two academies. In each case a semi-structured interview was conducted with either the chaplain, the head/principal or with both post-holders together. There were two individual interviews with academy principals; two individual interviews with academy chaplains; two joint interviews with Church of England secondary heads and chaplains; one interview with a Church of England secondary head and deputy in the absence of their chaplain, who was on sick leave; and three interviews with independent school chaplains: a total of ten interviews. These interviews were for me a re-introduction to the research experience; an ethical framework derived from the values of OxCEPT and the Bloxham Project provided the context, and interviews themselves were conducted informally, with interviewees consenting verbally both to their participation and to my taking detailed written notes (rather than full recordings). It was made plain that these were introductory, 'scoping' interviews, carried out in order to gain indicative insights, but a clear question schedule was employed (See Appendix E).

The scoping interviews proved constructive. Interviewees were keen to share their perceptions and initial questions prompted long, reflective and often complex responses, especially from individual chaplains, as if the interview

had provided the unfamiliar opportunity to reflect with another on the nature of their chaplaincy role. Heads or principals were equally forthcoming, and eager to convey their understanding of the chaplaincy in their school. In shared interviews, however, with both head and chaplain, the head took a clear lead, and it was noticeable that in these situations chaplains were perhaps understandably less forthcoming.

These interviews yielded important pointers. Reflection on the interview data brought out a number of issues about the nature of school chaplaincy and the framework within which it operated, including: the school's relation to the diocese and its mission; the nature of job descriptions, contracts and accountability for chaplains; the range of implicit theologies and models of school chaplaincy; the resourcing of school chaplaincy; the place of chaplains within the school; and the value added by school chaplaincy.

Reviewing the literature

I next conducted a literature review, using both on-line and library facilities at Regents Park College, Oxford, and King's College, London. This review led me into new theological areas as I explored thinking in the fields of mission, ministry and chaplaincy, prompting me significantly to revise and update my theological understanding of the Church's ministerial enterprise. As the early weeks and months of the research project elapsed, I continued to work with school chaplains through the Bloxham Project, but was now asking more probing questions about the nature of their work within the wider contexts of mission and ministry. The scoping interviews and the literature together presented me with a kind of interactive stimulus for new questioning about chaplaincy in schools, which meant that I approached the subsequent stages of the research with a heightened sense of the significance of what I was about to undertake: what did those practising this ministry really think and feel about the nature of their work? I set out with an 'open mind' (Denscombe, 2005 p.111) to gather good, valid data and to produce genuine, new knowledge of school chaplaincy though the analysis of those data. This was 'seeking the truth' about chaplaincy in schools as its practitioners

understood it, and I was clear it had great potential significance for the Church.

The interview sample and procedure

I approached the in-depth interviews in the light of Swinton and Mowat's insistence on the need to '… create deep and rich insights into the meanings that people place on particular forms of experience …', and I was also mindful of their view that:

> Interviews are concentrated human encounters that take place between the researcher who is seeking knowledge and the research participant who is willing to share their experience and knowledge. Such encounters are designed to enable the researcher to access and understand the unique meanings, interpretations and perspectives that the participant places on the chosen subject (Swinton and Mowat 2006, p.63-4).

A preliminary issue, however, was how to select a balanced and fair sample, especially given the diversity of practice and context in school chaplaincy which I had already encountered in my work with the Bloxham Project and which had become clearer from the scoping interviews. I had already formed a hypothesis that school chaplaincy was a ministry whose nature was highly dependent on two particularities, the context of the particular school and the person of the individual chaplain; and this reinforced for me the necessity of ensuring that there was as wide a spread of chaplains interviewed as possible, both in terms of school context and of person. I was also in the position of having the ongoing work of the Bloxham Project to lead, so interviews would need to be dovetailed into my normal work pattern. In the event, I set out to interview twenty chaplains in the three-month period end-December 2009 to end-March 2010, although regrettably the two final interviews planned for the end of March just before the end of the school term had to be cancelled because of illness.

I selected my sample partly on the basis of prior knowledge of those working in school chaplaincy who might be prepared to be interviewed, and partly

with the assistance of diocesan officers in four dioceses, who made suggestions of chaplains it would be helpful to contact. Although there was arguably an *ad hoc* element in the sample selected, since not every request made for a research interview may be granted, I believe the sample finally secured is genuinely comprehensive and representative. It covers: male and female chaplains (twelve male and six female); both ordained and lay (sixteen ordained and two lay); in both Church of England comprehensive schools (ten, with one of these being a Voluntary Controlled rather than Voluntary Aided school), independent schools (seven), and a new academy; covering city/urban contexts (five), town/suburban contexts (twelve), and the countryside (one); and located in seven of the forty-four dioceses of the Church of England.

The following table sets out the chaplains interviewed; location is indicated simply by the letters N, S, E, and W, representing broadly the North, South, East or West of England:

Chapl	Ordained/ lay	Male/ female	School type	Location
1	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Town, S
2	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day	Suburban, S
3	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city S
4	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Town, S
5	Ordained	Male	Independent day/boarding	Town, E
6	Ordained	Male	Independent day/boarding	Town, E
7	Ordained	Male	Independent day/boarding	Town, S
8	Ordained	Male	Independent day/boarding	Rural, S
9	Lay	Male	C of E academy	Town, S
10	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city N
11	Ordained	Female	Independent day/boarding	Town, N
12	Ordained	Male	Independent day/boarding	Town, S
13	Lay	Male	C of E comprehensive	Town, W
14	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Town, W
15	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
16	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
17	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
18	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city S

In-depth interviews produce personal information which is potentially sensitive, and it was necessary for me to seek ethical permission for the interviews from Anglia Ruskin University. This having been obtained, I sought 'in principle' agreement to their participation from interviewees, ensuring each interviewee was given a full participant information sheet and had signed a participant consent form (See Appendix F). Key restrictions imposed by the ethical framework related to the need for confidentiality and a guarantee that the research would not lead to any publication in which any individual research participants would be identified; for this reason, no individual chaplains or pupils are identified in the following chapters.

I carried out the interviews in the schools where chaplains were employed, usually in the privacy of the chaplain's office or in the chapel area; interviews were digitally recorded, and I also took brief written notes. The interviews were semi-structured, with a question schedule reflecting the issues emerging from the scoping interviews (See Appendix F). Additionally, I included questions about the chaplains' understanding of the priorities among their different ministerial functions, in order to test the accuracy and relevance of the Bloxham Project's functional typology of school chaplaincy: how true to the lived professional experience of school chaplains was the functional analysis which the Project proposed? Interviews ranged in length from thirty-nine minutes to an hour and eight minutes, the median duration being fifty minutes. This produced in all some sixteen hours of recorded material, and given this large quantity, I decided to undertake partial rather than complete transcription of the recordings. In all, I transcribed some 30,000 words of data from the interviews, and I have retained the digital recordings for any further, future analysis.

The resulting interview data has strong validity, I believe. The schedule gave a purposeful but unobtrusive shape to the interviews, a sense of their being genuine conversations, which I experienced as 'concentrated human encounters' (Swinton and Mowat 2006, p.63-4); chaplains appeared to speak openly and trustingly, in some instances with a considerable degree of

personal feeling, and to make comments in the confidential context which they would not have done in a more open forum. However, I took care to avoid seeking 'an authentic gaze into the soul of another', which Silverman identifies as a key danger in research interviews (Silverman, 2006 p.128). The chaplains spoke with reflective care, appearing to develop and refine their understanding of aspects of their work in the process of articulation; and reviewing the data I conclude that it has both genuine authenticity and validity. Emerging from chaplains across a fair cross-section of the widely differing contexts in which Church of England school chaplaincy is practised, in all sectors of education, it is the first research evidence we have of what chaplaincy in schools is actually about.

The national survey of school chaplains

From the interviews with school chaplains I went on to identify four key areas for further exploration: the school and employment context of school chaplains; their understanding of their role and function; their theological heritage; and their understanding of their relation to the wider Church. These questions would be explored through the national on-line survey by which I intended to contact all those working in chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools. Given the aim to allow the voice of chaplains to be heard, I constructed a questionnaire which used a range of questioning styles, including attitudinal questions using Likert scales and also free response, sentence-completion questions. The aim was to ensure that despite the quantitative nature of the research instrument – a survey questionnaire – it should produce so far as possible qualitative data.

As part of the preparation for the survey, the Bloxham Project's part-time administrator had been working to develop from all the available sources a full, e-mail contact database of all those engaged in chaplaincy in Church of England schools. The questionnaire (See Appendix G) was uploaded onto the website SurveyMonkey in August 2010 (See: SurveyMonkey, 2012), and e-mail invitations to complete the survey on-line were then sent in early October to all school chaplains in the academies, maintained and independent sectors of

education who were recorded on the database. In all, e-mail contact was attempted with 367 school chaplains, with 296 e-mails sent to a named person identified as chaplain, and a further 71 e-mails sent to a school identified as a Church school or one having chaplaincy provision, with a request that it be forwarded to the chaplain. A further 15 schools were contacted by letter, making in all an attempt to approach 382 individuals. In addition, a link was placed on the Bloxham website, enabling chaplains to participate who had heard about the survey, but who had not – for whatever reason - received a personal invitation. The database of 367 schools and chaplains comprised 242 independent schools; 108 maintained schools; and 17 academies.

The survey questionnaire was active on-line during the months of October and November 2010, during which period 218 school chaplains followed the electronic link from their personal e-mail invitation or from the Bloxham website to begin it. This represents a response rate of 57% of those initially contacted.   SurveyMonkey shows exactly how many respondents drop out at any stage of a questionnaire, and there was a clear pattern of respondents dropping out as they worked through the questionnaire. All 218 initial respondents completed Section A of the questionnaire, which asked for factual responses to questions about the chaplain's employment context; but Section B, which asked for responses to questions about the different functions of school chaplaincy, and invited a personal perspective via a sentence-completion question, was completed by only 173 respondents. Section C, which sought responses on aspects of the theological roots of chaplaincy practice, was completed by fewer still - 165 chaplains; and the final Section D was completed by 160 chaplains, leaving an overall completion rate of 160 out of 218, or 73.4%.   This represents a good response rate of 42% of those with whom contact was initially attempted.

The drop-out rate is understandable. In a busy school life, questionnaires are likely to be unpopular with practitioners, and so the starting figure of 218 reflected an encouraging level of initial response. That all the starters completed Section A, with its factual and contextual basis and simple tick-

box, option-selection and yes/no answers, is unsurprising. In Section B, however, chaplains were faced with having to prioritise the six aspects of school chaplaincy set out in the Bloxham Project's functional typology, and then to respond to statements by indicating on a Likert scale the extent of their agreement or disagreement with them: a question demanding real thought. This was followed by an invitation to chaplains to write about the core of their work – a question which required, in addition, further personal reflection. The progressively more demanding nature of this section would explain why it saw a substantial level of drop-out.

Once Section B had been tackled, Sections C and D offered few additional difficulties. Section C invited chaplains to indicate the significance for them of various aspects of the theological inheritance of the Christian faith in an attempt to discern the roots of their espoused theology; and the following questions – again employing statements and seeking agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale, and inviting a personal free response to the question 'What inspires and sustains your ministry?' – enabled almost all chaplains who had reached that point to complete the section, only seven chaplains not completing this section who had finished the previous one. Similarly, the final Section D saw only a further five chaplains drop out. Given the very significant falling-off from Section A into Section B, the fact that the three final sections largely sustained these numbers was encouraging.

The survey results were given prominence in the interim report on the research project, published by OxCEPT and the Bloxham Project in June 2011 (Caperon, 2011b; see Appendix D). It is however important to express some reservations about the data. Chaplains responding to the survey did not constitute a carefully-designed, representative cross-section of those working in school chaplaincy but instead a self-selected group of those deciding to respond.   On the other hand, they did not constitute a truly 'random' sample (See Denscombe, 2005 pp.11-12); and it is well to bear in mind in this context the caution expressed by Denscombe in relation to smaller samples:

> Extra attention needs to be paid to the issue of how representative the sample is, and special caution is needed about the extent to which generalisations can be made on the basis of the research findings (Denscombe, 2005 p.24).

A further reservation needs mentioning. When the contact database for the research was compiled, it was on the basis of the job title 'school chaplain'; and it is likely that some clergy exercise an informal ministry in their local Church schools, without being designated 'chaplain'. The survey data, therefore, while accurately representing the perspectives of the cohort of those who responded, may not be wholly representative of the full picture of school chaplaincy.

There is also arguably an imbalance in the survey results since almost two-thirds of the database contacts were in independent schools (65.8% - 242), with fewer than a third in maintained Church of England schools (29.5% - 108) and less than a twentieth in academies (4.6% - 17). Responses were nearly proportionate to this, with almost two-thirds of respondents (65% - 141) from independent schools and just over a quarter (26.7% - 58) from maintained schools, whilst the views of academy chaplains were proportionally well represented (11.25% - 18). It should be noted that at the time of the survey in Autumn 2010 numbers in the academies sector were small, with only 167 in existence in September 2010 (Department for Education, 2012). Since that time, however, the academies sector has rapidly expanded, with 1877 academies in June 2012 (Department for Education, 2012) as a result of government policy compelling some and encouraging all secondary schools to seek the semi-autonomous status. However, even if responses are seen as unduly representative of independent school chaplaincy, it is worth recalling that school chaplaincy originated in the independent sector and that the high proportion of questionnaire responses from independent schools can be seen as an indication of the seriousness with which this ministry is still taken in that sector.

A more detailed, minor reservation relates to a flaw in the design of question A2, where the invitation to 'tick all the appropriate boxes' clearly confused a

number of respondents, since a small proportion of chaplains (14.2%) identified as lay chaplains, with two-thirds (67%) identifying as ordained, leaving a missing element of almost a fifth of respondents: data derived from Question A2 is clearly undermined by this. When all reservations have been stated, however, the survey remains the first attempt at gathering data about school chaplaincy from chaplains themselves. My view is that we may regard the outcomes, especially the attitudinal and free-response replies of respondents as having a high level of reliability. In many cases, what chaplains wrote in these replies bore the mark of honesty, openness and a sometimes painful frankness.

School pupil focus groups

The final phase of the empirical research, interviews with pupil focus groups, was completed with four groups of pupils; I had originally thought in terms of a minimum of six groups, but pressure of time, caused not least by the necessity to complete the research phase and write up the interim report in time for the national school chaplaincy conference in June 2011, prevented arranging the full six pupil sessions. Obtaining ethical approval was complex, since the questioning of school students by a visitor in a confidential context raises child protection issues: there is the potential for inappropriate contact to be made or followed up. In the event, I was required to seek and obtain new CRB clearance as well as to satisfy the University's ethical requirements (For information and permission forms, and the question schedule, see Appendix H).

Small focus groups of six to a dozen senior pupils were conceived as the best way to obtain genuine feedback from the student body as to the perceived value of chaplaincy. The interview schedule was designed to explore the fundamental question, 'What value does the chaplaincy add to the life of your school?', and the schools identified for this part of the research were selected on the basis that I had confidence in the quality of the chaplaincy from my personal experience: there seemed little point in undertaking a more random

sample in which pupils might conceivably be talking about a chaplain who was failing, or whose work was of dubious quality; pupils have a way of being absolutely clear about the shortcomings of their teaching and other staff and to have a series of negative encounters with dissatisfied pupils would not, in my view, have advanced the research.

The four schools selected were: an inner-city Church comprehensive; a rural coeducational boarding school; a suburban Church comprehensive, in all of which the pupils who participated were in the Sixth Form; and a suburban 'fresh-start' academy where the most senior pupils were in Year 9. In each case, the chaplain was approached and asked to seek the approval in principle of the head and senior staff for the focus group to take place. Once management approval was forthcoming, the chaplain was asked to arrange with senior colleagues for an *ad hoc* cross-section of six to a dozen pupils to be gathered; in the context of the academy, I was asked to forward an explanatory letter to be sent to parents explaining the purpose of the gathering, which in that case took place at the end of the school day in voluntary activity time. One other group met in lesson time, and two groups during their lunch break.

Once I was introduced to the group, which in each case met in a familiar but private classroom or chapel context, I informally explained the purpose of the research project and of the focus group, and having ensured that consent forms had been signed and submitted, I embarked on the group interview. The discussions, which I managed carefully so as to avoid the opposite dangers of over-dominance and reluctance to speak identified by Denscombe (Denscombe, 2005 p.169), lasted between half and three-quarters of an hour, and were digitally recorded, although regrettably at the academy the recorder failed, leaving me to write detailed notes as best I could. Some ten thousand words of transcription resulted; and my sense of the pupils speaking openly and genuinely was clear. Their perceptions formed an important and, I consider, valid addition to the qualitative data previously gathered.

The analysis of qualitative data

How, though, was I to approach the analysis of the research data? Literally, to analyse is to divide into constituent parts, to subdivide, to fragment; but although some would see a fragmentation process as appropriate for dealing with qualitative data, and commend the use of computer-aided systems, others highlight the danger of too atomistic an approach (eg Willis et al., 2007 p.298). There appears to be a broad consensus that data analysis can be seen on a spectrum, from literal analysis at one end to interpretation at the other (Wolcott, 2001 p.34); from 'grounded theory' to 'eyeballing' (Willis et al., 2007); from the technical to the intuitive (Marshall and Rossman, 1999 p.151); or from fragmentation to Gestalt (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000 p.68). The area is one of considerable debate, but as will be apparent from what I have previously said about methodology, my personal approach lies towards the latter end of this spectrum.

The contrast is well described by Wolcott, who makes a distinction between 'analysis' and 'interpretation'. Analysis, he suggests:

> ... follows standard procedures for observing, measuring and communicating with others about the nature of what is 'there', the reality of the everyday world as we experience it ... [for instance in] 'content analysis' ... material is chunked into categories and reported statistically through procedures generally understood and accepted (Wolcott, 2001 p.33).

Interpretation, on the other hand, is seen as:

> ... derived from ... our efforts at sensemaking, a human activity that includes intuition, past experience, emotion ... [inviting] the examination, the 'pondering', of data in terms of what people make of it ... (Wolcott, 2001 p.33).

Blaxter argues slightly differently that 'analysis' is in itself essentially hermeneutic:

Analysis is about the search for explanation and understanding, in the course of which concepts and theories will probably be advanced, considered and developed (Blaxter et al., 1996 p.206).

- while Gibbs, citing Clifford Geertz, argues for the importance of achieving a 'thick description' of what is happening, in the process of answering the question 'What is going on here?' (Gibbs, 2007 p.4). For me, that question is certainly at the heart of the matter.

What emerges from the extensive literature on the analysis of qualitative data, then, is a spectrum of possible stances on which an individual researcher may take a position at any point, given the appropriateness of the method to the subject. In the case of school chaplaincy, a personal ministry whose inner and spiritual nature is experienced by its practitioners in individual ways unique to them, the approach to data analysis adopted must I believe show the 'honesty, sympathy and respect' called for by Hollway and Jefferson, whose interpretative approach gives space to the richness, complexity and biographical uniqueness of the research subjects (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000 p.102). It was my aim throughout both the data-gathering and the data-analysis stages of the research to respect that uniqueness.

In the light of this, I come now to the processes I went through in analysing the interview and focus group data, and the sentence-completion questions from the questionnaire. First, in relation to the in-depth interviews and the focus groups, I listened carefully to each individual recording, reflecting on the ideas and feelings being expressed by chaplains and pupils, and trying to gauge from pauses and emphases, and from tone of voice, the intensity of emotional commitment. Then, identifying what stood out as particularly significant passages of speech, I decided the extent of transcription and then transcribed all those passages which seemed to have particular force or relevance. The process of transcription is laborious, as Denscombe notes, but has the advantage of bringing the researcher close to the data (Denscombe, 2005 p.185); listening several times to ensure transcriptive accuracy is itself a task involving disciplined attention.

Once the transcription was completed, I read through the resulting texts identifying key themes and features – a process of 'coding' (Denscombe, 2005 pp. 184-5) – and then cross-referenced the different transcriptions so as to compare responses to particular issues. The fact that both the in-depth interviews and the focus groups were conducted with a well-shaped question schedule made this process very much simpler than it might otherwise have been: some basic coding was implicit in the collection of the data. In relation to the free-response sections of the survey questionnaire, I again used a simple system of coding, identifying different categories of response and again cross-referencing responses against one another. The entire process was iterative (Morse et al., 2002): I found that it was important to review the data again and to compare sections of it after a period of time, looking for new or previously unclear meanings - what Denscombe refers to as 'the constant comparative method' (Denscombe, 2005 p.120). I suspect, though, that what I report in the coming chapters by way of research outcomes, whilst being an honest account of the data, by no means exhausts its meaning: the data may still prompt further reflection, and like any rich literary text, have more to reveal on a further reading, or in relation to further 'pondering' (Wolcott, 2001 p.33).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have set out the methodology and rationale of the research project, drawing on the notion of 'personal knowledge' derived from Polanyi, identifying the research stance as interpretive/hermeneutic, one which for me is associated with an approach to 'narrative-as-knowledge' common to both literary study in the humanistic tradition and to practical theological research in the qualitative tradition. I have also described the research process in some detail; considered issues in 'insider research'; and explored briefly some methodological issues in relation to the interpretation or analysis of qualitative data. In the following chapters of the thesis I shall draw on the full range of the data – interviews, survey material and focus groups – to bring

out the emerging key issues for school chaplaincy. The authentic voices of those working in this ministry will be clearly heard as this discussion develops, creating the first-ever picture of the nature of the ministry of school chaplains in Church of England schools.

Chapter 5: Being a school chaplain: the shared vision of a 'ministry of presence'

In this chapter I shall draw on my interview data to explore the nature of the ministry of school chaplains. Reviewing the varied contexts of school chaplaincy, I shall highlight chaplains' common understanding of their role, its focus on pastoral care and presence; but by way of background to the discussion, I need to sketch briefly the origins of school chaplaincy in England and describe the inherited 'model' of chaplaincy derived from the public schools.

The origins of chaplaincy in schools

Education in England originated through the Church, and at one time all teachers were clergy. Given the religious foundation of English schools, it is hard to trace the development of chaplaincy as a specific role, although it is clear, as David Newsome demonstrates, that 'godliness and good learning' were inextricably linked (Newsome, 1961 pp.32-33). With the development of the nineteenth-century public schools, this emphasis held good; and Thomas Arnold – perhaps the most influential of nineteenth-century educationalists – continued to elevate the moral and spiritual functions of education above the physical or intellectual (Newsome, 1961 p.2). By the mid-century, the role of school chaplain had been clearly established, Arnold himself having contributed to its significance by taking in 1831 at Rugby the role of chaplain – his priority being moral leadership - in addition to that of headmaster (Newsome, 1961 p.28).

How chaplaincy in the public schools developed between Arnold's highly influential example and the early twentieth century is hinted at in Peter Parker's account of the Great War and the public school ethos, *The Old Lie* (Parker, 1987), but he offers little detail on the role of chaplains: the nature of their ministry remained hidden until the post-First World War recollections of J B Goodliffe (Goodliffe, 1961). As I showed earlier, Goodliffe offers an

account of school chaplaincy grounded in three functions: as teacher of divinity; leader of school worship; and pastoral carer.

Shaping and developing chaplaincy practice: the 'inherited model'

This 'inherited model' of school chaplaincy can be seen as well-established by the mid-20th century, a standard feature of independent schools. To the threefold role of teacher, liturgical leader and pastor had been added a 'prophetic' function as the 'conscience of the institution' (Marsh, 1987); and the role of the school chaplain would have been understood by all independent school pupils, even if chaplaincy practice differed from school to school in relation to the school's ethos and ecclesial tradition and in relation to the individual chaplain's personal understanding of ministry. When, after the 1944 Education Act, chaplaincy spread to Church schools in the maintained sector, the core features of the inherited model – still exclusively clerical and male - simply transferred across.

Anthony Russell's study of the development of the clerical role concludes:

> … it is by changing and adapting inherited practices that we are better able to keep faith with the past and fulfil ancient intentions in changed circumstances (Russell, 1980 p.306).

However, change and adaptation may lead to a loss of coherence and practicability, through an accumulation of different and even contradictory elements and expectations, leading to a sense that the role as now understood is unsustainable (See: Lewis-Anthony, 2009). The role of school chaplain, adapted from the independent schools to the maintained sector and thence to the academies, shows some indications of this. Even where the teaching role has been formally relinquished, as is now quite often the case outside the independent schools, what remains can be a formidable task for priest or lay person, either of whom may be untrained in working with the young and unfamiliar with the culture of education; through the Bloxham Project I came into contact with several school chaplains who had been parachuted into their role direct from the parish context. And some

advertised job descriptions for new academy chaplaincies appear hugely demanding.

Martyn Percy's notion of Darwinian adaptation in *Clergy: the Origin of Species* (Percy, 2006a) is relevant: just as the clerical role has developed in response to the changing social and cultural environment in which it is situated, so chaplaincy in schools has adapted as it has moved from the very distinctive cultural context of the 19th century public schools into the 20th and 21st centuries, and into the different contexts of maintained Church schools and Church-related academies. Percy's closing comment on the nature of the clerical role could readily be adopted as a description of the contemporary position of chaplaincy in the school context, where chaplains '... occupy that strange hinterland between the sacred and the secular, the temporal and the eternal, acting as interpreters and mediators, embodying and signifying faith, hope and love (Percy, 2006a p.188).

Beyond the inherited model: some vignettes

I shall explore the notion of 'embodying and signifying' later in this chapter as I discuss the notion of 'presence'; but at this point I shall illustrate some of the different ways in which the inherited model has been adapted in school contexts both in and beyond the independent sector. My interviews with chaplains made clear that school chaplaincy today is a widely diverse ministry; and something of the sheer variety of context and practice in current school chaplaincy can be gathered from the following vignettes, drawn from the interviews. In different kinds of school the chaplain will be offering a specific and distinctive ministry to those around him or her: 'being a chaplain' in the way appropriate to the culture of the individual school, and to the particular individual with the specific background and skills the chaplain happens to be. Both context and person are determinative.

Chaplain A teaches a half-timetable of Religious Studies in a coeducational, traditionally 'high' Anglican independent boarding and day school of some 750 pupils, situated in a cathedral city in the Midlands. He has a significant place

in the school's life as chaplain – a high-status role in this context. He leads regular, compulsory chapel worship for the school community, adding occasional voluntary sessions – late-evening Compline, for example - for those who are committed to or interested in faith. He responds to pastoral issues among staff and pupils, collaborating closely with the school's counsellors and medical team. His work provides the stimulus of lively interaction with classes across the age range, and he sees himself as working in school beyond the frontiers of the church community with those who otherwise would not interact with a priest. This is for him 'the cutting edge' of mission and ministry, and of absorbing interest compared with his earlier working in a parish, where he felt his ministry was 'lonely' and 'dull', confined to being 'mostly with Christians'.

Chaplain B has no teaching commitment as a full-time chaplain in a maintained Anglican comprehensive school of 1,400 pupils in a southern commuter town. She compares her work among this number of young people each day with that of her spouse in parish ministry, whose youth group may perhaps gather as many as twenty-five. Much of her time is spent in preparing materials for daily school assemblies or Eucharistic celebrations, and for the prayers and reflections which tutors lead daily with their groups; in supporting pupils with personal or educational problems, or who are going through some family crisis such as parental divorce; and in being a friendly, Christian presence around the school in break and lunch times. She is occasionally asked by staff colleagues to contribute to lessons from a Christian perspective on particular ethical issues. Currently completing her training as a counsellor, she will shortly bring this new range of skills to her work.

Chaplain C originally trained as a doctor and worked in hospital medicine before being called to ordained ministry. He brings a sophisticated understanding of health – physical, mental and spiritual – to his non-teaching, full-time chaplaincy work in his vibrant, inner-city, multi-ethnic and multi-faith Anglican comprehensive school of 1,500 pupils in greater London. Much of his time is spent preparing assembly presentations using multi-media

resources, designed to prompt serious spiritual reflection among pupils meeting daily in the school's chapel; he also supports the school's pastoral system through individual work with pupils in particular need. He is a counsellor for staff colleagues, offering time and space for pressured people to share their burdens with him. His reflective and prayerful style, rooted in catholic spirituality, brings another dimension into the hectic and dynamic ethos of the school.

Chaplain D works in a newly-established Anglican academy, born from a run-down urban comprehensive in the South of England and now establishing itself as a different kind of educational community, with higher standards and an aspirational Christian ethos designed to challenge its white, working-class clientele. He is a lay person, not a teacher, but long experienced in youth and community work and from a charismatic, non-Anglican church background. He sees himself as the key representative of the Christian faith in the school, supporting collective worship and often leading assemblies; spending time praying with staff and pupils, gathering vulnerable pupils around him at break times, and interceding with the school authorities on behalf of the difficult or unbiddable. He meets and prays weekly with the head, and sees an important part of his role as being around the school, greeting and encouraging pupils and staff, inviting them to see beyond their present horizons, the limited world of 'here and now'.

Shaping chaplaincy: contextual factors

What is clear from these vignettes is that while there are obvious points of continuity from the 'inherited model' described above – these chaplains still lead liturgy and offer pastoral care, and the independent school chaplain still carries a teaching timetable – the contexts of their ministry and the way they see their own priorities as chaplains differ widely. The role is still recognisable from the inherited model, and the title 'school chaplain' still makes sense for all of them, despite wide contextual differences: but the sheer diversity of context – of pupil cohort, staff composition, school buildings and provision - in which these Anglican school chaplains currently work is

striking. There is an obvious and inevitable contrast, for example, between the independent school with its venerable, nineteenth-century gothic buildings, noble chapel and extensive estate on the one hand, and the maintained schools and academy on the other, whose premises are typically low-quality 1960s-institutional in appearance, and where in one instance the 'chapel' is no more than a small classroom space adjoining the chaplain's office, used mainly as a place of refuge for pupils.

Reviewing the physical and cultural contexts in which the interviewed chaplains work, it is as if the range of school chaplaincy contexts extends all the way from Harry Potter to Grange Hill. And diversity of context is echoed by diversity of status. At one extreme is the chaplain in one independent school who carries both traditional and charismatic authority (to borrow Weberian terminology) in his role of celebrant at the Eucharist, where the context of weekly worship is a vast gothic chapel whose eye-lines lead towards the elevated position of the high altar, at which the celebrant stands robed in sumptuous vestments and haloed by incense. The core act of school worship provides a central, mystical role for the chaplain, and it seems evident that this will be an inescapable feature of this chaplain's life in the community: his role inevitably carries a high degree of authority and status.

In other schools, the chaplain may never be seen as the chief actor in a liturgical drama. One chaplain's tiny office was the only 'sacred space' in her maintained Church comprehensive, but still provided a place where pupils could come to light a candle or pray in silence. Another chaplain's space – the size of a very small classroom – offered both a place for reflection and a refuge for pupils, and a space where staff met for prayer before school. Another school chapel is a small, first-floor room, plain and un-atmospheric, overlooking a bleak, featureless tarmac play area. Diversity of environment, and associated diversity of status within their communities, characterise the school chaplains interviewed.

Shaping chaplaincy: theological stance

Something of the variety of individual background and outlook of school chaplains is also indicated in the vignettes set out above; but a more detailed look is required. The range of formal theological backgrounds and of the ecclesial stances of the chaplains interviewed was considerable. Whereas, for example, invited to identify theological figures significant for them, three chaplains interviewed named Thomas Aquinas as their key theological influence (one adding to Aquinas the philosophers Wittgenstein and Derrida), indicating an intellectual and catholic stance, others highlighted F D Maurice or Don Cupitt, suggesting a more liberal or radical temper. Some identified Rick Warren and Steve Chalke, indicating an evangelical and charismatic allegiance; and there appeared to be a full range of Anglican backgrounds and ecclesial styles represented among the interviewees. This contrasts interestingly with some recent research which has identified a tendency for hospital chaplaincy to be staffed disproportionately by those in the liberal/catholic tradition (Hancocks et al., 2008). At an individual level, the chaplains interviewed ranged from highly-qualified academic theologians to those with no formal training in academic theology.

Chaplains who naturally spoke in strongly evangelical or charismatic terms tended to be located in maintained schools or academies rather than in the independent schools: 'I want to be able to demonstrate that Jesus is real and relevant to the young people here and the staff as well', said one maintained school chaplain. Another, who identified Rick Warren as a key influence on her ministry, went on to say: 'I don't see myself as purely an Anglican … I am an Anglican, I can't be anything else in a sense, but … my regular place of worship, my most frequent place of worship, is not a Church of England church….' This is a fascinating insight into the stance of a chaplain whose loyalties – probably like those of many practising Anglicans who identify as evangelical or charismatic – are more related to fellow-Christians in non-Anglican churches by a shared evangelical or charismatic spirituality expressed in characteristic styles of worship, than to their fellow-Anglicans.

For this chaplain, there is less emphasis on the specifically Church of England ethos of the school and the process of religious socialisation – or indeed on the specific 'chain of memory' that is the Anglican church – than on the spiritual capital to be drawn from the evangelical stream of faith.

Another chaplain with similar evangelical reference points spoke of 'Bringing a little bit of Jesus' into people's lives in his academy community; yet another spoke of 'helping to shine a bit of Jesus light on things': these examples of distinctive religious language, reflecting an espoused theology, are characteristic of the more evangelical/charismatic impulse among school chaplains in the maintained schools and academies. This can be seen to contrast profoundly with the characteristically more liberal or catholic impulses of chaplains in the independent schools, which goes with an altogether different kind of religious thinking and discourse; one such chaplain noted W H Vanstone and Richard Holloway as key influences; another spoke of his sense of service being rooted in his 'sense of being the one who's there offering the sacrifice of the one who gave himself for all'; and spoke of his willingness to leave for the Roman Catholic Church should the Church of England drift further from its catholic roots.

But whatever sector of the ecclesial spectrum or of the education system chaplains come from, they appear to share a sense that the real outcomes of their work are to be understood in the longer term; as one chaplain put it: 'Schools are in the business of planting time-bombs.' This view interestingly connects with the concept of spiritual capital: it is as if chaplains are conscious that any fruit of their work will be displayed in the adult lives of their pupils as a consequence of the values and dispositions learned in school. One chaplain said, 'I'm not at all bothered as to whether people are Christian or become Christian while they are in the school … what I am trying to do is ground people in something that they might choose or need to draw on at some point in their life.' One way of looking at this response with its notion of 'grounding' is to see it as closely related to that of religious socialisation, and there is a clear resonance with the thinking of Vermeer (Vermeer, 2009)

highlighted earlier: that denominational schools are in the business of helping pupils ask questions about personal identity and purpose.

The chaplains interviewed, surprisingly, did not display any overtly evangelistic drive, any urgent sense that pupils must be 'converted' or 'won for Christ', even when they themselves were rooted in the evangelical/charismatic tradition where this might be expected. Instead, there was a sense that the task of chaplaincy was to 'open up [pupils'] spiritual thinking', to provide through regular worship 'some kind of grammar' to support the understanding of faith, to 'help [pupils] resolve some of [the] questions in their lives'. Again, this echoes both the notion of endowing pupils with spiritual capital, a 'bank' of significant spiritual resources which can be drawn upon at a later stage to help respond to and help resolve the life-issues which adults have to face, and the notion of religious socialisation as understood by Vermeer.

One theologically liberal chaplain spoke more tentatively of her head and herself wanting 'the students to engage with what it is to be human and develop their humanity and sense of community', suggesting also that 'the religious dimension is important to that but exactly how that is expressed and shapes the school is open to debate'. This more broadly spiritual - even quasi-humanistic - expression of the school's task indicates a very different stance from that of chaplains quoted above and located in distinctively catholic or evangelical traditions. But this chaplain's sense of the need for the head and herself to have a shared vision of their students engaging with 'what it is to be human' highlights the importance of the Church school having a shared intentionality in its work of religious socialisation: the question is, what exposure to religious thinking and practice do we intend our pupils to have, and how should this shape the ethos of the school? It is unclear whether Church schools regularly review this important issue of their corporate religious identity and its intended impact upon the student body both individually and communally; this is one school where the issue is live, and it is significant that the chaplain describes a key role in leadership here.

Priorities in chaplaincy: practice

It seemed clear that for chaplains in the independent sector, inhabiting the inherited model without significant discomfort came quite naturally, whereas chaplains in other sectors appeared to be more uncertain or questioning in their consideration of the nature of their ministry. The continuities of the inherited pattern in the sector are stronger, the nature of the chaplaincy role felt to be more tacit and self-evident, something which still has the advantage of comprehensibility within the institution; one independent school chaplain spoke of an invitation from a head simply to 'come and be chaplain', as if the task were self-explanatory, the nature of the role clear, fixed and understood. It is as if the independent schools operate with a shared understanding of what chaplaincy (self-evidently) is; whereas greater adaptation from the inherited model appears to be taking place in the other sectors.

In the maintained sector, liturgy remains a key responsibility for school chaplains, but in an adapted, developed form: it is no longer simply a question of regular liturgical worship in the school chapel. The planning of her Church comprehensive school's pattern of collective worship is for one chaplain her most time-consuming task: it involves the detailed preparation of materials for chapel worship and for daily tutor group reflection. Similarly, another chaplain emphasises the importance of setting up, providing material for and monitoring the quality of daily assemblies, but notes that although discussion with colleagues about this may '… ostensibly be about how we deliver assemblies for the school … in a way that is inclusive … it's also a way of doing theology with them, and of opening up both the relationship and the beginning of a dialogue around that…'. In practice, that is, working on liturgy and worship may lead into the pastoral area, if we conceive of the pastoral sphere as being that relational, inter-personal area where the representatives of the Church are 'committed to human flourishing so that people attain their God-given potential', as Stephen Pattison puts it (Pattison, 2008 p.18).

The liturgical role, helping people – both staff and students - to reflect and pray, creating through 'apt liturgy' opportunities to experience the presence of God, remains a key priority. One chaplain in a maintained school spoke of her struggle to create an appropriate liturgy, meaningful for mostly non-religiously-practising students, to mark the tragic death of a Year 10 student; another, until recently situated in parish ministry but formerly a teacher, commented on his new role in his independent day school by saying that 'looking after assemblies' was really secondary to the relational aspect of his work, which he described as 'being a pastoral/spiritual presence in the school … realising that a big part of my role is being there and being around and smiling at people, and building up lots of little relationships, and sometimes big relationships'. But again the two areas interlink: the same chaplain recounts a female pupil telling him how a school assembly had '… caused a friend of hers to say "I really need to re-think my life." ' Liturgy is something that leads out and beyond itself – both towards God and into the real lives of pupils and staff: unsurprisingly, prayer and worship are not hermetically sealed away from living.

Where a chaplain is also a classroom teacher – the default position in the independent sector - the liturgical, pastoral and classroom roles can all interact, providing a role which can be experienced as seamless. One chaplain spoke of her key responsibility for '… the pastoral care of staff as much as students, drawing that together through leading worship …'; and went on to say: '… the teaching component helps underpin that by allowing me to build relationships … it just becomes like a heartbeat in the end, you do it, but day by day you don't go through that conscious process of prioritising.' Here, the inherited pattern displays an interconnectedness which speaks of the chaplain's ease in her role, and of the ease of the institution in accommodating that role. There is something deeply organic about her metaphor of the heartbeat: it suggests a naturalness of behaviour through which ministry becomes a web of different activities bound together within known relationships.

In the light of this organic view of ministry, one has to ask whether formal descriptions of role can help clarify the priorities of chaplaincy. Reponses from chaplains were mixed: experiences vary considerably from the independent school chaplain invited simply to 'come and be chaplain', who went on to say that he had never had a formal job description in any of the schools in which he had worked, to the maintained school chaplain whose job is painstakingly described over four detailed pages of his contract. One chaplain, whose key responsibilities are described as the spiritual welfare of all pupils and the provision of chapel services, said that '… like all priests, your job description and what you do cannot be equated ….' His approach, perhaps characteristic of independent school chaplaincy culture, is one which almost rejoices in the undefined, the amateur and *ad hoc*, and describing his approach to pastoral work he fell back on a well-worn phrase: 'I loiter with holy intent ….'

The issue this raises is essentially: how can a chaplain most readily be available to people in the school community? We have come a long way since Arnold announced his availability for private counsel by raising a flag on the tower of Rugby school (Newsome, 1961 p.29). Now, there is an assumption of constant availability: chaplains spoke of 'being around', or 'loitering', whatever the pressure of other specific duties. This emphasis on 'being around' – the idea of 'presence' - expresses the centrality of the pastoral and inter-personal dimension for chaplains, even in situations where the liturgy is of huge importance. This was strikingly exemplified by one independent school chaplain whose regular working week in his boarding school involves daily morning prayer and Eucharist, and the weekly whole-school Eucharist: formal, public, liturgy is at the heart of this school's life. Pressed on whether his liturgical or pastoral role had priority, the chaplain paused before saying: 'It must be being with people in the end ….' For these school chaplains, the relational, pastoral sphere seems to come first, ahead even of word and sacrament.

The pastoral sphere: priority for the person

This pastoral priority is theologically rooted.   One chaplain claimed to have little time for 'deep theology', but when asked about theological influences on her, spoke of her training as a counsellor taking her back '... to how Jesus was with people ... in the way that he counselled and listened and was ... accepting people, he lived authentically, non-judgmentally, what you call the core conditions in counselling, he embodied all of that, so for me it makes a huge amount of sense ... it's back to the Jesus of the Gospels ... and also about humanity being created in God's image ... every person is of value and significant ....'.   What is in fact – despite her disavowal – a profoundly theological response lies, I think, at the heart of what the school chaplains interviewed are saying about the pastoral ministry: it is about priority for the person simply because people are of value in themselves; and this is a deeply dominical style of ministry, deriving from the pattern of Christ himself.

'Listening to people' is how another chaplain put this. Others spoke similarly; one, for example, referenced Paul Tillich and Simone Weil, saying 'the first duty of love is to listen'; 'when someone's in a state of ... affliction ... this kind of attentiveness where you really do listen with such compassion and imagination to what the other is going through, that this is also part of it....'. There is a practical theology of listening in the process of articulation here, which this chaplain describes by contrasting her work with that of a counsellor or nurse in the same school situation: 'If I wasn't there they'd probably have a school counsellor or something like that but I do think it's different ... I think it is having the faith and the hope that ... the students will in some way be enabled to work things out for themselves ... you can ... accompany them, and you can strengthen them, support them, but having respect for the path they tread is tremendously important....'.   Here is a chaplain who is bringing a specifically priestly, ministerial awareness to the practice of listening, finding her listening linked to her own ongoing and developing spirituality: it is pastoral care moving far beyond 'ordinary' counselling, moving clearly into the spiritual realm.

But how do relationships of confidence between chaplain and pupil or staff colleague develop to the point where 'listening' can be a genuinely significant pastoral activity? One independent school chaplain described how in a new chaplaincy post a female pupil had been advised by the headmaster to go and talk to him about the terminal illness of a close relative, to which the pupil's response was, 'Not on your life!' Reflecting on this, the chaplain said he was clearly 'not yet part of the wallpaper', which explained 'why she did not feel any confidence in me at all'; whereas in his previous school he had been widely trusted by the very many pupils who had known him as a permanent feature of the school – a recognisable presence - and with whom he had shared out-of-class activities such as sport.

This perception sharpens the distinction between the role of counsellor and the role of pastoral carer as listener. Whereas, suggest these two chaplains, a pupil may be 'sent' to a counsellor in relation to a specific issue, the counsellor being seen as a professional able to 'listen to and deal with' the issue in question, a chaplain's listening must be understood differently. It is as if a chaplain is a listener because of his or her humanity and spirituality; as if the human authenticity and spiritual commitment of the listening person rather than his or her professional training in a specific role ('counsellor') is what counts. This is why chaplains need strategies for developing relationships of personal trust which may pave the way for 'pastoral' conversations; and it is clear that in the context of the boarding community in which chaplain and pupils are exposed to one another by the intense, inter-personal living conditions of shared, residential, community life there is every chance of these emerging. The conditions of the day school could be seen as less conducive to the development of personal relationships between chaplain and pupil; and where a maintained school chaplain has no teaching timetable, and is therefore not known to pupils through classroom interaction, any difficulty could be compounded.

Interrogating the 'pastoral'

Chaplains interviewed naturally employed the terms 'pastoral' and 'pastoral care' in reflecting on what is at the heart of their ministry. There is a real difficulty that emerges here, however, for these terms are contested in the context of English schools, and the ghost of Thomas Arnold again stalks the corridors. Peter Lang argues convincingly that the origins of the modern notion of educational pastoral care can be traced back to the nineteenth century public schools. The house and tutorial systems, he suggests, '... laid the foundation for what was ultimately to follow in terms of pastoral care in the comprehensive school ...' (Lang, 1984 p.140). Deriving from an Old Testament metaphor later used in the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus himself is 'the good shepherd', the Christian idea of shepherding or 'pastoral' care was transplanted from the religious context of the nineteenth-century public schools and transmuted into the modern, comprehensive context.

Lang notes how the development of 'pastoral systems' in schools from 1944 onwards (and universal by the 1980s) brought a re-thinking of the aims of education and a restructuring of school staffing, no longer solely along academic lines. And as larger, comprehensive schools were created from the merging of grammars and secondary moderns in the 1970s, it is suggested, new 'pastoral' promoted posts went to less academic teachers – who had probably worked in the predecessor secondary modern schools – while the former grammar school staff took the academic head of department posts (See Best et al., 1977). Added to this politico-professional dimension – 'pastoral' work being second-rate – was the ambivalence of 'pastoral care' in schools itself: is it really about the personal welfare of pupils or about their disciplinary control? (See: Best, 1989).

From a professional educational perspective, it is clearly preferable to see the school as a place where young people are not simply filled to the brim with 'imperial gallons of facts', as Dickens has it in *Hard Times* (Dickens, 1961 p.2), but rather allowed to develop and prosper as human beings, to flourish

humanly. To this extent, even though some schools, including new academies, are now dispensing with parallel academic and pastoral systems and dovetailing the two into one, there is a clear case for 'pastoral care' systems in schools. However, this raises a problematic issue for those schools where there is also a chaplaincy: if the core of chaplaincy is about offering pastoral care, how does chaplaincy relate to the school's pastoral care system and its various kinds of provision for the care and support for pupils? What, in short, is the specific quality or nature of a chaplain's pastoral care, or, how does chaplaincy add value to a school's care provision?

The nature and 'ownership' of pastoral care

In the context of the traditional independent school, friction or even overt conflict between housemasters and chaplains over pupil pastoral care is not unknown. A more constructive pattern is offered in one independent school where the deputy head has overall responsibility for the personal wellbeing of pupils, and regular case conferences will be held about pupils causing anxiety which involve both house staff, medical team and chaplain. A similar management structure exists in one maintained school, where the chaplain is accountable to the deputy head responsible for 'student services', and is involved in meetings of pastoral staff. In another independent school, however, the chaplain is kept entirely outside the confidential circle of those who as matrons or counsellors advise the pupils on personal matters. There are plainly unresolved issues of role and professional responsibility here: the 'ownership' of pastoral care is unclear.

Several of the interviewed chaplains in the maintained and academies sectors reported their involvement with pupils regarded as 'difficult' or unbiddable by the school, and appeared to have an implicit role in pacifying pupils who had behaved unacceptably in class and been excluded: an aspect of chaplaincy highlighted in an account of the recent Australian national experiment in providing voluntary chaplaincies in state secondary schools (See: Hughes and Sims, 2009). If the case of the pupil about to be bereaved who was pointed (unsuccessfully) towards the chaplain represents a

traditional, 'inherited pattern' notion of the situations in which a chaplain offers pastoral care – that is, *in extremis* – something analogous appears to be happening in other contexts where the chaplain becomes a kind of remedy of last resort in the pupil management system.

There is, therefore, a real need for more theological clarity among practitioners and in schools about what a chaplain's 'pastoral care' means, and what place it has in relation to pastoral care systems and staff in the school. Pastoral care systems are best seen as systems which support the aim of the school in enabling the pupil to learn successfully and to grow through the potentially turbulent years of puberty and early adolescence without significant disruption. Michael Marland, the educationalist probably most significantly influential for the development of pastoral systems in the 1970s and 1980s, largely through the influence of his 'seminal' *Pastoral Care* (Marland, 1974, Best, 2008), sets out the case like this:

> True "caring" for pupils is at the heart of schooling, for enabling the child to develop as a person is essential for happiness in school; the best chance of success across the curriculum; and as preparation for adult life in all its aspects (Marland, 2001).

This vision is one which Christian educators would share; what they would want to add, though, is a specific concern for the spiritual development of the pupils. And it is here that a school chaplain has a role which in principle adds value to the pupil's experience of school, since a chaplain is specifically tasked – if the dominical example cited by the chaplain quoted above is indicative – with relating to pupils and staff both humanly as a person and spiritually as a person of faith, with a particular quality of attention – hinted at in the chaplain's earlier comments about listening - which values the person, and with a sense of values which, however skilled the chaplain may be as a counsellor, is person-focused without in the least being 'value-free'. The ruling metaphor is that of shepherding – and the shepherd has a responsibility both to protect and guide the flock. The provision of individual pastoral care can be seen as an action designed to develop the spiritual capital of the pupil, enabling him or her to manage personal life better.

Stephen Pattison's earlier-quoted definition is relevant; he sees pastoral care as:

> ...that activity, undertaken especially by representative Christian persons, directed towards the elimination and relief of sin and sorrow and the presentation of all people perfect in Christ to God ... (Pattison, 1993 p.13).

But it is interesting that in discussion chaplains tended not to express this explicitly spiritual approach or to cite what earlier I called '... the long Christian tradition of 'spiritual care' in which the pastor is seen as a 'physician of souls'' (Purves, 2001, Bonhoeffer, 1985). It seems that school chaplaincy is in need of a more robust, professional understanding of the nature of spiritual counsel and pastoral care which demarcates itself more clearly from the general concept of educational pastoral care: more theological clarity appears to be called for, particularly around the idea of spiritual care – an area already explored in the context of hospital chaplaincy (Wright, 2001, Wright, 2002).

Chaplaincy in schools: incarnation and embodiment

There is also a need for greater theological clarity about the idea of 'incarnational ministry', which emerged from some interviews. At least two strands of 'formal' theological thinking are present here. One has its roots in Anglo-Catholic incarnational theology, and is echoed both in the thinking of Bishop Gore and his colleagues in *Lux Mundi*, (Gore, 1921), and in the previously quoted view that 'the Incarnation is the centre of human history and the heart of the Christian faith' (Morrell, 1967 p.6). One chaplain – trained at Mirfield, where Charles Gore founded the Community of the Resurrection in 1902 – spoke of being: '... brought up very much in the Anglo-Catholic tradition of incarnational theology and ... simply saying ... if you believe that God became man that's an extraordinary statement to make ... and that sanctifies all humanity.' In this understanding, incarnational

ministry is about 'rejoicing', as the same chaplain put it, 'that God is made man … that God is love', and about 'demonstrating that love'.

A further strand is linked with a very different theological impulse. Originating in evangelical missiology, and accumulating a considerable, mainly transatlantic literature from the 1980s onwards, there developed a concept of 'incarnational ministry' that focused on how best a missionary, tasked with evangelism, might approach those to whom he was sent, the basic notion being that one had fully to 'enter the culture' of the target group. The idea did in effect become a significant missiological concept over these decades (See: Billings, 2004, Stutzman, 1991 , Hill, 1990, Hill, 1993), and found its way into the English context with works such as Pete Ward's *God at the Mall*, subtitled *Youth Ministry that Meets Kids Where They're At* (Ward, 1999). The agenda of Ward's book is described in an on-line review: 'Ward combines theologically-based theory and practical application to encourage youthworkers to meet kids … befriend them, and then begin to introduce them to Christ.' (SPCK, 2012); and Ward himself happily uses the term 'incarnational evangelism' and writes of 'working incarnationally' with the hope that 'Jesus can become real within the subculture' (Ward, 1999 pp.2, 24).   Here, in contrast to the older, Anglo-Catholic 'incarnational' stance appears to be an understanding of ministry which could be seen more fundamentally, perhaps, as about evangelism rather than pastoral care: getting to know people not purely for their own sake, but more instrumentally, with the hope of 'introducing them to Christ'.

Only three of the school chaplains interviewed, however, referred specifically to incarnational ministry. One of these, in comments reminiscent of his Mirfield-trained colleague, spoke of '… modelling what I believe is Christ's way … of showing … unconditional love … it's trying to be incarnational … incarnate in my understanding is God being here … I want to signpost God.' In this hesitant understanding, the task of the chaplain is to 'show unconditional love' as Christ did, and thus to point towards, 'signpost' the love of God. The chaplain aims to 'model' or demonstrate in his or her own life the spiritual

and personal qualities of Christ, echoing a long spiritual tradition of the *imitatio Christi* (See: A Kempis, nd). Deriving ultimately from the New Testament epistles, and reflected in the thinking of other chaplains who seek to model their ministry on 'how Jesus was with people', this is one practical understanding of being incarnational.

Seeing pastoral care as 'the expression of the incarnational ministry', another chaplain spoke of her '… probably fairly feeble attempt to embody a sense of the presence and the love of God alongside people … standing beside them and sharing with them whatever they are experiencing…'. Another spoke of the gospel '… not being remote and dusty and cold in an institution, but it being embodied and lived … the faith is an embodied faith, and it's a lived today faith….' Whether the faith and its ministerial expression are thought of as 'incarnational' or 'embodied' is really simply about a choice of words: the essential, core idea is that – as Martyn Percy suggests – the task of the minister is to embody and signify, to live in a specific way and thus to point beyond, to God.

Chaplaincy in schools: a ministry of presence

For several chaplains, this strand of thought was expressed in the notion of 'presence'. At one level, the 'ministry of presence' is seen as simply physical: 'being there and being around'; 'roaming purposefully' or 'loitering'; one chaplain even spoke self-deprecatingly of engaging in 'a kind of desultory hanging around'. The sheer physical presence of the chaplain is itself felt to be significant, a sign or signifier; one chaplain saw himself as a 'representative symbol of spiritual values', another as being 'a physical expression of Christianity ', saying '… ultimately I'm a little Christ here … I do believe I'm trying to take God's presence into the classroom and into the hallways and into the playgrounds….'.

This is a core awareness: the chaplain is a representative Christian, one seeking to embody the gospel though a way of living and being. A 'ministry of presence' is seen as a matter both of representing and of signposting God,

and this in itself is a way, suggested one chaplain, of 'being that presence in a school which encourages, legitimises people's faith.' A visible, representative figure of the Christian faith, embodying its values, the chaplain supports and even enables the faith of others in the community.   'You have to be where people are', said one chaplain; and this may be seen as the evident prerequisite for ministry.   Being there, among people – and the chaplains interviewed conveyed a strong sense of concern for their whole, extended school community, pupils, staff, parents, governors – is a key to what school chaplaincy is about: it is 'an enactment of belief', as one chaplain said, 'that each person is of value'.   Being what one chaplain called 'a prayerful presence' in the school community is a way of embodying and signifying the truth that above and beyond the day-to-day business of learning, developing skills and competencies, living together in community, creating, there is another realm of reality, the spiritual; and another order of being, the divine.

This theology of significant presence, of 'embodying and signifying', seems to lie at the heart of the practice of school chaplaincy as it is currently carried out and described by practitioners across the range of contexts.   More than simply 'being there' (See: Speck, 1988), it is about 'being there' in a specific way with a specific intention, to be an embodiment and a signifier of the Gospel, imitating Christ,   pointing to God: intentionality is central. This theology appears as yet intellectually undeveloped, inchoate, and struggles to find articulation; but it has the potential – given further reflection and elaboration – to be an awareness that animates and provides clear motivation for the roles which school chaplains carry out.

The challenge this poses is twofold. The Church of England's recent debates about ministry have focused, as I showed earlier, on the antithetical notions of parish ministry and 'fresh expressions of church'. The fact that chaplaincy has been so little reflected upon or written about means that those working in the 'front line' of ministry in hospitals, the armed forces, prisons, schools, higher education and a host of other, newer chaplaincy contexts (See: Brown, 2011), are theologically under-resourced, with, in effect, each chaplain in his

or her own context working out what their vocation is rather than being able to draw on an established framework of theological thinking. And while it is probably true that each minister in any context has to develop and live their own espoused and operant theology, the existence of a body of normative and formal theological thinking is helpful in that process (See: Cameron et al., 2010). In addition to the need for more Church thinking about chaplaincy across the board, there is a challenge for the widening community of school chaplains to refine and develop their own thinking about the specific nature of their own calling, and the ways in which their ministry adds spiritual value to the life of the school community and of individual pupils. In this process, developing an understanding of how the concept of 'significant presence' interacts with that of 'spiritual capital' could be particularly productive.

Conclusion

What emerges from the interview data is a picture of a very wide range of individual people, from quite diverse ecclesial and theological backgrounds, working as chaplains in schools which vary considerably in the way their ethos expresses and shares the values of Christian faith. Despite the range and variety of people and styles, however, there appears a clear convergence of understanding of what the ministry of school chaplaincy is: a vocation to care for people, representing and even embodying Christ, leading the worship of the community and thereby seeking to alert people – students and staff – to the actuality of the presence of God. In functional terms, the pastoral and liturgical aspects of the role emerge most strongly; but above and beyond function is the notion of being present: school chaplains see themselves as exercising a ministry of presence, 'embodying and signifying' the spiritual dimension.

Chapter 6: Being a school chaplain: role, accountability, development and support

In this chapter I shall draw on both the national survey and the interview data to explore school chaplains' understanding of their role, particularly as this relates to three employment issues: job descriptions, accountability and continuing professional development. I shall conclude by considering the personal support needs of school chaplains as evidenced by the national survey data.

The employment of school chaplains

Responses to Section A in the national survey questionnaire revealed that the overwhelming majority of responding chaplains were ordained, with only 31 of the 218 respondents (14.2%) identifying as lay chaplains, although as I noted in Chapter 4 there are reservations about the reliability of responses to Question A2. Taking this into account, however, it is clear that in talking about school chaplaincy in Church of England schools we are describing a ministry predominantly carried out by theologically-trained, ordained priests of the Church. It is worth contrasting the different picture in Roman Catholic schools. Here, lay chaplaincy has a similar predominance for the simple reason that in Roman Catholic dioceses in England there is both a chronic and acute shortage of priests available for parish appointment; chaplaincy in schools is carried out largely by lay people, members of religious orders or occasionally permanent deacons, with the celebration of Mass being something for which local parish priests are invited into the school. Technically, according to Roman Catholic canon law, the title 'chaplain' is reserved for men ordained priest, but in practice the title is taken by or ascribed to others of both sexes carrying out a chaplaincy role. It is plain from the Roman Catholic literature on school chaplaincy, discussed in Chapter 2, however, that there is no shortage of clear theological and practical guidance for Roman Catholic school chaplains.

Who actually employs the Church's school chaplains? More than two-thirds (70.2%) of respondents described themselves as directly employed by their school governing body, with fewer than a tenth (8.3%) describing themselves as employed by the Church at deanery or diocesan level, and smaller proportions having joint employment arrangements with both Church and school, or being unpaid.   What this means is that school chaplaincy in Church of England schools, a key ministry of the Church, is financed predominantly from sources outside the Church. Anglican school chaplains are in effect paid either by independent schools, which in practice means by fee-paying parents, or by the State, in the form of funding delegated through Local Authorities to Church of England maintained schools or paid directly from the Department for Education to academies. In this respect, maintained school and academy chaplaincy is on a similar financial footing to chaplaincy in prisons, the health service or the armed forces, where public funding is the sole financial resource. Although it has recently been argued that 'chaplaincy … is … an aspect of the involvement of the whole church in the public square' (Todd, 2011) – a view which presents the Church as a generous contributor to the wider society - the funding of chaplaincy in schools, as elsewhere, could equally and arguably more realistically be seen rather as the wider, secular society – 'the public square' – directly funding the Church's ministry.

The employment data from Section A of the survey questionnaire presents a clear picture of the 'typical' respondent as being ordained; employed in a full-time, pensionable capacity by their school; and carrying a substantial, even full, teaching load in addition to the responsibilities of chaplaincy.   It is notable, though, that as many as a fifth of responding chaplains (20.2%) describe themselves as working on a part-time basis: there is no data about what this means in detail; but even the fact that this proportion of school chaplains has other responsibilities in addition to their chaplaincy is a matter of concern, when we recall the Dearing Report's commendation of part-time chaplaincy posts on the grounds of 'financial considerations' (Dearing, 2001 p.56).

The status and position of school chaplains

Responding chaplains did not appear to enjoy high status within the management structures of their schools; only very few (6%) were members of the school management or leadership team. I noted earlier how Woodard schools ascribe to the chaplain a role and status equivalent in significance to that of the head, but this model clearly does not extend widely to leadership team membership. This raises a number of questions. Is a chaplain best-placed when insulated from the political, personnel and power issues dealt with at school leadership level? Or is there a case in principle for a chaplain's presence on the leadership team, perhaps to act as the voice of conscience in the decision-making process? Would not involvement in some kinds of leadership team discussion – say on teacher capability or discipline - be entirely inappropriate? In my own former dual role as a head and chaplain, I was deeply conscious of the role-conflict potentially involved, and found it absolutely necessary to have a team of associate chaplains who shared the chaplaincy but had no involvement in leadership decisions.

How is a chaplain perceived by students and staff? There is a real question about whether a chaplain is better positioned for ministry as a teacher-chaplain, known by pupils in the classroom context as well as in a religious or pastoral context, and a fellow-worker with other teachers; or as a non-teaching chaplain, someone who stands aside from classroom encounters and who can therefore engage neutrally on a non-pedagogical and extra-disciplinary basis with pupils, even if this reduces the credibility of the chaplain with staff colleagues. The indications from the data are broadly that – whatever issues are raised by a dual role - teaching chaplains are the norm in the independent sector: a common pattern combines the role of chaplain with that of head of religious studies, for instance, although in some schools this is changing, with subject leadership becoming a separately-held responsibility. Independent schools may well need or want to extract the maximum value from a chaplain employee and thus insist on a quite substantial, even seriously taxing teaching commitment. Equally, it may be

that a school chaplain is highly-qualified in an academic subject – often theology – and that it would be seen as a waste of resources not to have those capabilities employed in teaching students.

Whatever the thinking, and whether it is educationally or financially driven, the model of the teaching chaplain in independent schools - the inherited model - seems likely to stay. However, non-teaching chaplains are increasingly common in the academy or maintained school context; these may make contributions to the normal curriculum through, say, conducting occasional PSHE classes, or being invited by colleagues to contribute a religious perspective to the study of another academic area, but the main consideration appears to be that they should be seen as chaplains rather than teachers, distanced from academic or disciplinary roles and thus able to relate to pupils and staff simply as pastors. Practice in the independent schools appears more driven by inherited tradition, whereas in the other sectors the inherited model is more likely to be adapted. One conjectures whether this might be because there is more willingness in these sectors to ask fundamental questions about chaplaincy: Why have a chaplain? What is a chaplain for? How should a chaplain's role and responsibility be described?

The school chaplain's job description

How clearly do schools understand chaplaincy? All responding academy chaplains had formal job descriptions; and given the fact that the academies are recent newcomers on the educational scene, this could be attributed to an insistence on the requirements of current educational professionalism: chaplaincy being considered to require - alongside teaching and other roles - a proper professional description. Particularly where a diocese has 'taken over' a former non-Church school, there is likely to be a high priority for ensuring that all the professional expectations of the government paymaster are fully met. Equally, new Church academies are likely to be set up on a demonstrably 'model' professional basis: in such a context, an invitation simply to 'come and be chaplain' would be likely to be seen as ludicrously un- or pre-professional.

In fact, almost three-quarters of all respondents (72%) had formal job descriptions, a higher proportion than I had expected, and the figure was even marginally higher (73.3%) for independent schools. However, it is a matter of real concern that in independent schools over a quarter of chaplains have no job description, and that in the maintained Church schools this figure rises to over a third. It is, I think, reasonable to assume that this absence of formal job-descriptions indicates that the schools concerned remain unclear about how to describe the nature of school chaplaincy or the responsibilities of the chaplain: not that the role is somehow 'beyond description', but that real thought had not been applied to these questions.

Bloxham's *School Chaplaincy Review* (Caperon, 2009) proposes that one helpful way of approaching job descriptions for school chaplains is to be clear first about the purpose of the job. An illustrative example for a Church comprehensive school suggests the following:

> *Job purpose*: The purpose of the chaplain is to represent the Church in the life of the school and its local community through providing and leading regular Eucharistic worship for all pupils and being a supportive pastoral presence in and beyond the school.

As a head I had been increasingly drawn to this approach as an aid to clear thinking; it was a good way to cut through vagueness and institutional inertia, and to ensure that both post-holders and those responsible for overseeing their work knew what they were meant to be doing. Such an approach may be at odds with characteristic thinking about ministry: it may even be felt that the spiritual nature of a priest's role is inherently indefinable. However, accepting that the spiritual realm cannot easily be described in transactional – rather than poetic – language, I remain convinced that it is both possible and helpful to all parties not only to describe the purpose of a chaplain's post, but also to describe its main responsibilities clearly.

The school chaplain's accountability

To whom is the school chaplain accountable? In the model chaplain's role cited above, accountability is set out as follows:

> *Accountability:* The chaplain is directly accountable for her work in the school to the head and governing body, and will also work under the guidance of the local area dean.

This highlights one of the key issues for chaplain accountability: there is inevitably a dual accountability to both the school and to the wider Church which authorises the chaplain's ministry. The chaplains I interviewed expressed a range of perspectives on this matter, and the question had prompted some uncertain responses.   One chaplain in a maintained school revealingly noted that she felt her accountability both to God, to 'the bishop at some removed level', but 'obviously predominantly in the school ... to the head.'   'At some removed level' could well reflect the feelings of other chaplains in similar schools about their relation to their bishop. Another chaplain, listing those he felt accountable to as, 'God, family, pupils, deputy head, head' added: I don't really feel very accountable to a bishop, to be honest....'; similarly, another chaplain said: 'Who I don't feel particularly accountable to is the Church of England, or ... my area bishop.'

There may be particular accountability issues for ordained female chaplains. One interviewed in a maintained school spoke of her difficulties in sensing accountability to her local bishop: 'I ought to feel accountable to the bishop but I don't ... I probably feel accountable to the Archbishop of Canterbury rather than my diocesan bishops because ... in a sense they don't recognise my Orders, how can I be accountable to them?'   School chaplains' thinking presents a picture of a whole cadre of people working for the Church who may have little sense of direct accountability to the wider ecclesial community. Another chaplain described his commitment as first and foremost to the school: 'I feel Christianly that I have a huge responsibility of loyalty to the headmaster and to the school, and that is part of my witness.'   This chaplain

went on to say that a sense of greater involvement *from* the institutional Church would result in a greater sense of accountability *to* the Church: ' … if the wider Church – bishops or their representatives – were supporting and directing explicitly, then … chaplains would find it easier to feel "That's where my lines go."' There seems to be a real need for the school chaplain's dual accountability to be better understood, and for the Church to play a more positive role in creating a sense of wider, extra-institutional accountability for school chaplains.

The school chaplain's professional development

The notion of professional development – that is, that obtaining an initial qualification is insufficient to guarantee ongoing, high-quality performance, and that teachers need constantly to develop their capabilities – is inherent to the culture of schools, and is closely connected to the practice of teacher appraisal.   Part of the culture of English maintained schools since the 1990s, although possibly introduced with the intention of managing or even controlling teachers (See: Bartlett, 2000), it has also been seen as a means to raise standards: doubtless for this reason, it has been incorporated into the culture of independent schools also. The Department for Education says:

> The teacher Performance Appraisal system provides teachers with meaningful appraisals that encourage professional learning and growth (See: Department for Education, 2012).

- and the OECD concluded from the first Teaching and Learning International Survey that appraisal and feedback had a strong positive influence on teachers and their work (See: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009). My own experience as a school deputy head and head convinced me of the general truth of this view: appraisal encourages reflective practice and professional improvement.

How might this culture of review and development relate to school chaplains? The Church of England is currently in the process of trying to introduce its

own system of ministerial development review (MDR), for the implementation of which bishops are responsible. The official guidance makes clear that development and accountability are concepts that the Church now formally accepts, although there is an interesting if not wholly clear distinction drawn between responsibility and accountability:

> MDR is founded in the assumption that all office holders are responsible to God for the ministry entrusted to them and that they are accountable to the Church and to one another for the way in which it is exercised. Ministry is a gift and a trust for which each individual holds account. Accountability includes a preparedness to grow and develop on the basis of experience and the learning gained from it. It is about affirmation and encouragement as well as challenge (Church of England, 2009).

School chaplains, I have argued, have dual accountability to their employing school and to the institutional Church. The survey questionnaire, however, indicates that whereas in the context of the school, chaplains were likely to have a regular review of performance, in the context of the Church this was far less likely. Almost three-quarters (74.3%) of chaplains overall report having a regular school-based review, with independent school chaplains having the highest proportion at 80.3%: an indication, perhaps, of the rapidly increasing professionalisation of that sector. The lowest proportion was in the Church maintained schools, where under two-thirds (58.6%) of chaplains were formally reviewed. Adding together the lack of job descriptions and of performance review in this sector prompts speculation that maintained Church schools may simply not yet as a sector have come to terms with the significance of school chaplaincy – a conclusion which is not adrift from the assumptions laid bare in the Dearing Report.

Within the institutional Church itself, fewer than half of school chaplains – a mere 43.1% of respondents – say they have a performance review. Breaking down the figures further, just over half of academy and maintained school chaplains (55.6% and 56.9% respectively) have a Church-based review, compared with only just over a third (35.9%) of independent school chaplains. Two points emerge: first, the fact that the institutional Church appears to be

uncommitted to the review of chaplains in school, despite the existence of formal structures, reveals an alarming lack of interest in what chaplains are doing in this key ministry of interface with the young and how effectively they are doing it.   Second, it seems the ministry of chaplaincy in independent schools is largely ignored by the institutional Church, at least as far as the review of its chaplains in this context is concerned.

The absence of Church-based performance review for most school chaplains seems to indicate a significant degree of disconnection between the ministry of school chaplains – especially those in independent schools – and those in the institutional hierarchy of the Church who carry responsibility for oversight, or *episcope*.   On a personal note, during my twelve years as a school head and chaplain I was invited on only a single occasion to reflect on my ministry with a senior local Church figure; but not until analysing the survey data did I realise that my own experience was paralleled by that of nearly half the chaplains in similar Church maintained schools, and by almost two thirds of those in independent schools.

In the working context of schools, where a dominant professional model is in place, with clear job-descriptions and accountability and highly-structured performance review and development systems, the sheer separation of school chaplaincy's apparently only semi-professional culture from the surrounding professional norm is decidedly strange.

The school chaplain's ministerial priorities

One aim of the national survey was to explore how school chaplains understood the different aspects of their role and to test the validity of the Bloxham Project's own understanding of school chaplaincy. *School Chaplaincy Review* (Caperon, 2009) had proposed a five-fold functional typology, identifying the pastoral, liturgical, spiritual, missional and prophetic aspects of the chaplain's role, with a further dimension – the pedagogic – being added in 2010 in the course of the development of the school chaplaincy research project.   Section B of the survey questionnaire set out to elicit data on the

school chaplain's role and priorities, asking chaplains to prioritise these six functional aspects of the chaplaincy role identified in the Bloxham typology, to consider and respond to a range of statements about school chaplaincy, and to express their own personal understanding in a free-writing response. The different functional aspects of the role were described in the questionnaire like this:

Pastoral: the chaplain's role as someone committed to the care and wellbeing of all members of the school community;

Liturgical: the chaplain's role as a planner, organiser, facilitator and leader of collective worship and other worship events in the school;

Missional: the chaplain's role as a person of faith commending the Christian faith to others, and nurturing faith in all;

Spiritual: the chaplain's role as a spiritual leader in the community, seeking to bring to bear the insights of spirituality on all aspects of the school's life;

Prophetic: the chaplain's role as someone 'speaking truth to power', challenging the school to review its life in the light of Christian faith;

Pedagogic: the chaplain's role as a teacher of and about the Christian faith, in the context both of Religious Studies and of Christian catechesis.

Respondents were asked to rank these six aspects of school chaplaincy in order of priority in their own ministerial practice. Unambiguously, the pastoral aspect emerged as chaplains' top priority, closely echoing the views of chaplains interviewed earlier in the research programme, and reinforcing the view that school chaplaincy is understood by practitioners as first and foremost a pastoral ministry. Next, displacing the liturgical - perhaps surprisingly, given the high priority ascribed to liturgical work by the chaplains interviewed – was the spiritual aspect: the notion of their spiritual leadership of the community clearly resonated strongly with respondents. Closely following was the missional aspect of chaplaincy, described in deliberately 'open' terms so as to make clear that this was an aspect to do with faith rather than just the Christian faith. The other two aspects of the role, the prophetic and the pedagogic, were ranked lower, the prophetic last.

Interestingly, what for Marsh (Marsh, 1987) had been a key priority in school chaplaincy – the prophetic – appeared no longer to count so significantly for practitioners. Again, that the teaching or pedagogic aspect of chaplaincy was ranked so low was surprising, given the persistence of the inherited model in which teaching remains a significant part of the chaplain's life and work.

The school chaplain's role: further insights

There was similar convergence in chaplains' responses to a series of statements about school chaplaincy. An overwhelming proportion of those responding (88.4%) agreed that school chaplaincy was a special vocation to which they felt personally called; and although almost all (97.7%) agreed that their ministry was one to the whole school community, not just pupils, there was strong agreement (expressed by 89% of respondents) that the chaplain has a real opportunity to influence the young and to change the course of their lives: the potentially transformational nature of chaplaincy is averred by those working in this ministry. Alongside this, 91.4% of respondents agreed that being a school chaplain 'means you are in close contact with the young people you would never see in church'. School chaplains make up a cadre of ministers who have a personal vocation to work with the young as well as the wider community in schools, and who see their ministry offering potentially transformational ministry to the young. What was left unclear was quite how 'changing the course of the lives' of their young people was understood by school chaplains: was this about the 'transformational spirituality' posited in *Making Sense of Generation Y* (Savage et al., 2006 p.16); did it refer to the potential benefits of pastoral care; or was it understood to relate to significance of spiritual guidance offered by chaplains?

Despite the clarity of the chaplains' sense of vocation, some significant uncertainties about the chaplain's position within the school's life and structure emerged from responses to this section of the questionnaire. Royal Naval chaplaincy assumes that the chaplain holds a rank equivalent to that of the person with whom he or she is at any one time engaging: what of the placing of the chaplain within the 'ranking' system of a school? Despite the

Woodard view of the chaplain's special status, only just over half (52.6%) of responding chaplains felt they had a special relationship of trust with the head, and over a third (34.7%) agreed that 'not many people seem to understand what I do as a school chaplain'. There was support from just over half the respondents (57.3%) for the view that a chaplain influences the way the school runs; but as far as relationships with teaching colleagues are concerned, there was more confidence: almost three-quarters of respondents (71.1%) agreed that the chaplain was one of the few people with whom stressed teachers could let off steam. But chaplains did not express complete confidence about some aspects of the uniqueness of their own role: only just over a third (35.3%) felt that they were the one person in the school who could offer total confidentiality. This appears to cast doubt on the special place ascribed by one chaplain interviewed to the chaplain's listening role; and the question remains: how exactly do chaplains understand the distinctive nature of the confidential attending and listening, the 'counselling' they offer?

The imbalance between certainty about their vocation and its potential on the one hand, and significant uncertainties about the status and impact of the role on the other, presents an image of a highly committed but in some respects rather uncertain ministerial group. And this uncertainty is reflected, perhaps, in chaplains' relations with Christian Unions. Only a third of respondents (34.1%) agreed that 'working with committed youngsters in the school's Christian Union is a great satisfaction', and in maintained schools the figure dropped to a quarter (25.6%). Christian Unions (CUs) in schools and universities are characterised by a firmly evangelical and often evangelistic identity, and by their connections with supporting organisations such as Scripture Union and UCCF (See: Scripture Union, 2012, UCCF, 2012); and anecdotal indications are that chaplaincies at both school and university levels have historically had uneasy relations with them. Christian Unions, similarly, have tended to view chaplains with suspicion, as perhaps 'unsound' in their faith stance on issues such as biblical inspiration and infallibility, on which CUs remain strongly conservative (See: UCCF, 2012).

However, CUs have also been places where young Christians have been able to find encouragement in their faith, and it might have been expected that school chaplains for this reason would want to try to work with CUs as far as they were able, in the interests of inclusivity, and of 'nurturing faith'. That there is such a large proportion - almost three-quarters (74.4%) – of maintained school chaplains who feel uneasy about working with the CU is worrying; a long-term stand-off between CUs and chaplaincies seems to be continuing at a time when Christian faith is already rare among the young, and when internal divisions among Christians are unhelpful.

In a similar way, only just over half of responding chaplains (52.4%) agreed that pupils of other faith traditions saw them as faith leaders and sought their help and advice. At one level this may be seen as encouraging: in the multi-faith context it is good that more than half of school chaplains are working with apparent success with 'other faith' groups in their schools. However, one might have expected that all school chaplains would at least have wanted their role to be understood as one supporting all in the community, irrespective of faith background. I noted in Chapter 2 that the Dearing Report highlighted the simple Runcie formula: 'Nourish those of the faith; encourage those of other faiths; challenge those who have no faith' (Dearing, 2001 p.11). This formula might constructively be used as an aim for all school chaplains; and it has relevance both to the CU issue and to the multi-faith framework of contemporary England.

The school chaplain's role: individual voices

The final part of the questionnaire's section B invited personal reflection in a free-writing context, where chaplains were asked to complete the sentence: 'The core of my work as a school chaplain is about ...'. Responses were overwhelmingly reflective and informative, and it was clear that chaplains were engaged as they responded to this question, even though one or two respondents felt unable to express their views except by a blank or a query.

Unsurprisingly, many chaplains wrote in functional terms, echoing the categories of the Bloxham typology. However, almost half of the free writing responses (43%) did not offer a functional understanding of their role but focused instead on who a school chaplain is rather than what he or she does. I describe these different responses as related to 'being', and they variously reflect on the ways in which a chaplain by his or her very presence in the school may represent, embody or signpost the Christian faith. One chaplain writes of 'being a visible sign of God's presence in this place'; another of 'living out and proclaiming God's love for individuals and all humanity in a way that young people can understand and value'; and a similar response offers 'demonstrating that God's love of humankind is inclusive of all'. 'Being a living reminder of the love of God' is what another chaplain writes, to which a further adds, 'being a visible sign of the love of God in this community'.

Being a visible sign, living out, demonstrating, being a living reminder: these are understandings which emerge not from an analysis of function but from a sense of calling, a calling to 'be' in the particular context of place and community what one chaplain calls 'a distinctive presence'. For another chaplain, apparently struggling to find the exact word, this is about 'symbolising/representing/incarnating the presence of God'. To the idea of the chaplain's symbolic presence another chaplain adds the idea of 'being a constant sign of the Church'; for yet another, thinking beyond sign or symbol, there is the straightforward but daunting notion of 'being Christ in this place'. A key theme emerging from the interviews discussed in the previous chapter was what I called an operant 'theology of presence'; and the fact that it emerges again with such strength through the survey is of real significance: here, I believe, is the core theological perception of practitioners about the nature of the ministry of school chaplaincy.

An espoused/operant theology of presence: identity before function

This theology of presence is expressed in a number of ways. One chaplain writes of 'making Christ present in school', another of 'being the presence of

Christ in the school', another of 'being the visible presence of the Church'. This thinking recalls the notion of the priest as an *alter Christus*, 'another Christ', a core part of Roman Catholic thinking on priesthood. Phrases such as 'being Christ in this place' or 'being the presence of Christ' used by school chaplains appear – consciously or otherwise – to echo this thinking, and at the same time to imply a theology in which the priest/chaplain's role is – literally – vital in conveying the reality of God in the place in which he or she is ministering. This is a theology of grace embodied in the person of the priest, and it is hard to imagine a 'higher' theology of chaplaincy.

Now the ontological dimension of priesthood has recently been highlighted by Pope Benedict XVI. Reflecting on the idea of the priest as an *alter Christus*, he distinguished – as many school chaplains seem to – between the functional and ontological aspects of ministry. Quoting an earlier piece of his own, Benedict said:

> ... there is on the one hand a social and functional concept that defines the essence of the priesthood with the concept of 'service': service to the community in the fulfilment of a function.... Moreover, there is the sacramental-ontological concept, which of course does not deny the priesthood's character of service but sees it anchored to the minister's existence ... (Benedict XVI, 2009).

What chaplains appear to be saying is that it is necessary to be aware not only of what a chaplain does - the nature of his 'service to the community in the fulfilment of a function' - but also of the personal identity and being of the chaplain – 'the minister's existence'. It is unlikely that chaplains are drawing specifically on Roman Catholic thinking: it is, rather, that living the role of chaplain seriously inevitably requires them to reflect on their being – who and what they are - rather than solely on their function. The wording of the survey question seems to have prompted chaplains to think beneath the function to the personal existence which sustains their ministry, whether that ministry happens to be lay or ordained.

Some respondents' comments on 'being', however, seem to relate less to the nature of the chaplain's personal being than to his or her availability, in the sense noted earlier of 'being there' (Speck, 1988). One chaplain summarises this by referring to 'being there for people whatever their need'; another refers to 'being there … being around'; another to 'being available' and another to 'being present to people'. This last chaplain says that he was originally employed to 'waste time with people', a term which echoes the notion of 'wasting time in school' (McKeone, 1993); and there is a clear strand in chaplains' thinking which is about personal availability, an availability which can only be realised by 'hanging around' or 'loitering with holy intent' – being 'part of the furniture' or 'part of the wallpaper'. The 'desultory hanging around' to which one chaplain referred, then, can be seen not as a declaration of a somewhat aimless presence, but as an intentional declaration of availability to be there for others. John Robinson coined the term 'the man for others' to describe Jesus (Robinson, 1963 p.76); and some school chaplains seem to be saying that they are called – in the tradition and after the example of Jesus - to be 'a person for others'.

The survey responses made very clear that both a theology of presence and a notion of being are at the heart of the theological understanding of the wider community of school chaplains, just as they were at the heart of the theological understanding of those interviewed earlier. But articulating this theology is by no means straightforward, the responses to this part of the questionnaire seem to indicate. For some school chaplains there is a struggle to conceptualise and express clearly what exactly they are engaged in; one chaplain wrote: 'As best as I can understand it, being the person God made me to be with the people he has set me amongst.' This speaks about both 'being' and 'being there': it expresses a fundamental confidence that there is a divine calling to minister among these particular people; and in doing so to be unaffectedly and openly the person he is – and, I suggest by implication, thereby to embody – to incarnate – Christ.

Resources for chaplaincy: theological understanding

The chaplains' struggles to put into words the core of their work - to articulate faith in practice – reflects a basic theological problem, described by Rowan Williams when he refers to:

> … the gratuitous mysteriousness of what theology deals with, the sense of a language trying unsuccessfully to keep up with a datum that is in excess of any foresight, any imagined comprehensive structure (Williams, 2000 p.xv).

Williams is pointing to the theological truism that, as Karl Barth put it:

> Of God it is impossible to speak, because He is neither a natural nor a spiritual object. If we speak of Him, we are no longer speaking of Him (Barth, 1936 Vol 1.2, p.750).

And if it is ultimately impossible to speak of God, with language always 'trying unsuccessfully to keep up', it is perhaps unsurprising that articulating fully and clearly the nature of a chaplain's identity and work is difficult, even for those engaged in it.

However, in attempting to understand something of what may theologically be resourcing and driving the ministry of school chaplaincy, Section C of the questionnaire asked chaplains to describe their own theological heritage: in effect, an invitation to relate their practice to the theological 'beliefs, assumptions and perceptions provided by the Christian tradition (including the Bible) …' (Pattison, 2000). Responses to this question were surprising; I had anticipated a wide variation in claimed heritage, given my experience of the widely varying ecclesial origins of the chaplains I had interviewed; but the outcome was that responses coalesced around two core influences, the Bible and Pastoral and Practical Theology.

I had not anticipated that chaplains would respond so positively to the way the Bible question was worded: I had assumed that the term 'the whole Bible as the Word of God' would have had strong resonance for those of evangelical

background, but would have been off-putting for others. It is interesting that terminology which once would have been a marker for a specifically evangelical standpoint now seems to have more universal acceptability. The Anglican liturgical custom of inviting a response to scriptural readings other than the gospels with the formula 'This is the Word of the Lord' may have had some influence; as may also the increased salience of 'Word of God' theology in the Roman Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council's *Dei Verbum* (Abbott, 1966 pp.111-128), recently reinforced by Pope Benedict (Benedict XVI, 2010). Whatever reasons lie behind this, though, it is clear that school chaplains place the scriptural heritage at the heart of their own theological understanding.

Nor had I anticipated that the category of pastoral and practical theology would feature so strongly in school chaplains' responses. Having been introduced to this theological discipline fairly recently, as I explained earlier, I had perhaps anticipated that others might similarly be unfamiliar: certainly some of my conversations with groups of school chaplains had endorsed this assumption. What, therefore, is highly encouraging about chaplains' highlighting of practical theology is that it shows those working on the edge of the Church in a liminal or threshold ministry being concerned not so much with the 'academic' aspects of the theological heritage - with dogmatics and systematics – as with the practical: here are people for whom *praxis* appears to be a core priority.

I had designed this section of the questionnaire in the light of the earlier responses of interviewed chaplains to a question about theological influences. That question had produced widely varying responses, and this was echoed in the survey. Over half (55.8%) of responding school chaplains acknowledged Thomas Aquinas as an influence, with almost two thirds (64.8%) acknowledging the influence of Reformation theology. Over two-thirds of chaplains (67.2%) described Anglo-Catholic thought as influential or strongly influential, while nearly two-thirds were dismissive of the influence of Barth (61.2%); two-thirds dismissive of contemporary radical theology epitomised by

Cupitt and Spong (66.1%); and almost as many of contemporary evangelical theology epitomised by Rick Warren (58.8%). More than half, however (53.3%), identified modern post-Vatican 2 Roman Catholic theology as an influence, and two-thirds (66.1%) similarly identified the influence of liberation theologies such as feminism.

This presents a fascinating overall picture of the theological heritage of responding school chaplains. It is as if they are, broadly, a group of ministers whose roots are in the Christian scriptures, with a practical focus shaped by the thinking of pastoral and practical theology; but acknowledging also some of the major historical trends and schools of theological thought as influential for them. Aquinas, the Reformation, Anglo-Catholic thought: these influences suggest an inheritance which can be seen as characteristically 'Anglican' in the sense of acknowledging a debt to both Catholic and Reformed sources. Again, responding school chaplains appear in general to be influenced less by what might be thought of as theological fashion – though the impact of Barth could not be written off in quite this way - than by major movements in theological thought. This may be a recognition that what for a while excites the Christian world – the austere radicalism of Cupitt or Spong, the enthusiastic evangelicalism of Warren – may be superficial, compared with the deeper resources of the tradition.   Profound movements in that tradition – the vast surge of post-Vatican II theology re-animating the Roman Catholic and other churches, the rediscovery of a liberation agenda in the scriptural sources, and its application to groups including the poor and marginalised of the world and the whole female sex - seem to have more significance than what may be seen as the merely fashionable and temporary.

But chaplains working in different kinds of school showed distinctively different perspectives. Overall, independent school chaplains appeared to have the broadest theological heritage, drawing on the widest range of resources.   Academy chaplains responding were distinctive in their attachment to contemporary evangelical theology – a feature also of lay chaplains; those in maintained Church of England schools appeared to owe the

greatest debt to Anglo-Catholic thought; but for very few did radical/sceptical theologies seem to be a strong influence. These, perhaps, are more for the study than for the practice of ministry, more for the diversion of the intellectual explorer than for practical use in a context where theology is not about theory but about *praxis*, not about dogmatics but about apologetics, and even more about pastoral care.

Resources for chaplaincy: sustaining the person

My own work with school chaplains had convinced me of the huge pressures on those working ministerially in the hectic context of schools. In the light of this, the next section of the questionnaire looked at what enables school chaplains to sustain their ministry, that is, what provides their spiritual and personal sustenance. Offered for consideration in Section C of the questionnaire were resources ranging across the personal, professional and spiritual spheres, and chaplains also responded through a further 'free response' question.

The clearest impression coming from this section of the questionnaire is that of a group of people who share a strong spirituality, with their inner life of prayer and meditation being described as sustaining by almost all (98.8%) respondents, and their private spiritual reading being mentioned by nine out of ten (90.7%). But any impression of over-intense piety is dispelled by the fact that almost all those responding (97.7%) mention holidays and personal interests; and it is clear that for the overwhelming proportion of school chaplains, looking outside the inner life of spirituality to relationships with others is hugely important: 97.7% of respondents say they are sustained by the backup of family and friends. They also reported being sustained by the support of pupils (94.5%); of school colleagues (89.7%); and of their head (82.5%). The importance of this relational dimension is further reinforced by responses to a question about worship: participation in the Eucharist is said to be sustaining by 85.5% of respondents, raising the interesting - but sadly unanswerable – question, what animates the Anglican spirituality of the other 14.5%?

How much do chaplains feel themselves involved in a wider community than that of their own school? Whereas over 80% of academy and Church of England maintained school chaplains referred positively to their involvement with local clergy and church workers, fewer than half (49.5%) of independent school chaplains did so. This relative lack of involvement can be seen to echo the apparent lack of interest of the institutional Church in its ministers working in independent school chaplaincy identified earlier in this chapter: it is perhaps little wonder these chaplains feel less involvement in the local expression of the Church when the Church is apparently so little interested in them. And there is a further dimension to the theme of involvement: although there is a substantial number of people working in school chaplaincy – the 367 on the working database is probably not the total number - fewer than two-thirds of responding chaplains (61.8%) feel sustained by the nation-wide community of school chaplains, and in maintained Church of England schools the figure is fewer than half (49.5%). One is left with the impression of a specific occupational group with a hugely important ministry but an undeveloped sense of corporate community of enterprise.

Despite what emerges as a strong dependence on personal spirituality, it is odd, perhaps, that over a third of chaplains (40.6%) do not regard the opportunity of regular retreat as sustaining for them; and equally puzzling that a similar proportion (38.8%), though immersed in the life of an educational establishment where ongoing CPD is part of the professional culture, do not see themselves as being sustained by higher-level theological study. Is it felt, perhaps, that once a chaplain has absorbed his or her initial theological training, there is little further distance to go?

Resources for chaplaincy: personal perspectives

The data from the personal response section here again has force and truthfulness: chaplains speak powerfully of what sustains their ministry. From these personal perspectives appear to emerge two distinctive but rather different spiritualities. On the one hand, there appears to be a widespread

'catholic' spirituality, centring around the formal disciplines of prayer, the daily office and the Eucharist, with an emphasis being given to retreats and spiritual direction. On the other hand, there emerges an 'evangelical' spirituality, described in its own distinctive language and emphasising aspects such as 'Christian fellowship', the significance of the 'Quiet Time' and Bible reading, the importance of 'Christian friends'. Both these evangelical and catholic styles of spirituality seek the inner path, in their distinctive ways. One chaplain writes of being sustained by his 'faith and prayer life and Bible reading'; another of his 'personal relationship in prayer to God in Christ … my inner devotional life'; another chaplain highlights 'The Mass!' as his source of sustenance. Another writes of 'meditation on the scriptures and prayer … spending time seeking the Lord'; yet another of 'finding the still, small voice of calm'. In contrast, there are chaplains who refer to external sources of sustenance, in – for example – 'being part of a living, active and supportive Christian community'; or in 'feeling supported and valued by Senior Leadership' or simply 'encouragement from family and colleagues'.

But whether their spirituality is evangelical or catholic, their natural movement inwards to personal devotion or outwards to seek the sustenance of others, chaplains appear similarly to root their ministry in a sense of vocation; one, for example, writes of being sustained by 'a certainty that everything I have done and have experienced has been preparation for this task'. 'A strong sense of vocation and the duty which accompanies it' is what another chaplain cites; whereas another writes of 'reminders from God that he is on my case and that I am doing his work …. He is very gracious to me'. A sense of the validity of the ministry of chaplaincy affirms one chaplain: 'this role is authentic mission', he writes; while another chaplain is sustained and inspired by 'the thought of living to the glory of God'. There are moments, writes one, 'when I realise that a young person has started to see beyond themselves to God/others/the spiritual dimension'; another writes in less religious terms of 'seeing students' aspirations and self worth grow'; while another simply describes the satisfaction of 'seeing girls grow in faith'. These responses evidence, it can be suggested, the idea of potential transformation identified

above: what rewards chaplains, perhaps, are signs that their ministry is in some sense transformative.

Conclusion

Any ministerial role draws on deep personal resources of conviction and commitment. What seems to emerge clearly from school chaplains' responses to the questionnaire is that they have a very strong sense of a specific calling to work - and to be authentically themselves – in the educational communities where young people are developing towards adulthood. They bring to their multi-functional roles a deep awareness that they in some sense, not always clearly defined or articulated, represent, embody or incarnate the Gospel as 'God people' in a place where there is not necessarily any other visible representative. Their significance in the process of religious socialisation, their contribution in offering the opportunity of adding spiritual capital to the lives of those among whom they work, their ability to be a link for pupils to 'the chain of memory': all are hinted at in their strong sense of vocation and commitment. This chapter has focused on chaplains' vocational understanding of their ministry; the next chapter will explore their connection with the wider Church.

Chapter 7: School chaplaincy and the wider Church's mission: perspectives from the survey, interviews and focus groups

This vital ministry of school chaplains – hugely significant as it is in the current, secularised context in which very many of the young are cut off from the spiritual resources of the Church and lacking in spiritual capital – remains, of course, part of the wider ministry of the Church to the nation as a whole. A key question is, therefore, how do chaplains in school relate to the wider Church, and how do they feel themselves valued as part of that community? In this chapter, I shall explore the relationship between school chaplains and the institutional Church, drawing both on data from the interviews and also from the national survey, where again I shall give priority to the personal voices of chaplains, rather than simply to aggregate figures. In the final part of the chapter, I shall examine data from the student focus groups, to uncover the 'client' perspective on school chaplaincy and the role of the chaplain.

School chaplains and the wider Church

The final questionnaire section invited school chaplains to reflect on their relation to the wider Church, with question D1 (See: Appendix G) being framed as a series of statements with which to express degrees of agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale. The introductory rubric drew on the earlier interviews in stating that 'Chaplaincy in schools is experienced by some chaplains as a fairly isolated or misunderstood ministry in relation to the wider Church.' The intention was to permit the possibility of a critical perspective, rather than to invite negative thinking, and the balance of responses showed chaplains able to distinguish between aspects of the Church's relationship to them which were helpful and other aspects which were less so.

In the light of other questionnaire responses, there was a surprising, perhaps overstated, degree of confidence expressed in the personal support of the

bishop: over two-thirds of respondents (67.5%) agreed that their bishop 'strongly supports the work of school chaplains'. This looks like a clear endorsement by chaplains of the support they receive at diocesan level; but in fact it turns out to be in stark contrast to what they said specifically about support from their diocesan organisation. It also needs to be balanced by the comments quoted in the previous chapter about chaplains' sense of accountability to their bishop, where as I have shown, strong reservations were expressed. This raises the question: how well supported are school chaplains by their bishop – in reality? Or, how significant is *episcope* for school chaplains?

Chaplains did not express a strong sense of confidence that the wider Church supported or embraced them. Fewer than half of respondents (40.1%) perceived their diocese to have a strong sense of the significance of school chaplaincy for the future of the Church, and almost two-thirds (64.4%) described themselves as feeling 'somewhat detached' from the work of diocese and deanery. Among academy chaplains the proportion saying this was distinctly smaller at less than a third (30.8%), but among independent school chaplains the proportion rose to almost three-quarters (72.6%): it seems clear that 'the diocese' is closer to its academies, but that an alarming sense of separation exists between diocese and independent sector chaplains – despite the fact that all these must have the bishop's license, or at least permission to officiate (PTO), in the diocese.

If we look more closely at what degree of professional support is offered to those in school chaplaincy, the picture is similarly worrying. Responding to a sentence setting out what might appear minimal levels of professional support – the provision of published guidelines for school chaplaincy and regular support sessions – the contrast between academies and other sectors was again clear. Almost half of academy chaplains (46.2%) said these were provided by their diocese, but in Church maintained schools the figure was only just over a third (34.2%) and in the independent sector less than a fifth (17.9%). Whether this is a matter of actuality or perception matters little:

what is clear is that a significant proportion of those in school chaplaincy sense both distance and lack of professional support from the structures of the institutional Church.

Nor is this simply a matter of locality. When questioned about the wider Church, more than half of responding chaplains (56.9%) agreed that the national strategy of the Church takes little account of the potential of school chaplaincy, and fewer than a tenth (9.4%) could bring themselves to disagree, with a third remaining neutral. As to the way the Church regards and values school chaplaincy, chaplains were invited to respond to the sentence 'School chaplaincy is admired in the Church as a pioneering ministry.' Alarmingly, only just over one per cent (1.2%) of respondents agreed strongly that this was the case, with a further tenth (10.0%) agreeing; and this left over half of respondents (53.8%) registering their disagreement, with over a third (35%) neutral. It is clear, and depressing, that there is little confidence among those working in chaplaincy in schools that their ministry is understood or valued by the national Church.

It is, of course, possible to object that the Church, though a national institution, is locally manifested, and that the very notion of 'national strategy' is therefore out of place; or to suggest that 'admiration' is an entirely inappropriate aspiration. However, the evidence seems to point clearly to chaplains in schools having very little sense that the significance of the work they are doing is understood, or properly supported on a professional basis, by the institution within which they are accredited as lay or ordained ministers and which they represent. The general sense of personal support from a bishop asserted by chaplains might well be argued to counteract all this, and to display a real interpersonal strength in the institution; but another take on this is that chaplains - in what is, after all, an episcopal system - loyally or diplomatically 'talk up' episcopal support, while at the same time admitting the system's real shortcomings.

School chaplains and the wider Church: individual voices

The individual voices of chaplains reinforced the picture given by the aggregate figures. Asked to complete the sentence beginning: '*As far as the relation of school chaplaincy to the wider Church is concerned, it seems to me that …*', chaplains again wrote clearly, reflectively and openly, and in these responses with a degree of frankness at times indicating a painful sense of the wider Church being out of touch with their work. Several themes emerged, with an overall feeling from chaplains that they work in a ministry context which is both highly significant in missional terms, but at the same time mostly unregarded by the institutional Church.

Chaplains plainly see the national Church - as opposed to local church communities – as indifferent to the ministry of school chaplaincy. From a cautious 'the wider Church of England can often seem ambivalent' to the frustrated 'I might as well be working as a missionary in a foreign country', there is a wide spectrum of discontent. One chaplain writes, 'not much is known about us'; another comments that 'the fact that it is the C of E's single largest piece of youth work is unappreciated'. A common sense of frustration is variously expressed: 'the wider church does not appreciate the enormous potential for contact with young people that school chaplaincy represents', writes one chaplain; another says: 'the wider church does not appreciate the missional potential of its schools or of the vital vocational work that is going on in school among young people.'   There is a clear and common perception among chaplains that the Church is simply neglecting, or just failing to notice, the major strategic significance of school chaplaincy.

One chaplain suggests a link between the predominantly parochial basis of the Church's ministry and an institutional unawareness of the missional potential of school chaplaincy: 'I suspect most clergy in parish ministry give little thought to school chaplains, and that most are unaware of the potential to engage with young people who generally would never step inside a church.' Another writes: 'the Church simply does not appreciate that a daily ministry

to hundreds of young people is significant both in the present and the future. The Church would appear to be more concerned with the half-a-dozen young people who attend the local parish church.'

There is also a clear sense that the Church's institutional investment, and therefore its core mentality, is rooted in the parish system. This leads one chaplain to the view that 'The Church of England only understands the parochial system and regard[s] any one in Chaplaincy as being failed parish priests'; another chaplain links different kinds of chaplaincy together as suffering from institutional neglect: 'like all forms of chaplaincy (prison and hospital) it is not considered much by the diocese'. A less overtly negative view is: 'they like what we do but … it is not regarded as proper church'; and another chaplain seems to accept what he sees as the status quo: 'Those in parish ministry see their role as more significant'. There is a similar awareness in the response which acknowledges that 'our work … [is] seen as being somewhat unrelated to mainstream parish ministry.' Here, the use of the term 'mainstream' is particularly telling: it is again an acknowledgement that whatever may be going on in extra-parochial ministry, it is likely to be seen as marginal rather than mainstream. This raises the question, where is 'real' ministerial work going on? One chaplain writes: 'When you meet clergy outside chaplaincy, there seems to be a continual argument about who is doing the real work.' Another, more optimistically, reports a 'mixed response to school chaplaincy – some see it as a 'cop out' of parish ministry, some think that it is a wonderful opportunity.' There is a strong tinge of bitterness in some comments: one chaplain expresses the view that 'what I do is not considered proper work'; another that 'it is sometimes regarded as a 'soft option' by parish clergy'; another that chaplaincy in independent schools is viewed as 'an easy option'.

That there is perhaps a long pedigree to the attitudes described is indicated by one chaplain who writes: 'it [ie the Church] regards school chaplaincy as not a 'real' or 'authentic' ministry and that only the structures of the parish and diocese are proper ministries (30 years ago I used to receive a regular

letter asking me to return to proper ministry within a reasonable time!).'
This is echoed by another chaplain who says: 'my diocesan bishop is overtly
keen to get me back into a parish as soon as possible!'   The fact that school
chaplaincy is thought to be perceived as 'somewhat unrelated to mainstream
parish ministry' may easily transmute into a sense that it is 'not seen as being
as important as parish ministry'; although one chaplain writes 'It is actually
more challenging in my experience but some people think it is a soft option.'

There is a considerable and problematic issue for the Church here.   If, as
seems likely, there is a widespread perception in the 'mainstream' that the
parish context of ministerial engagement is 'authentic', and chaplaincies -
and school chaplaincies in particular - a 'soft option', then school chaplains
may be working not only on the edge, at the margins, but also under the
institutionally-derived burden of being sidelined by the Church.   What is
needed, it appears, is some recognition by the institutional Church that there
is a variety of contexts in which genuine ministry takes place, both parochially
– that is, in territorial units, many of which, however, seem in effect to be
more 'gathered', congregational settings than genuinely parish- or
community-based – and also extra-parochially.   It appears that the pattern of
thinking into which Anglicans naturally fall has the huge disadvantage of
assuming a traditional norm – the 'parochial' - and then defining other forms
of ministry in relation to it, by way of contrast and also of relative
disparagement.   It can be argued that the Church of England's whole
understanding of ministry today is disastrously skewed as a consequence of
inherited, inertial assumptions and limited ways of thinking: the parochial
setting is the place of genuine ministry, and 'fresh expressions' or the
occasional 'pioneer' ministry are the new 'leading edge'.   In fact, suggest
school chaplains, their own chaplaincy – and by implication other forms of this
ministry – are bringing the Church into personal touch with those at the very
margins who would never meet a vicar or attend a parish church.

Divergence from the 'mainstream' context of ministry is seen by some
(ordained) chaplains as having negative 'career' implications.   One chaplain

writes that 'the experience [school chaplaincy] gives a priest is at best seen as narrow and at worst as irrelevant in terms of preferment'. Another says: 'I get the impression that if I had said I was solely committed to going into school chaplaincy that would have counted against me and there would be some feeling that my training was wasted or that the Church wouldn't get their value out of me.' The term 'preferment' has a Trollopian ring to it; and there is a certain irony that (ordained) school chaplains inhabit a modern professional context – that of education – where quite rigorous structures of support, evaluation and promotion are in place; whereas the institutional Church they also inhabit - less comfortably, it seems, in the light of the responses in this section – remains at one level amateur and pre-professional. There is clearly an uneasy 'fit' for ordained school chaplains between the career or vocational understandings of the Church and those of the teaching profession, and the use of terminology such as 'preferment' and 'counted against me' suggests a real fear of being sidelined by those who have the power to shape a minister's life and destiny.

Working 'on the margins'…

The strongest thread of perception from school chaplains in this free-response section, however, is one related to the positioning of school chaplaincy as a ministry, and the ambivalent implications of this. The positioning of school chaplaincy is variously understood and described by chaplains as 'marginal', 'frontier', 'isolated', 'out on a limb', 'separate': the connotations of these varying descriptions ranging from the positive and affirming – 'frontier' – to the distinctly negative – 'out on a limb'. One chaplain uses the term 'mission work' as a positive description of his role (in contrast to the chaplain who spoke despairingly of being like 'a missionary in a foreign country'); for another, it is 'a somewhat forgotten ministry'. Another writes of the ambiguity of the positioning of school chaplaincy – 'I am a marginal figure on the edge of the church but this is a good place to be! It is the only place where the church meets outsiders. Because I am peripheral to the church I am the very frontier of its ministry.' This perhaps encapsulates the dilemma for many school chaplains: the Church for and within which their work is

undertaken has no clearly affirmative understanding of their ministry, and this places them in a marginal, almost 'outsider' position – one which may be rejoiced in, but also one which may lead to feelings of isolation and neglect.

What comes through most powerfully from these individual voices is the need chaplains sense for there to be some new recognition of their ministry, one positioned in some senses 'on the edge' of the institutional Church rather than in its parochial or cathedral close 'heartland', as both 'marginal' in the positive and missional sense, and at the same time of huge significance – given its daily contact with the young – for the future of the Church. School chaplains clearly inhabit an uneasy space, but one where the Church surely needs its ministers to be. Whether school chaplaincy happens to be located in independent or in state-funded institutions – and some chaplains report a political and social distaste in the Church for independent education - what counts is the actual presence of ministers, lay or ordained, in the school contexts where the young are living, learning and developing towards adulthood.

Relating to the Church: chaplains interviewed

My interviews with chaplains had initially prompted the survey question about the relation of chaplains in school to the wider Church; and returning to the interview data illuminates this issue further. One chaplain quoted earlier noted a lack of responsiveness in his local church officials, a sense of isolation from the wider Church community: having newly arrived in an independent boarding school, he described how:

> … there was a particularly low moment last term when I was thinking, why is no-one around for me because I was trying to make contact with local clergy and it was all getting rather difficult and I rang the Archdeacon … and he returned the phone call very quickly and said we must meet and we tried a few dates and nothing happened, and then it's all been forgotten ….

School chaplains' thinking about accountability and responsiveness presents a picture of a whole cadre of people working for the Church who have little sense of direct connection with their wider ecclesial community. Another chaplain quoted earlier described his commitment as first and foremost to the school: 'I feel Christianly that I have a huge responsibility of loyalty to the headmaster and to the school, and that is part of my witness ...'. This chaplain had come from parish ministry, and noted a 'slightly selfish thing of no longer being in control'; but also a 'sense of not quite being in the mainstream of what the Church was talking about': it is as if the parochial/diocesan world is operating according to an agenda which is somehow irrelevant to people who are outside that world.

This sense of separation between the 'world' in which school chaplains live and work, and the 'world' of the Church is echoed by another chaplain in a maintained comprehensive school: this for him is 'the bigger narrative that the Church needs to listen to'. 'Listening' is a key term for him; he perceives an institutional Church which simply needs to attend to what those outside it, or on the margins of it, say, rather than 'banging on about mission'. He goes on to say: 'The answers to those conflicts we live with in the Church are to be found through mission, and a two-way mission, of listening and of having humility, and of being vulnerable in love, rather than living in what can be introspective splendid isolation sometimes, which is a path to death.' Here, the institutional Church is perceived – with a degree of tense ambivalence – as in danger of isolated separation from the world in which those outside it live: the chaplain seems torn by a sense of the division between core values of Christian living which make for life - listening, humility, being vulnerable in love – and the isolation of the Church which makes for death. 'Church' and 'world' become almost dichotomous.

In an independent day school, another chaplain spoke of his relationship with the Church, seeing it as 'integral, as far as what is being done; marginal, in the understanding of it by the Church'. For this chaplain, as for the chaplain just quoted, the distance of chaplaincy from parish ministry is considerable.

At one point in the interview, he asked rhetorically: 'How many people do they [ie parish clergy] see? And what do they do?'; and he went on to admit: 'My real fear is that one day they'll ask me to leave chaplaincy, and I'll have to consider going back to parish ministry, and I love chaplaincy so much….'. It is as if for this chaplain the distance between the 'world' of chaplaincy in schools and the 'world' of the parish is almost as great as that between 'Church' and 'world' for the chaplain quoted above; it feels almost like the contrast between life and death.

'Just absolute madness'

Another chaplain, working in an inner-city Church comprehensive, used the idea of marginality to describe his own position in relation to the Church, underlining the 'two worlds' perceptions just quoted. For him, the world of the institutional Church was bizarrely irrelevant to the youngsters among whom he worked: 'I just look at the state of the Church of England at the moment and the things people are arguing about and I just think, it's just not part of my world – and I just think, what's it about? You know, it's just absolute madness … why are we trying to destroy ourselves … what is the Church really up to? And I suppose that's another reason why chaplaincy is appealing, because I'm out of all that petty nonsense, really….'

It could well be that for other clergy working in school chaplaincy and other chaplaincy contexts there is a similar sense of the institutional Church being inherently self-destructive, and of chaplaincy in various fields and in different kinds of institution – whether medical, military, corrective or educational - offering a saner, better-supported and more down-to-earth context for ministerial work than the 'world' of the Church. If indeed the institutional – and parochial - Church is perceived by many in chaplaincy as both distant, unsupportive and alien to the everyday world in which most people live, a place of 'petty nonsense', then one has to ask how the situation might be improved or transformed. It is, one suspects, only through a huge change in

fundamental thinking at the level of deeply-held and institutionally-inherent assumptions that this could come about.

In Chapter 2, I outlined recent debates about ministry and mission, noting the drive to 'Fresh Expressions'; the counter-reformatory, renewed insistence 'For the Parish' (See: Davison and Milbank, 2010); and the absence of serious thinking about the potential and significance of chaplaincy. I also quoted Martyn Percy's assertion, against 'fresh expressions', that '...church is actually it. That parish ministry is still the cutting edge.' (Percy, 2008). What this conviction that 'parish ministry is still the cutting edge' may represent, I fear, is that even a younger generation of Church leaders, with the most progressive of credentials, may be unable to resist the inherent Anglican conservatism which says, in effect, that this is the way we have always done things; and that the medieval structures and patterns of organisation we have are still essentially fit for missional purpose in the twenty-first century.

Student perceptions: the voice of the young

If chaplains have such a generally despairing view of the institutional Church and how it regards them, how are they themselves perceived by those among whom they work? The student focus groups produced some very interesting data, and I want now to explore this data to bring out the value which pupils find in chaplaincy; and interestingly, there were clear echoes of earlier Irish findings about the positive attitudes of school students to their chaplains (Murphy, 2004). It is worth prefacing my discussion with a comment about the student focus groups themselves. What was most impressive about them was the clarity of their views, the straightforwardness of their thinking and yet at the same time the penetrating nature of their insight into what chaplaincy in their school – and by implication in other schools – was all about. By no means particularly Christianly-minded people – some came from other faith backgrounds, others acknowledged their lack of belief in any faith, very few declared any Christian commitment - the students nonetheless displayed the capacity to articulate clearly their views on what chaplaincy was for, and to assess what value it added to their school's life. If occasionally individuals

or the group were lost for words, unable to say exactly what it was they meant, for nearly the whole of the group time there was clarity and precision: and anyone wanting to understand whether chaplaincy actually delivered value and added spiritual capital to the life of the school would have been encouraged by these students' views.

In exploring the data from the focus groups, I shall refer back to ideas introduced in Chapter 3, the concepts of religious socialisation, spiritual capital and the chain of memory, identified there as important for understanding the nature and significance of both Church of England schools and of Anglican chaplaincy. Whilst these concepts have not been substantively re-introduced in the previous two chapters focusing on the chaplains' own experiences and understanding of their mission, since it was most important to give space to chaplains' own understandings of their ministry, in the focus groups we have an external perspective on school chaplaincy rather than an inward expression of its identity. There are also two further questions underlying the rest of this chapter: how do students – key clients of chaplaincy – understand the nature of this ministry, and how far do their perceptions link with the chaplains' own self-understanding and with the conceptual background set out earlier?

School chaplaincy's core activities: liturgy

School students seem to understand the chaplain's role to be focused in the core functions of liturgical leader and pastoral carer, and I shall first explore the liturgical aspect. In the independent school focus group, held in a school where the chapel building is a major architectural declaration of the significance of faith, students saw the chaplain's role as inevitably focused on the chapel and its liturgy: since as one student put it, '… because the chapel is such a part of life here … it would be weird if you didn't have a chapel …; it wouldn't be the same at all'. Asked what were the most important things the chaplain does, another student responded: '[He] takes the services … I think that's his main role, just to take the services'; to which another added (unwittingly going to the etymological root of the word 'chaplain'): 'Just to

look after the chapel'; concluding, 'we haven't got any religious aspect if he's not taking the services.' In the academy - where the chapel is an unimposing, small room off the beaten track - and where the student group was composed of younger pupils, one responded to a question about the purpose of chaplaincy with the down-to-earth: 'We're a Church of England school so we need a chaplain; we have a chapel and we need someone to look after it.'

In one of the two Church of England maintained schools, a focus group member said that the most important thing the chaplain did was to 'take the Eucharists', since she 'runs the whole worship' of the school. Other students in the same group noted that the chaplain was 'passionate' about worship, and 'expert' in leading it, though one student referred to 'the scepticism that surrounds assemblies', going on to say: ' that's when you get the most religious input, when you get assemblies and everyone says 'Oh no, it's assembly, we don't want to believe that and then that sort of pushes it away … because there are poignant meanings in what [the chaplain] says, but you sometimes lose those because of the scepticism.' In the other maintained school, the chaplain's role as the author of the daily 'thoughts and prayers' for the school was felt to be important, as was his leadership role: 'He leads assemblies … and of course the termly Communion.' Leading religious worship is seen as a core aspect of school chaplaincy.

These comments illuminate what I noted in Chapter 3 about the changing nature of religious socialisation. Students were clear that they did regularly attend assemblies, chapel or Eucharist - in the independent school there is a weekly, whole-school Eucharistic celebration and daily optional services as well; but what they experience appears to be felt as participating in the 'contingency, relativity and doubt' of the age mentioned earlier (See:Collet Sabe, 2007). Students are not experiencing liturgy as a source of authoritative and compelling messages - the world of the young Stephen Dedalus is long past (See: Joyce, 1960) - but are instead quizzical, questioning, themselves exploring the question 'Who am I?' (Vermeer, 2009). Nonetheless, where students are participating in - or to suggest a less consenting stance - even

simply present at celebrations of the Eucharist, there is an inevitable, inherent link in the 'chain of memory' which according to Hervieu-Léger is core to a sense of religious community (Hervieu-Leger, 2000).   It is also possible to suggest that each celebration of the Eucharist, even each address from a chaplain or visiting preacher, is potentially adding to the student's spiritual capital: as one student said, '… when other priests come in and preach, sometimes there's something said and you're kind of, 'Oh, actually…', and you think about it a bit ….'; to which another student added, 'they'll give us life lessons'.   And such addresses may prompt new perspectives: one student recounted how a sermon of his chaplain's 'really made me change the way I looked at the world and everything', encouraging him to take on a more religious view of the universe in contrast to an earlier, materialistic stance.

School chaplaincy's core activities: pastoral care

There was also a clear, shared expectation among students that pastoral care was at the heart of the chaplain's role: one student, invited to describe the chaplain's role in a word or two, said simply 'It's care'.   The term 'pastoral care' was used naturally by some students, while for others the term 'being there for people' came more readily; but there were uncertainties about what precisely 'pastoral care' consisted of, perhaps most sharply expressed by the student who, as a day pupil in a boarding school said: 'I find the pastoral care I need I can get at home 'cos I go home every evening … I don't really feel the need to talk to [the chaplain] or anyone about my problems because my Mum's always there.'   Interestingly, in this school the chaplain was generally referred to in the focus group discussion as 'Father', almost as if the role were parental; and it would be interesting to explore how the use of particular titles – or other forms of address – might affect the student's perception of what the chaplain is and does.

 If one possible dimension of the role of 'pastoral carer' is quasi-parental, there was no indication from any of the groups that their chaplain was anything other than a receptive listener, and certainly none that the chaplain

was concerned to persuade or argue a student towards a particular stance or viewpoint, as perhaps once parents were inclined to do. One brief, anecdotal comment is relevant here. In one of the Church of England maintained schools, two students waited behind after the formal discussion had ended to offer their individual stories of how their chaplain had helped them. One described how as a student of philosophy, theology and ethics she had found herself questioning her faith, and in particular how her discussions with the chaplain had helped her. Having earlier been 'a strong Christian', she had gone away for the weekend with an evangelical Christian Union school group and found herself now so alienated by their approach that she no longer wanted to 'assign herself' as a Christian. The chaplain, she said, had helped her in this period of the questioning, and discarding, of her earlier faith.

So for this student pastoral care was not about being argued into faith, but being accompanied on her journey, even if it was one that led away from a 'simple' faith: and this is arguably an aspect of the 'relativity and doubt' referred to above. For the chaplain to accompany the pupil on a journey away from simple faith rather than leave her to undertake that journey alone can be seen as an indication of the chaplain's unwillingness to use 'pastoral care' as a kind of covert evangelism – a use which David Lyall condemns bluntly as 'unethical' in *The Integrity of Pastoral Care* (Lyall, 2001 p.107). It is also interesting that if one accepts the broad drift of Fowler's argument in his *Stages of Faith* (Fowler, 1981), the student in this narrative was in the process of developing her own 'individuative-reflective faith', a process in which the chaplain was her pastoral support.

A chaplain's pastoral care was characterised by students as distinctive in its objectivity – it is disinterested; there 'for others'; available to all, since the chaplain is 'a person for everybody' whatever their faith background or lack of faith. He or she is 'more like a friend to people'; and 'a lot more personal than other staff members': the chaplain is a person who will listen, 'be there' for people, will be reliably confidential, someone invested with complete trust at an inter-personal level. Whilst some students felt that the chaplain

was particularly instrumental in fostering confidence among younger pupils, who might perhaps be finding the transition to secondary school hard to cope with, others saw the chaplain as particularly able to support those higher up the school; as one student expressed this: 'when you get a bit older you start to think about faith, and to question a lot more … I think more older students will go to [the chaplain].'

Where do students draw a line between a chaplain and a counsellor? For one student in a maintained Church of England school, the counsellor was 'for social issue and personal issues … I wouldn't go to her and say I'm having trouble with my faith if I was a Christian.' The same student made equally clear that it would not be appropriate to go to the chaplain with a personal relationship issue, seeing the chaplain as exclusively for issues of faith; another, though, argued that the chaplain's ability to assess objectively was what was sometimes needed for all kinds of issues: 'I mean there's so many issues you can't just say everything goes into this pile … there are some issues [for] which you will need someone who doesn't know anything about you, and you need it to be very confidential….' In brief, students seem to understand the pastoral care of chaplaincy as characterised by a particular focus on matters of faith and identity – the deeply personal, rather than the inter-personal – but as having also the quality of more trustworthy confidentiality.

The chaplain as representative Christian figure

There was a distinctive strand of student perception which saw the chaplain as focusing the religious identity of the school, being its 'religious leader', and, in the independent school, of seeing the chaplain as comparable in institutional significance to the head, 'leading the Christian element of the school', being 'a similar figure to the head': this interestingly underlined chaplains' high valuation of the spiritual leadership aspect of their function. At one level this was seen as an obvious institutional necessity: 'We are a religious foundation so we need a chaplain'; at another it was seen as a hugely important representative role: the chaplain is 'a religious beacon for the school'. One younger student in the academy memorably described the

chaplain as 'a handful of the school's essence'; and all the groups seemed to see a close and even indissoluble link between the chaplain and the school ethos, as if the chaplain somehow embodied that ethos in his or her way of being: take away the chaplain, it seemed to be suggested, and the school's ethos is at least compromised, and more probably dissipated.

This was connected for some students with the notion of the chaplain as a 'role model', someone who models a Christian way of living and being in the school community; it was (again) a younger pupil in the academy who, commenting on this idea, said of the chaplain that 'he infects us with happiness and smiles'. The chaplain's very presence in the school was felt to be significant - 'the fact that he's there' - and at this point the thinking of students showed a surprising convergence with that of Pope Benedict, as outlined in Chapter 6: one student contributing to the academy focus group said, 'It's not what he does, it's his '-ness', who he is, his essence.' This sophisticated view of the ontological nature of the minister came from a Year 9 student, it is worth noting; and another in the same group ventured the view that the chaplain was really a kind of 'scaled-down version of Jesus, a sort of mini-Jesus'.

What is fascinating about this is the extent to which it echoes not only Roman Catholic thinking about priesthood, the idea of the *alter Christus*, but also school chaplains' own perceptions about the nature of their ministry. A predominant line of thought among the chaplains responding to the survey, it will be recalled, was the notion of a 'ministry of presence', a focus on being rather than doing. And here, in the perception of a fourteen-year-old student is a terse and powerful expression of that understanding: 'It's not what he does, it's his '-ness', who he is, his essence.' This is both encouraging for those in the ministry of school chaplaincy, and also challenging: the implication is that the shrewd student will be noting not so much what the chaplain's public front projects, the various things which he or she initiates or is involved in within the school, but will be looking instead at the nature of the person, who the chaplain is and to what extent the ministry offered by

the chaplain echoes the dominical example of the ministry of Jesus. The chaplain is indeed expected to be a 'faithful practitioner of Christian living', as I suggested in my opening chapter (See: p.21).

Further distinctive insights from the student focus groups are worth mentioning. All the groups - including that from the independent school, where the chaplain also had a teaching role - offered the notion of the chaplain occupying a 'bridge' role, being someone 'in the middle ground' as one student expressed the idea, between students and teachers, or between students and the school authorities. It is as if the chaplain's role does - in the eyes of students - clearly demarcate him or her from other staff members, making the chaplain's status distinctly different from that of other school employees. Again, one might speculate that this may have to do with the idea of the chaplain as a 'man of God', a 'priest', a 'minister': somehow because of his or her role as chaplain occupying a marginal or hinterland position in relation to the institution, and perhaps thereby acquiring a greater degree of trust among students.

Again, students saw clearly the role of the chaplain as having an educative influence in the sphere of belief, or as one student put it, 'enlightening us about faith'. Whilst chaplains surveyed put the pedagogic function of their role at a lower level of priority, as I explained earlier, for pupils there appears to be a keen awareness that chaplaincy involves a kind of teaching, even if that is teaching by example, by being, rather than by doing or saying. A further dimension of student thought emerging was that the chaplain's role was distinct - even if he or she operated also as a subject teacher - from the formal education of the school which would be recorded in examination results and league tables. One student said that the chaplain was not so much for 'education' as for 'the institution', that the role was to do with ethos - a point echoed by several, as I indicated earlier - and with 'helping to build community'. One student group developed the idea too that the chaplaincy was not about 'subjects', but about the personal development of students, and that this made clear the school's educational priorities: 'I think

it defines the school; it would be just another school if we didn't have a chaplaincy … the chaplaincy helps to show that it's not just focused on getting the grades, it's actually about building a person.'

The student perspective: implications for school chaplaincy

In terms of the concepts earlier set out in Chapter 3 – religious socialisation, spiritual capital and the chain of memory - it is clear from the 'student voice' (See: Ofsted, 2012) that there is genuine insight among pupils into the wider significance of school chaplaincy.   Regular assemblies and worship led by the chaplain are seen as an expected – if sceptically received – aspect of the life of the Church school, part of its distinctive process of religious socialisation. Chaplaincy is seen as intimately associated with the ethos of the school, a further aspect of religious socialisation. Students are aware of the personal spiritual capital which the chaplain may be conducive, even crucial, in adding to the individual pupil through personal discussion and interaction. And – particularly in the two schools where the Eucharist has a key and distinctive place at the centre of the community's life – the 'chain of memory' is kept alive through the *anamnesis* of the liturgy. The way the student groups 'read' and understand school chaplaincy in the very different contexts of their contrasting schools makes clear, I think, not only something about the lived quality of the chaplaincies they are experiencing, but also a wider point about the significance of chaplaincy in schools itself: what the students are talking about – their chaplaincy - is something at the very heart of the nature and purpose of their schools, they believe.

Conclusion

Having conducted the focus groups, transcribed much of their conversation, and reflected both on what was being said and on the undercurrents of the dialogues, I remain – frankly – stunned by the quality, clarity and perceptiveness of the students' insight; and I find myself contrasting that with the apparent shortcomings of understanding, vision and support which seem to exist in the institutional Church if the evidence of the survey data and of

the interviews is to be believed. It is as if the clients of school chaplaincy have a clear grasp of what it is for and what it offers; and as if the wider Church – at least from the perspective of chaplains themselves - has little understanding of this at all. School chaplains are in a ministry appreciated and respected by its clients, but one they see as currently unregarded by the official Church.

In the following chapter I shall describe the current, rapidly developing situation in school chaplaincy, highlighting some key dilemmas this raises; and propose a theological understanding of school chaplaincy derived from the various elements of the research project. I shall conclude by arguing that given the nature and significance of chaplaincy in schools, the support and development of this vital ministry of the Church must be an urgent priority.

Chapter 8: Challenges for Anglican school chaplaincy: identity, purpose and strategy

The school chaplaincy research project arose from my work with the Bloxham Project in support of chaplains in the particular context of Church of England secondary schools in all sectors of the education system, maintained, academy and independent. The picture of Anglican school chaplaincy I have presented is to this extent comprehensive, drawing as it does on data from eighteen in-depth interviews with a wide cross-section of school chaplains, a national survey with a strong, 42% response rate based on a database of almost four hundred schools and chaplains, and four student focus groups representing all school types. In this penultimate chapter I shall review the emerging, alternative model of 'para-chaplaincy', consider some of the issues this raises, and offer a theological understanding of the identity of Anglican school chaplaincy.

The inherited model: 'embedded' school chaplaincy

In essence, the 'model' of school chaplaincy which has been researched and discussed here is one which derives ultimately from the English public schools. In Chapter 5 I identified the work of Thomas Arnold as pivotal in the early modelling of a role which was to develop throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Originating in a stern moral leadership – the advocacy of righteousness – school chaplaincy had by the mid-twentieth century become an accepted feature of independent schools, its ministry adapted to focusing on teaching, liturgical leadership and pastoral care (Goodliffe, 1961); subsequently, the role evolved by the mid-twentieth century to that described by Marsh (Marsh, 1987), incorporating a newly-emphasised 'prophetic' element; and was also extended to Anglican maintained schools and academies in a largely unaltered form, although in this context it appears that the chaplain may now have reduced his or her subject teaching commitment and broadened involvement in the pastoral dimension to include especially the support of difficult pupils. The most recent published

literature suggests that this inherited model remains largely intact (Tregale, 2011, Threlfall-Holmes and Newett, 2011).

What the Bloxham Project's typology of school chaplaincy sought to do was to offer a way of understanding the functional aspects of this model of school chaplaincy under the six headings - pastoral, liturgical, spiritual, missional, prophetic and pedagogic – described and discussed earlier, and endorsed by the responses to the national survey.   This analysis of the role still seems to me to provide a helpful tool especially for the creation of job descriptions for school chaplains in varied school contexts, as well as being a basis for appraisal or review; though the research project has made clear that for practitioners themselves the interior perspective – the nature of the chaplain's 'being' – is of greater significance than any external, functional understanding.   Whether the perspective is functional or ontological, however, the inherited model is clear and well-established, and Paul Ballard's notion of 'embeddedness' is a helpful way of describing it: the Anglican school chaplain lives within and alongside the community she or he seeks to serve, while being committed to values which reach beyond it.

Alternative models: Roman Catholic school chaplaincy

However, school chaplaincy in England clearly cannot be seen as limited to the Anglican context. It is also a key feature of Roman Catholic schools across the country, where the expectation that there should be a chaplain appears axiomatic and the role of the chaplain more clearly delineated. The evidence from written sources suggests also that Roman Catholic (predominantly) lay chaplaincy is better resourced by clear theological thinking than Anglican (predominantly) ordained chaplaincy, as indicated earlier: the notion of spiritual accompaniment, seeing the chaplain as a fellow-traveller on the pilgrimage, has a strong identity. A comparative study of the two major churches' policy and practice in relation to school chaplaincy could be fruitful.

Alternative models: 'para-chaplaincy'

Beyond these two essentially institutional chaplaincy paradigms, however, there are other and increasingly significant non-institutional, para-church initiatives which may be seen as 'school chaplaincy' in a broader sense. The Australian experiment from 2007 onwards in providing chaplaincy for state schools at federal government expense is one such model. Under this scheme, part-time 'chaplains' recruited from local church groups have been offering pastoral support both to students, staff and parents in secondary schools, and the initial evaluation report contains some fascinating vignettes of this style of chaplaincy in action (See: Agombar, 2007, Hughes and Sims, 2009). Despite recently being ruled 'constitutionally invalid' in the Australian High Court, the National School Chaplaincy Program will, it is thought, continue under a different funding scheme (Anon, 2012): from the government perspective this model of school chaplaincy is clearly felt to be worthwhile, as a contribution by voluntary agencies to the pastoral wellbeing of school students and the wider school community.

Prompted by the success of the Australian programme, Scripture Union has subsequently explored through a number of pilot schemes the viability of a similar style of 'school community chaplaincy' in England (Scripture Union, 2009). In March 2012, Scripture Union demonstrated its commitment to this new model of school chaplaincy by convening a day conference on 'educational chaplaincy' which gathered representatives of a number of national and local organisations involved in the delivery of the new-style 'chaplaincy' services to schools. The conference revealed that there is now emerging a serious alternative to the inherited model of 'embedded' school chaplaincy, in which a new style of para-chaplaincy (as it seems appropriate to call it) is being offered to schools. Essentially, the new para-chaplaincy appears to be modelled on an evangelical tradition of Christian youth work (See: Ward, 1999); it seems to be predicated on the idea of developing warm personal relationships with students and being able on this basis to offer faith-derived pastoral support to all, including supporting students who wish to

share and express their faith in school through membership of a Christian Union or similar group. Organisations offering the new para-chaplaincy, as yet largely operative in non-church schools, may now be poised to seize the initiative in school chaplaincy from those whose practice is rooted in the more traditional model; they may represent a major challenge to the inherited pattern of thinking and practice.

Para-chaplaincy initiatives: LCET

One local charitable organisation which has pioneered this approach is the Luton Churches Educational Trust (LCET), whose work has – interestingly – been sympathetically reported in the Roman Catholic journal 'The Tablet' (See: Curtis, 2011). Set up some twenty years ago, LCET was originally responding to the cultural and spiritual impact of secularisation on the young; factors identified earlier in this thesis - lack of religious socialisation, a deficit of spiritual capital, and the fracturing of the 'chain of memory' connecting the young and the inherited faith of the churches – are implicit in the initiative. LCET now speaks of 'developing spiritual literacy'; of 'being there for young people at the right moment'; and their chaplaincy team 'provides inspiration and challenge for the spiritual side of young people's lives'.   Their mission is described as working mainly in local secondary schools 'to support their provision of spiritual development within the curriculum and the wider school community' (Luton Churches Educational Trust, 2012).

The charity – funded by local churches and national charitable trusts including the Jerusalem Trust - has developed a track-record of respected work among local secondary schools, eight of which regularly receive its young 'schools workers' as leaders of assemblies, contributors to classroom religious education, mentors for troubled pupils, organisers of off-timetable days of spiritual exploration and development, and convenors of pupil Christian groups.   LCET also offers out-of-school provision for 're-engaging' excluded pupils, where an emphasis on measurably building self-esteem, raising

aspiration and improving collaborative skills is central (Luton Churches Educational Trust, 2012).

The chaplaincy aspect of LCET's work was at an interesting stage at the time of a personal visit I made to the organisation in late March 2012. The chaplaincy team leader, a young graduate who described her church background as 'very varied', including a spell in Anglicanism but mostly in non-denominational evangelical groups, wanted to emphasize the view that the most crucial aspect of LCET's chaplaincy work was in assisting the development of 'critical skills': that is, the encouragement of a critical, interrogative stance towards the assumptions of the secular society in which the young were now growing up. In this understanding, prompting questions about the messages society brings to the young through magazines, music, the internet and other media is a pre-requisite to any real discussion about faith and its place in personal and social life. Where the young are more religiously literate, however, and have benefited from good religious education in school, the task of the trust was to give young people 'space to hear [God's] Spirit, and to allow head knowledge to become the knowledge of the heart'. The role of the 'chaplain' – someone who drops in to schools and meets pupils informally – was about 'facilitating pupils' spiritual development', 'facilitating the spiritual journey of young people, where God is leading them.'

There are evident 'post-evangelical' echoes in this approach (See: Lynch, 2002), which coming from evangelical origins now seems more at ease with the language of the 'spiritual journey' than with that of 'conversion'. This reflects a more recent and open trend in some youth work thinking; Pete Ward, for example, speaks of 'the direct preaching of the gospel' feeling 'inappropriate' in the context of 'outside-in' youth work, and emphasises that 'Young people need to be free to choose Christ for themselves, not to be manipulated or coerced into commitment ...' (Ward, 1999 p.21).   This approach was echoed by other members of the LCET chaplaincy team. One spoke of her own life having been 'transformed' by faith, and said that she was working in chaplaincy in the hope that young people would similarly find

that faith could be 'transforming, and healing and fulfilling'; her work was motivated, she said, by 'a desire that young people of all backgrounds and cultures and faiths should draw close to God'. Other team members spoke of wanting to 'explore their spirituality' with youngsters, and – possibly echoing Ward's stance - of not wanting to expose the young to church cultures where there was 'pressure', where they felt 'controlled or manipulated'.

This approach to school chaplaincy – a model in which young people of (usually evangelical) Christian faith, trained as youth workers, 'drop in' to schools to meet and befriend the young, hoping through RE teaching, assembly presentations and conversation to prompt questioning of the materialist values of secular society and to open up the possibility of faith – appears reflective and respectful. These para-chaplains also have the characteristic – possibly an advantage in communicative terms – of being fairly close in age to the young people amongst whom they work, in distinct contrast to the school chaplains I had interviewed during the research programme, all of whom could not unfairly be described as middle-aged.

Other para-chaplaincy and related initiatives

There is a range of other enterprises which, like LCET are offering para-chaplaincy or 'drop-in' chaplaincy in schools, and Internet searches indicate that these all apparently stem from evangelical/charismatic, inter- or non-denominational sources. For example, Christian Youth Outreach (CYO), based in Colchester, carries out work in local schools which their website describes as including: assisting school staff with 'assemblies, lessons, lunchtime and after-school groups, pastoral support and extra-curricular activities'. CYO is one of a number of local organisations linked via the internet through their use of the website Schoolswork.co.uk, which originated at LCET as a resource for youth workers active in schools (now described as 'schools workers') and which has now developed a national network of 3,800 'members', who have registered on the website. This site describes itself as being 'about every Christian who works in and visits schools across the UK, passionate about

making a difference in the lives of children and young people' (Schoolswork, 2012).

Schoolswork itself appears to have a socially-involved and activist change agenda, with some ambitious intentions, as the website's 'Editorial' suggested in May 2012:

> I want to see fewer exclusions; I want to see a reduction in numbers of students turning to self-harm; I want to see places where students can express their anger in helpful ways; I want to see spaces in school where you can share about faith in ways that are meaningful and real; I want to see students restored to wholeness…   (Schoolswork, 2012).

This impressive change agenda might well have emerged from a group of embedded school chaplains in, say, the context of a group of academies; that it emerges from a para-church context is a challenging reminder that Christian educational and pastoral motivation is by no means limited to the institutional Church, or to its formally-appointed representatives in schools.

Nor are embedded school chaplains alone in their concern for spirituality. Another organisation, again largely evident through its website, is Prayer Spaces in Schools. Developed from the international evangelical/charismatic organisation 24-7 Prayer (See: 24-7 Prayer, 2012), Prayer Spaces in Schools offers in-school courses based around the idea of a quiet space for reflection and prayer:

> Prayer Spaces in Schools enable children and young people to explore faith and spirituality from a broadly Christian perspective in a safe, creative and interactive way… (Prayer Spaces in Schools, 2012).

At the Scripture Union conference on chaplaincy in March 2012 it was evident from a workshop run by Prayer Spaces in Schools that, whilst rooted in the same general evangelical/charismatic theological location, the organisers were keen to enter the spirituality area with sensitivity and with respect for the experience and faith (or non-faith) background of school students. They also evinced an understanding of spiritual development, and an openness to

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the use of many of the aids for prayer and reflection – icons, candles and so on – which the broader Christian tradition includes.

Professional issues for para-chaplaincy

There are, however, important professional issues implicit in the new para-chaplaincy and associated 'schoolswork' approaches. What is the nature of the training and qualification of the para-chaplains now active in schools? Are young para-chaplains trained in 'Christian youth work' skills, linked generally with non-denominational evangelical organisations (See: Centre for Youth Ministry, 2012, Schoolswork, 2012) really equipped for 'pastoral care' within the parameters of 'integrity' suggested by Lyall (Lyall, 2001 p.12) ? What, similarly, might be reasonable expectations of the professional standards and ethics of para-chaplains? How confident can schools be that para-chaplains will have a clear understanding of their own responsibility and be held within a clear framework of accountability? These are real questions for any headteacher considering para-chaplaincy access to his or her school; for the existence of legislation which commits schools to the promotion of the 'spiritual' development of their pupils (Her Majesty's Government, 1988) is at least potentially an invitation for any group which defines itself as dealing in 'spirituality' to seek access to schools by urging the importance of its own particular contribution to the curriculum.

Whereas an 'embedded' school chaplain, lay or ordained, will have been trained and authorised by the Church, and will be clearly accountable both to the school and to the Church, operating within a framework explicitly or implicitly set out by the school, there are evident questions, including those indicated above, which the new para-chaplaincy prompts. This significant phenomenon, which represents a distinctively different approach to traditional Anglican patterns of thinking and practice in school chaplaincy, seems poised as I have suggested to increase its influence: building on the earlier conference of March 2012, Scripture Union held a gathering in Autumn 2012 with a view to developing a national support organisation for school

chaplaincy in maintained schools. Such a development could constitute a potential challenge not only to the Bloxham Project's support work, but also to any national or diocesan developments in school chaplaincy from the Church of England; and this suggests that empirical research designed to clarify some of the issues I have identified for para-chaplaincy would be timely and appropriate.

Para-chaplaincy and the Niebuhrian spectrum

The impetus for para-chaplaincy emerges, I have suggested, from evangelically- and charismatically-rooted groups which have genuine pastoral and personal concern for the young. The theological space from which it comes, however, looks significantly removed from that inhabited by the inherited model of embedded chaplaincy. To return to the question of the relation of God and the human world as set out in Chapter 2, it is as if the inherited pattern of school chaplaincy and the new model of para-chaplaincy originate from different locations on the Niebuhrian spectrum; or, in terms suggested by Bevans and Schroeder, from different responses to the question, what is the value of human culture as the context in which the gospel is preached (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005 p.34)? The inherited model appears to emerge from a theological space more liberally-inclined, more receptive to culture, seeing culture as capable of mediating Christ. Partly, at least, this might be because the context of the Church school is one in which there is positive cultural shaping by the traditional values of the Church, and in which chaplains potentially have significant personal influence on the institutional ethos, the nature of the school culture in which the young live. In contrast, para-chaplaincy appears to stem from a more conservatively-inclined theological space, one nearer Niebuhr's 'Christ against culture' paradigm, where the task of mission, in Niebuhr's characterisation, is to bring youngsters out of the world of culture, into 'the kingdom of light', the world of the church (Niebuhr, 1951 p.47). Again, it may be that para-chaplains, operating essentially as 'outsiders' to the institutions into which they come, bring with them a more questioning sense of culture as embodying the darker influences

of the contemporary, secularised world. Both models can be seen as deriving from different places on Niebuhr's spectrum, or from different, but equally valid, responses to Bevans and Schroeder's question: as Niebuhr insists, there is no chance of saying definitively, '*This* is the Christian answer' (Niebuhr, 1951 p.231).

A particularly sharp sense of the dangers of the world of culture, a realisation of the destructive potential of the secular context for the young, may be a distinctive feature of the new and dynamic style of para- chaplaincy. Developed from an earlier 'youth work' enterprise, similarly based largely in evangelical and charismatic churches, it has re-located 'youth work' from the churches, where its impact is now widely seen to be marginal, into schools, a context where the young are present in numbers. Sylvia Collins-Mayo has argued that 'Christian youth work helps unchurched young people who are indifferent to religion have a benignly indifferent attitude towards the faith', and that it is consequently 'not a total failure' (Collins-Mayo, 2011); but given its very limited impact on small numbers of the young, moving the thrust of evangelical youth work from churches to schools has a clear strategic logic. It is ultimately based on the same argument about the disconnection between the young and the inherited faith of the churches which I set out in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Intentionality in school chaplaincy

However, a degree of ambivalence may be discernible in the intentionality of the new para-chaplaincy: is it, like embedded chaplaincy, primarily dedicated to pastoral care, or is its core motivation evangelistic, its practice specifically designed to draw young people into church communities? At one level, para-chaplaincy expresses profound pastoral concern: the change agenda quoted above begins in a desire for the personal lives of youngsters to be better, and evidently embodies a concern with well-being, with 'fullness of life'. Similarly, 'exploring faith and spirituality' looks like a genuinely educational enterprise, dedicated to the spiritual development of students

whatever faith background they might come from, and without any pre-determined intention as to where this might lead. However, there is also discernible a core evangelistic motivation within 'schools work' which is seeking to befriend the young in schools with the hope of drawing them into the faith communities of local churches: one LCET worker described that organisation's task as being a bridge between the worlds of young people and that of the churches.

This does raise issues. David Lyall, as I have noted, has highlighted in his discussion of 'the integrity of pastoral care' what he terms the 'unethical' use of pastoral care to cover a fundamentally evangelistic intention. Para-chaplaincy's language of 'restoring students to wholeness', or of 'exploring faith and spirituality' certainly suggests an open pastoral and spiritual focus, but it may not be clear what are in reality the success criteria of the new para-chaplains; Lyall has suggested that in some contexts pastoral ministry to those outside the church community 'may be judged by its success in bringing in the outsiders to share the beliefs of the insiders' (Lyall, 2001 p.126). Detailed and careful qualitative research would be needed to clarify how the two impulses towards pastoral care and towards evangelism are balanced in the thinking of the organisations working in para-chaplaincy, and in the espoused theologies of those working as para-chaplains, and what their success criteria actually are.

In the research into embedded chaplaincy, the pastoral element of the chaplain's function emerged strongly as most significant for practitioners, as we have seen. However, despite school chaplains' prime commitment to pastoral care, and the lack of any specific mention of evangelism as significant to their role, the data also provides evidence of the desire to 'change the lives' of pupils, and to look longer-term to pupils' adult lives for indications of the transformative impact of chaplaincy work in school. It might ultimately be concluded, following further research, that though emerging from different theological spaces, both chaplaincy and para-chaplaincy in schools share a dual intentionality, supporting personal growth

and well-being, but also seeking to demonstrate convincingly to the young the attractiveness of living as a Christian, and to invite them to consider this as a possible life-option: 'human flourishing' and membership of a church community are, after all, hardly mutually exclusive.

Different models, similarities of substance

We might therefore see both the traditional, embedded model of school chaplaincy researched for this thesis and the newly-emerging para-chaplaincy model as similarly valid expressions of Christian missional and ministerial concern for the young. Both have clear pastoral motivation; but both also have a concern for bringing the young into the fold of the wider Church. Embedded Anglican chaplains routinely seek to induct pupils into the ongoing, committed community of the Church of England through the formal catechesis of voluntary classes leading to Confirmation; para-chaplains are eager to link those with whom they develop pastoral and personal relationships with the church communities – often non-denominational but occasionally Anglican – by which their chaplaincy work is sponsored.

Interestingly, something resembling the para-chaplaincy model has been adopted by at least one Anglican diocese as a standard pattern for its school chaplaincies. All Church of England secondary schools In the Diocese of Blackburn have full-time 'Christian youth workers' or 'chaplains' – the terms appear to be used interchangeably - recruited and employed by the youth department of the diocese, and qualified as youth workers (See: Diocese of Blackburn, 2008). They undertake a range of functions: leading assemblies, supporting the school's pastoral care system, relating with pupils and staff, supporting the student voice and taking an advocacy role (Caperon, 2008): and while this certainly resembles in some respects the traditional, embedded model of school chaplaincy, it also shares aspects of the youth work-derived, para-chaplaincy model. Here, the capacity of the youth worker or chaplain to be 'alongside' the young is key; and this can be seen as one understanding of 'incarnational' ministry, 'youth ministry where the kids are at' (Ward, 1999).

In a recent initiative in the deanery of Salisbury, young youth workers sponsored by an Anglican parish work part-time in two local Church secondary schools; while ordained chaplains operating far more in the mould of the inherited pattern work in another maintained Church secondary school and a local independent school (Caperon, 2011a). It is as if both the traditional, embedded model of school chaplaincy and the newer para-chaplaincy model now have currency within the Church, interestingly highlighting the institutional uncertainty of the Church of England about what a preferred model of school chaplaincy actually might be.

The Church of England and school chaplaincy

There is in fact no clear, shared understanding of the nature of school chaplaincy in the Church of England, nor is there a policy for school chaplaincy, or even a presupposition that Church schools should in principle have chaplains, in my own view a basic minimum expectation. Whilst there is a policy framework for Church schools, there has been no serious consideration of where chaplaincy sits within the mission of those schools. We do not even have any clear idea of how many of the Church's ministers, lay or ordained, are working in school chaplaincy: there is no official register or database of those with the formal title 'chaplain' in Church of England schools, and Crockford's list of some two-hundred school chaplains probably underestimates the total by around half (Crockford, 2009), as the Bloxham Project's contact database developed for the research project indicates. Add to this our ignorance about how many parish clergy and other Church workers may be offering informal chaplaincy of some kind to their local schools (Cf: Bishop and Oliver, 1985), and the picture is one of near-total uncertainty. That the Church has national officers to oversee policy and to support practice in both Higher Education (HE) and in Further Education (FE), but none in relation to school chaplaincy seems bizarre: for every child attends school as a core, common experience, whereas FE and HE represent additional educational experiences nearer the edge than the common centre of people's education.   It is remarkable that the Church appears to be so

institutionally uncommitted to what school chaplaincy represents: potentially its greatest opportunity for ministry to the young.

Clarifying a theology for school chaplaincy

The absence of any clear policy or theological thinking about school chaplaincy in the Church of England renders urgent, I believe, an attempt to supply this deficit. Recent para-chaplaincy developments, and associated initiatives in spirituality such as Prayer Spaces in Schools, represent a further challenge to the Church to clarify its thinking, and highlight the need for a positive assertion of a distinctively Anglican theology of school chaplaincy. The research project, however, has provided the practitioner data from which such a theology may be inductively developed through a process of theological reflection, and in the final section of this chapter I want to set out what seem to me the main aspects of such a theology. I shall bring in to the argument the key theological perceptions about chaplaincy highlighted in Chapter 2 in the work of Pattison, Morisy and Ballard, and in addition draw on my own experience as an observer and supporter of school chaplaincy as director of the Bloxham Project. As an exercise in practical theology, the aim will be to recognise the interactive, 'negotiating' relationship of practice and reflection, and to draw from the 'living, human document' of the real experience of practitioners (Gerkin, 1984, Miller-McLemore, 2008)*.

At the heart of the testimony of school chaplains gathered as data during the research project and reported and discussed in this thesis is the conviction that in some sense the ministry of the chaplain is the ministry of Christ. In one chaplain's reflections, it will be recalled, there was the simple calling 'to be Christ in this place'; in another, there was a recognition that the way to be a chaplain was to follow the example of Christ in his openness of relationship to people. Another chaplain spoke of 'bringing a little bit of Jesus' into the situation of the school, yet another of 'helping to shine a bit of Jesus light on things'. At the most basic level, chaplaincy for these chaplains is about the influence, the imitation and the presence of Christ: to carry the role of

chaplain is to 'carry' Christ into the situations and to the people with whom they engage, but also to recognise, with Alan Richardson, that: 'All true ministerial acts of the Church are *gesta Christi*, the acts of Christ,' and that Christ is 'the minister of every act of loving service that his disciples perform in his name' (Richardson, 1958 p.291).   One student commented that the chaplain was 'a sort of mini-Jesus': what is primarily distinctive about school chaplaincy is its Christ-derived and Christ-inspired nature as a ministry of the Church whose very mission is to be Christ to the world. School chaplaincy – whether lay or ordained - is a ministry which is rooted in the ministry of Christ.

At the forefront of this ministry, according to the chaplains themselves, is the call to pastoral care, to the nurturing and support of all those around them. When one student summed up the role of chaplaincy simply as 'care', he was identifying exactly what is the core motivation of school chaplains, even, as I have shown, those most strongly wedded to their public and liturgical role. The language of 'pastoral care', however, is as I argued earlier, in sore need of clarification, even purification.   Perhaps Stephen Pattison gets closest to the dangers inherent in talk about pastoral care in his stern dismissal of what can appear '... a minor and trivial activity of personal niceness to people without purpose, skill or theological significance ...'; and what school chaplains perhaps need to acquire is a way of talking about their pastoral care which lifts it to the level of Pattison's ' ... attending to and nurturing God's world, and all that is in it, for God's sake ...' (Pattison, 2008 p.9).   There is a long Christian tradition of spiritual care, as I have noted, and a re-description of 'spiritual pastoral care', making plain that the school chaplain's *spiritual* pastoral care is about depth and spirituality and prayer and personal identity, is desperately needed.   The specificity of the chaplain's spiritual pastoral care as a skilled, in-depth, ministerial commitment to the well-being and human flourishing – not least the spiritual flourishing - of the other person needs to be established in the context of the school: whatever school heads may think, chaplains do not exist simply in order to bolster a 'pastoral system' or to be its last resort with the intractable pupil.

Pastoral care, of course, emerges from a deep theological conviction about the value and potential of the person, the kind of conviction articulated by the chaplain who said 'the first duty of love is to listen', and who spoke of listening with 'compassion and imagination'. What mostly remained implicit in the testimony of school chaplains, though, was their understanding of the nature of the people they were committed to serve; it was as if the deep assumptions of theological thinking and practice were known and understood, and did not need further airing. What chaplains' responses universally revealed, however, was a clear commitment to an Irenaean theological anthropology; a sense that the adults and young people among whom they lived and worked were deserving of attention, respect and nurturing as children of God, bearing the image of God. As Bevans and Schroeder express this, it is:

> ... a positive appreciation of human beings while at the same time not being naive about human failure and human sinfulness ... humanity was created in God's image and called to grow into the divine likeness (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005 pp.69).

Now an Ireanean theological anthropology emerges from a particular theological stance; and what seems clear from the research project is that the practice of Anglican school chaplaincy as described by its practitioners is, despite the wide ecclesial spectrum they occupy and the range of theological heritage they acknowledge, largely rooted in an essentially liberal understanding of mission, in which pastoral ministry rather than evangelistic activity has the key place and where:

> ... mission is carried out as a search for God's grace that is hidden within a people's cultural, religious and historical context; it is a call to people to fulfil their deepest potential as human beings by allowing Christ to be the answer to their deepest human desires (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005 p.61).

In effect, the dominant operant theology of Anglican school chaplaincy researched is one in which there is a common commitment to promote 'human flourishing'.

These key points lie at the heart, perhaps, of an Anglican theology of school chaplaincy; but from my own observation of chaplains at work I would want to add some further elements. The liturgical ministry of school chaplains seems to me of huge significance. Whether the school chapel is a numinous space, an everyday school hall or a small classroom, the chaplain's task is somehow to make prayer and liturgy, formal or informal, Eucharistic or non-Eucharistic, things which as Ann Morisy expresses it 'link heaven and earth', providing the opportunity for all to sense the reality of God. Morisy's thinking also reminds us of the chaplain's role as 'priest of the everyday', and this emphasis on the rootedness of the chaplain's life in the ordinary life of the school community is significant: it is echoed by the chaplain who speaks of leading the worship of the community being a process of 'drawing together' everything in worship. In practice, the worshipping community of the school becomes 'church', and where the school offers catechesis for those wishing to affirm their own faith through Confirmation, school becomes the place where that affirmation of faith is culturally 'normal' rather than a cultural aberration, encouraged and supported by the school's whole ethos. Having seen in schools both formal Eucharistic worship led with great conviction and dignity, and informal worship led with simple integrity, I am in no doubt that school chaplains do have the capacity to open up the eternal dimension for the young: and it is at the core of the chaplain's own being, in the heart, that place where 'we encounter transcendence' (Lyall, 2001 p.19) that this is initiated.

This brings me to the insistence of both chaplains and pupils that it is not so much the effective performance of a specified role – important though that is – in which the core of school chaplaincy is revealed, but in the chaplain's own authenticity of personal being. The pupil's observation that it was not what a chaplain did, but his '-ness', his essential being, that counted, conveys a key insight: school chaplaincy is a ministry of transparent being, one in which

the life of faith is lived out with integrity within and before a community; as Martyn Percy has it, 'embodying and signifying' the Christian virtues of faith, hope and love. A ministry of presence – significant presence – is what chaplains themselves and their pupils see the school chaplain called to: and a strong similarity emerges between the (Roman Catholic) theology of the priest as an *alter Christus* - with its emphasis on ontology rather than sociological function - and the insights offered by school chaplains both lay and ordained into their own 'ministry of presence'.

A further important note is struck by the pupil's story of her chaplain's accompaniment on her journey away from simplistic faith. McKeone's *Wasting Time in School*, as we saw earlier, highlights the role of the chaplain as one who travels with the school student on their spiritual journey, and one of my own clearest personal insights into school chaplaincy emerged during the Bloxham Conference 2010 when I was tasked with preaching at the closing Eucharist on the Emmaus story from Luke 24. Here, the unrecognised Christ is the one who joins the disillusioned and questioning disciples on their way from Jerusalem after the Passion; he 'draws near' to them; he asks them about themselves and their journeying, prompting them to open up their own hearts; he then - and only then - presents them with a perspective from the Scriptures; makes to continue his own journey when the disciples approach Emmaus; and is only finally recognised as, pressed to stay with them, he sits together with them at table and breaks the bread. Christ the fellow traveller, the one who offers his 'presence in pilgrimage' (Glackin, 2004): this is a model, it became clear to me, which the school chaplain is called to incarnate. It is a model of presence, of accompaniment, of openness, of embodiment, of 'being': one which the chaplains studied in the research project also point towards.

Whatever the attractions of the newer para-chaplaincy model – and these have been suggested - I believe that the way forward for chaplaincy in Church of England schools lies in clarifying and promoting the understanding of chaplaincy expressed in the 'inherited model' practised by the 'embedded'

school chaplains studied in the research project.   Any notion of a 'way forward', however, requires the Church to recognise the strategic significance of the ministry of school chaplains and to develop an institutional determination to take it forward, offering the structures of support and development I have earlier argued for.   In the light of the new para-chaplaincy, this has become an urgent priority.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have considered the major current challenge to the inherited model of 'embedded' school chaplaincy, the emerging 'para-chaplaincy', and offered my own theological understanding of school chaplaincy in its Church of England context.   In the final, concluding chapter, I shall review the core outcomes of the research project, adding my own personal reflections on aspects of the research data and their implications for policy, and proposing further areas of research to illuminate both other models of chaplaincy in schools and further aspects of the 'embedded' Anglican model highlighted here.

Chapter 9: Conclusions – the outcomes of the research

My years with the Bloxham Project between 2006 and 2011, which first prompted my research into school chaplaincy, were some of the most rewarding of my lifetime in education. I learned to respect and admire the ministry of school chaplains through working closely with them as an adviser and mentor. The impetus for research emerged from a realisation of the gap in knowledge about the nature of this ministry; and the research itself, located as a practical-theological exploration within the area of professional practice research, has been productive, as this thesis has shown. From the total research process – encompassing the exploration of relevant literature; empirical work in both interview, focus group and survey modes; and data analysis rooted in theological reflection – has emerged significant, new knowledge: there is a specific and distinctive model of 'embedded' chaplaincy which operates in Church of England schools across both the independent, maintained and academy sectors of education. This thesis has set out substantial insights into the nature of this model of chaplaincy in Church of England schools and how this ministry is located within the wider contexts of the *missio dei*, the mission of the Church of England, and the social context of schools and our wider society in the secular age. In this concluding chapter, I shall outline the key conclusions emerging from the research.

Conclusions from the literature: the socio-cultural and policy context

From the sociological literature emerges a picture of a context of considerable secularity, where the young are profoundly disconnected from the religious tradition: they do not attend church, are not in touch with the ministers of the Church, and lack spiritual resources for their lives. Abby Day's recent research vividly characterises the stance of the young:

> I believe in things like love and stuff like that, feelings, more so than religious things. I don't have any beliefs on that side at all (Day, 2010 p.99; Cf., Day, 2011)

Collins-Mayo and her colleagues (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010), writing from a distinctively Christian perspective, reinforce this characterisation: they argue that young people have generally disengaged from Christianity, and offer a similarly terse quotation to exemplify this disengagement:

> I love me and my family and friends. No other Gods. I believe in myself' (Collins-Mayo et al., 2010 p.33).

From the sociological literature, I also identified three key concepts for understanding the mission of church schools and in particular the role of school chaplaincy: the concepts of religious socialisation, spiritual capital and the 'chain of memory'; and I have gone on to argue from the empirical data that chaplains have a vital, inter-personal role in both the religious socialisation of the young, in endowing the young with spiritual capital derived from the Christian tradition, and in linking the young with the 'chain of memory' which that tradition embodies.

From the analysis of the Church of England's key policy documents on church schools emerged the conclusion that the place of chaplaincy in church schools has so far played only a marginal part in the Church's official thinking. In effect, chaplains working in Church of England schools have had no clear policy context for their ministry, and this may well be a factor in what I later report both from the interviews and from chaplains' individual responses to the national survey: a sense of marginality, of being unsure whether the institutional Church really either understands or values their work. Examination of some of the literature emerging from the Roman Catholic Church, in contrast, presents a picture of a clear policy context and a distinctive theological modelling of chaplaincy in that Church's schools. School chaplaincy in the Church of England may still therefore be seen, as far as policy is concerned, as a 'crucial but neglected' ministry of the Church (Saxbee, 2008).

Core conclusions based in the empirical evidence: the nature of the ministry of school chaplains

The process of empirical research involved both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview and focus group) methods. From the research data a number of core, strongly-evidenced conclusions emerge about the nature of the ministry of those school chaplains who are embedded in Church of England schools. The empirical data shows unambiguously that school chaplaincy is understood by practitioners from across the ecclesial spectrum as above all a ministry of presence, in which they both embody and signify faith, hope and love in the name of Christ to those around them. This is a ministry of authentic Christian 'being', of being present, and being available to others. It is expressed most clearly and obviously in pastoral care, a spiritual ministry of personal care which, the research shows, needs greater theological clarification, especially of the specific nature of the 'pastoral care' and 'counselling' offered by a chaplain, but which is distinctive in its concern to facilitate 'human flourishing', the full, human development of the person in the image of God. This is at the heart of 'gospel', as David Lyall observes:

> There is nothing so profoundly evangelical as good pastoral care. This is the place where the gospel becomes an embodied response to human need and grace becomes incarnate (Lyall, 2001 p.107).

It is also, as the Bloxham typology suggests and the research data confirms, a liturgical ministry, where the creation of 'apt liturgy' offers the possibility for others of a sense of the divine, of the presence of God; a ministry of spiritual community leadership; a missional ministry in which the chaplain works with those of Christian faith, of other faiths and of no faith to encourage the faith perspective; and it has both a prophetic dimension and a clear pedagogic element – helping others to understand faith and through Christian catechesis to embrace the core elements of Christian faith itself. But practitioners are aware that above any function stands ontology: the nature of the chaplain's personal being and identity is central.

What gives significant force to this identification of the nature of the ministry of school chaplains derived initially from the interview and survey data is that it is so clearly underlined by separate and confirmatory data from the focus groups: that is, students' own perceptions of the nature of chaplaincy ministry chime in key respects with the chaplains' own self-understanding. Students significantly echoed the notions of presence and of embodiment – demonstrating a sophisticated insight into the ontological nature of chaplaincy ministry: 'It's not what he does, it's his '-ness', who he is, his essence.' 'He's a 'scaled-down version of Jesus, a sort of mini-Jesus'. Their recognition, too, of the central place of 'care' in the chaplain's calling underlined the chaplains' own placing of 'pastoral care' at the forefront of their ministry. Also, students' understanding of the significance of worship and its potential underlined the chaplains' own focus on their role as liturgical leaders, creating a space for students to experience the reality of prayer and worship, and making real the possibility of life-shaping reflection and even encounter with the divine.

Further conclusions from the data: chaplains' perceptions and the context of school chaplaincy

If these core conclusions about the nature of chaplaincy ministry in schools are clearly triangulated by the different data emerging from both interviews survey and focus groups, there are further conclusions which emerge from the data drawn from chaplains' own self-perception, and which provide a degree of challenge for the Church in whose name the ministry of school chaplains is undertaken. One set of conclusions relates to the ministerial context occupied by chaplains.

My analysis in Chapter 2 of the debate about mission and ministry in recent years shows clearly that this debate has been coloured by an assumption of the centrality to the Church's identity of the parochial system, and by the identification of 'fresh expressions' of church as the strategic complement to the parochial system. What this has meant is that thinking in the Church has

oscillated between these two paradigms of parish and fresh expression, to the detriment of other possible contexts for ministry, producing in effect a marginalising of the varied chaplaincy situations in which the Church operates. This may be why the strategic importance of chaplaincy is underestimated in policy documents dealing with church schools and (in so far as they do deal with this) with chaplaincy in those schools (Dearing, 2001, Chadwick, 2012). In telling contrast, Roman Catholic documents reveal a strong understanding of the importance of the ministry of school chaplains in Roman Catholic schools, and a developed, positive theology of spiritual accompaniment which animates the valued work of its predominantly lay cadre of school chaplains.

From the evidence discussed in Chapter 7 emerges the conclusion that school chaplains sense themselves occupying an uneasy and uncharted space, one which is felt to be 'out on a limb' and marginal to the perceived heartland of the Church's activity in the parishes. Both the quantitative survey data and the individual voices captured through the survey reflect a sense among school chaplains that the institutional Church seems not to grasp the potential missional significance of their ministry, 'the C of E's largest piece of youth work', as one chaplain expressed it. Nor is their ministry really understood or valued, suggest chaplains: as another chaplain wrote, 'I might as well be working as a missionary in a foreign country'. When these responses to the ministerial context and perceived valuation of school chaplaincy are set alongside evidence from the survey data and the in-depth interviews relating to chaplains' perceptions of the ambivalence of Episcopal and diocesan support, it is hard not to conclude that despite an overwhelming sense of specific vocation among school chaplains, they inhabit an uncertain space, where their relation to the wider Church and its mission is unclear. The challenge for the Church implicit in this is evident: school chaplaincy needs both a clear policy context and a positive evaluation of its ministerial significance: there is a strong case for the more effective and also more explicit integration of this ministry into the supportive and enabling structures of the Church. The development of a positive theology of school chaplaincy,

one predicated on the notion of ministry as significant presence and incorporating the Roman Catholic model of spiritual accompaniment as a significant element, could transform the ministerial context of school chaplaincy.

Reflections on the culture of school chaplaincy: some possible implications of the empirical data

A set of related reflections is prompted by the survey data on professional aspects of school chaplaincy. Currently, the survey shows, school chaplains in Church schools are overwhelmingly theologically-educated and ordained. However, there are respects in which school chaplaincy appears not to be supported by a set of professional structures equivalent to those now customary to schools and beginning to be introduced into the Church.

The fact that the small proportion of academy chaplains among the survey respondents all had job descriptions represents this newer, more professional educational age; but a quarter of independent school chaplains and a third of maintained school chaplains are without – representing, I consider, a pre-professional era and culture. Similarly, as I have shown, a quarter of all school chaplains are without an in-school review; and fewer than half of all school chaplains and only a third of independent school chaplains are reviewed within the context of the Church. Now clarity about role and review are widely considered essential if a developing professional capacity is to be fostered in teachers (See above: p.126); and whilst the school chaplains surveyed showed evidence of good and in many cases broad theological education, I have noted that they appeared to display little enthusiasm for higher-level study (See: p.141). Chaplains, that is, appear not to share the professional assumption of the teaching culture that ongoing professional development is both an entitlement and a necessity; and the occupational context in which they work – one where job description and review are by no means universal – does not engender or encourage this assumption.

There are indications, therefore, of an uneasy, pre- or semi-professional culture among at least some school chaplains, which is in my view likely to be detrimental to their full professional development and which at the same time marks school chaplaincy out as distinctly apart from the surrounding professional culture of schools. My conclusion from this is that a greater degree of professionalism would be of real benefit to both school chaplaincy and to those in the care of chaplains. This would involve (at least) the necessity of a clear, practical and manageable job description; regular supportive review both in the school and ecclesial contexts; effective provision for pastoral supervision (See: Leach and Paterson, 2010); and an encouragement to financially-supported, higher-level study and development. If the ministry of chaplaincy is about human flourishing, and if school chaplaincy is, as one student remarked, about 'building a person', then school chaplains themselves are in need of better provision for their own development.

Beyond the empirical data: the emergence of a new model

In Chapter 8 I described the emergence of a new model of chaplaincy in schools, exemplified in the work of the Luton Schools' Educational Trust and replicated in the work of a number of other charities across the country. This dynamic new phenomenon, which I have called 'para-chaplaincy', derives from evangelical and charismatic ecclesial contexts and represents, I believe, a serious, alternative model to the style of chaplaincy I have researched in Church of England schools. The original, nineteenth-century public school model of school chaplaincy evolved into what I have described as the 'inherited model' of 'embedded' chaplaincy, still the predominant style of chaplaincy in Church of England schools and academies, although there is a growing divergence between the 'teaching chaplain' model of most independent schools and the 'non-teaching' chaplain model of some academies. The core features of 'embedded' chaplaincy include the chaplain being a community member living alongside others; being a recognised, official representative of the institutional Church, most probably theologically

trained and ordained; being available to all members of the community for care and counselling; being the community's spiritual and liturgical leader; and being the 'person for others', embodying and signposting faith in God.

In contrast, the para-chaplaincy model involves being a visitor to the community; being a representative not of the official Church but rather of the Christian faith in a looser, less institutional sense, and with less theological training and no ecclesial office; and while being available to all members of the community, having no recognised status as spiritual or liturgical leader. In short, some elements of what embedded Anglican chaplains understand by 'chaplaincy' are clearly present in para-chaplaincy; but others are not. I have also suggested that there may be a more overtly evangelistic motivation at work in para-chaplaincy than is currently the case in embedded chaplaincy in Church of England schools. This raises the question: what is the intention of the new para-chaplaincy, and in what respects does it explicitly or implicitly challenge the assumptions and practices of embedded chaplaincy?

Clarifying the picture: the need for further research

The emergence of the new para-chaplaincy is therefore a prompt for further research. My own, initial and impressionistic encounters with this new style of ministry, drawn on in Chapter 8, make clear to me that there is room for a serious empirical study exploring para-chaplaincy's own self-understanding and impact. What exactly is the motivation of this ministry? How does it understand its nature and role? How does it impact upon young people, and what are its criteria of success? I have referred in Chapter 8 to the diocese of Blackburn's use of a model of chaplaincy which appears to draw on both the embedded and para-chaplaincy models; and my article on school chaplaincy of different kinds in the Salisbury area (Caperon, 2011a) highlights a situation in which the two models appear to co-exist in neighbouring schools: here are two possible contexts in which aspects of that further research might sensibly take place.

There is also a case for researching the further model of Roman Catholic chaplaincy, one which in maintained schools is predominantly a lay ministry. It would be helpful for the better understanding of the Church of England's current practice in school chaplaincy to compare it with what happens in Roman Catholic schools; one key question might be the extent to which the existence of clear policy guidelines shapes and supports the ministry of chaplaincy in these schools, and a further issue for research might be the influence of the notion of spiritual accompaniment on Roman Catholic school chaplaincy thinking and its impact on practice (See: Glackin, 2004).

The benefits of further empirical research in these areas would be the creation of new, additional knowledge about the diverse, current practice of different kinds of chaplaincy in schools. My own research has contributed a detailed and, I believe, illuminating study of the Church of England's 'embedded' model; but given the eventual limitation of the research project to the 'nature' of the ministry of school chaplains, as I have indicated above (See: p.18), we still have little sense of either the 'extent' or – beyond the initial indications derived from my focus groups - the 'effectiveness' of this ministry. There is a clear case, therefore, for further research into how far the ministry of school chaplaincy actually extends in Church of England schools, and what its longer-term effectiveness might be. As I believe this thesis demonstrates, research into ministerial practice can produce clear and significant outcomes. The particular sphere of Christian ministry in schools – school chaplaincy - has, I have argued, a huge strategic significance for the Church, and indeed for the future of Christian culture. It is because of the significance of this ministry that it is important that further research is undertaken to illuminate more effectively an area of vital strategic significance for the Church.

Conclusion

This thesis represents an exercise in practical theology; it originated in the professional context set out earlier, and has described and analysed the first-

ever empirical research into school chaplaincy in Church of England schools. It has moved between the worlds of theological formulation, of empirical enquiry, and of my former professional context. Its underlying motivation has been to ensure that the Church remains in touch with the young, and that their pastoral needs in this post-Christian, secular context are responded to with imagination, respect and compassion, in the manner of the Christ who is the model for all ministry. I believe that I have both highlighted a gap in knowledge; made a significant contribution to populating that gap with new understanding; and thus made a new contribution to professional practice. Through an empirical study illuminating the 'embedded' chaplaincy model as practised in both the independent, maintained and academy sectors, the nature of the ministry of school chaplains in Church of England schools has now been described for the first time, and a substantive theological rationale for this ministry has been proposed.

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Appendix A

Stage 1 Unit 1: School chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools: an initial literature review and discussion

1. Introduction

This paper is submitted under the requirements of Stage 1, Unit 1 of the Anglia Ruskin University Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology, and sets out to review the available literature associated with the field of school chaplaincy. It also draws particularly on the work of Stephen Pattison, a leading contemporary scholar in the discipline.

David Tracy's The Analogical Imagination (Tracy, 1981) is a key source for understanding the place of practical theology, one of the three branches of the overarching discipline of theology encompassing fundamental, systematic and practical theologies. Tracy says: 'Practical theologies will ordinarily show less explicit concern with all theories and theoretical arguments. They will assume praxis as the proper criterion for the meaningful truth of theology, praxis here understood as practice informed by and informing, often transforming, all prior theory in relationship to the legitimate and self-involving concerns of a particular cultural, political, social or pastoral need having genuine religious import.' (Tracy, 1981) p.57) Chaplaincy in its various forms may be considered a classic context for praxis; situated at the intersection of the Church and the world, chaplaincy is a kind of ministry which calls particularly for the critical and interactive perspectives of practical theology.

These critical and interactive perspectives are notably present in Pattison's prolific, varied and trenchant work. Pattison's career as a practical theologian began with his initial, critical engagement with 'pastoral theology' in A Critique of Pastoral Care (Pattison, 1993). Subsequently, his books stem interactively from his own professional involvement in health care, prompting Alive and Kicking (Pattison, 1989); from concern with liberation theology, prompting Pastoral Care and Liberation Theology (Pattison, 1997b); from his

involvement in NHS management, prompting The Faith of the Managers (Pattison, 1997a); and from his personal experience of psychotherapy, prompting Shame (Pattison, 2000a). A quotation from Shame well encapsulates Pattison's approach: 'Christianity cannot gain strength or credibility from the denial of reality....' (Pattison, 2000a) p. 226); and the essays from the period 1985 – 2005 collected as The Challenge of Practical Theology (Pattison, 2007) demonstrate this commitment to both faith and reality. Pattison's key characteristics as a theologian can be described as a radical, critical – even contrarian - intelligence; a distinctively liberal, questioning faith; and a commitment to 'theological reflection' as the critique of theological ideas and practice in the light of other disciplines and of lived experience – 'reality'.   Theological reflection is '…the process of critical conversation and interrogation between contemporary situations or experience, aspects of the Christian tradition, and insights from sources of contemporary knowledge…' (Pattison, 2007) p. 144)

Although there is no single, agreed definition of practical theology, it is clear that there is a perpetual locus of interaction between the religious tradition and contemporary experience.   Woodward and Pattison in their Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology offer this understanding: '… practical theology can be defined as a prime place where contemporary experience and the resources of the religious tradition meet in a dialogue that is mutually and practically transforming' (Woodward and Pattison, 2000) p.xiii); and this definition importantly posits an interactive relationship between experienced reality and theological expertise. Practical theology is a discipline both interactive, dynamic and holistic (Woodward and Pattison, 2000) p.xiv), and thus especially well-placed to shed light on school chaplaincy, itself a specific locus of interaction between religious tradition and the contemporary world, as the younger generation and those supporting their education encounter the ministry of the Church.

2. Why this topic?

The topic 'school chaplaincy' arises directly from the work of the Bloxham Project, which the present writer has directed for the past three years. Originating in a conference of independent school heads and chaplains held at Bloxham School, Oxfordshire in 1967, the Project has been concerned with making the Christian faith inheritance of (mainly) Church of England schools accessible to each generation of students. In the years immediately following the conference, this drive prompted research into the attitudes and values of sixth formers, described in Images of Life, by Robin Richardson and John Chapman (Richardson and Chapman, 1973). The Bloxham Project was formally founded as a charity in 1976, with the objects of promoting 'education and the Christian religion'; and in subsequent years has developed a network of member schools across the country, providing staff development opportunities in the areas of pastoral care, school leadership and spirituality, and taking particular interest in the work of school chaplains.

Although there are no firm statistics yet showing how many schools have some kind of chaplaincy provision, the practice of appointing people to school chaplaincy has spread from its origins in the traditional public schools both to Church of England maintained secondary schools, to the academies, and even occasionally to (non-Church) community schools. School chaplaincy is a growing phenomenon, and it is interesting to note that far from the traditional, established church context of England, school chaplaincy has recently been put in place across Australian secondary schools under a federal government initiative, through which people recruited from local Christian organisations have taken up chaplaincy roles in schools. (Agombar, 2007, Hughes and Sims, 2009)

With the support of the National Society (the educational arm of the Church of England), the Bloxham Project is now researching school chaplaincy, the initial aims being to establish what school chaplaincy there is and how those engaged in it understand their work. It is hoped that out of this may emerge

descriptions of good practice which can guide those working in school chaplaincy, and at the same time demonstrate the significance of this work as a 'crucial but neglected' ministry of the Church. (Saxbee, 2008)

3. Chaplaincy as a ministry of the Church

Chaplaincy has a long history. Originally identifying a priest responsible for a (possibly chantry) chapel, the term 'chaplain' became used to designate a priest engaged in non-parochial ministry, whether in a royal household, an army regiment, or abroad among expatriates.   Karl Rahner argues that chaplaincies – as 'place of work' ministries - have a long-standing status as contexts for the work of the Church: they demonstrate that '…the Church's mission has never simply moved between the local community and the local parish as its beginning and its end … besides the territorial basis there have always been other sociological facts forming the natural foundation for Christian communities….' (Rahner, 1963) p.58)

Today we could describe a chaplain as one (no longer always ordained, or male) who ministers to a (non-territorial) community in the name of the Church.   A Dictionary of Pastoral Care (Campbell, 1987) offers no generic definition, preferring instead to have articles on different kinds of chaplaincy; but the Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling (Hunter, 1990, 2005) offers this definition: 'a clergyperson who has been commissioned by a faith group or an organisation to provide pastoral service in an institution, organisation, or governmental entity.   Chaplaincy refers to the general activity performed by a chaplain, which may include crisis ministry, counselling, sacraments, worship, education, help in ethical decision-making, staff support, clergy contact and community or church coordination.' (Hunter, 1990, 2005) p.136)   The assumption is that a chaplain may be of either gender, but will be ordained, as well as 'commissioned' for his or her role. Hunter's tentative list of chaplaincy activities is extensive, but unprioritised; what exactly 'chaplaincy' may involve is left unclear, although 'pastoral service' is the overarching and inclusive term.

The only published book on chaplaincy practice in the Church of England is Giles Legood's Chaplaincy: The Church's Sector Ministries (Legood, 1999). The oddly unsatisfactory terminology derives from 'Sector Ministries', the report of a National Society working party (National Society, 1983). The report notes that 'by far the larger part of the Anglican ministry is parochially orientated' but that 'an enormous variety of ministries exists within particular sectors' (National Society, 1983) p.9). Explaining its use of the term 'sector', the report says: 'We believe the term 'sector' to have a sociological connotation that makes sense. It refers to a slice of social life which contains ideas, values, concepts, activities with common roots and outlets in public life (education, for example, or industry).' (National Society, 1983) p.14) The idea of a 'slice of social life' given identity by 'ideas, values, concepts, activities' is imprecise, and the Church needs to find a better term than 'sector ministry' for talking about ministry in institutional or community settings. One possibility is simply the term 'community ministry'; and it is worth recalling the comments of Mission-shaped Church on the importance of networks and communities, and the declining significance of geographical, parochial locality, as features of twenty-first century life. (Working Group of the Mission and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England, 2004) pp. 4-7).

Legood acknowledges the Church of England's strongly parochial or territorial pattern for ministry, but notes a 'dramatic' (though unquantified) rise in the number of chaplaincies since World War II; a point recently re-emphasised by Paul Ballard (Ballard, 2009b). Legood's book has sections on chaplaincy in agriculture; airports; the armed forces; arts and recreation; hospitals; industry; the police; prisons; the retail trade; schools; among seafarers; and in universities. Together, these indicate the extent of chaplaincy or community ministry. However, Legood is clear that '... even recently published histories of the last hundred years of church life have largely ignored the work, witness and contribution made by clergy not working in parochial or congregational appointments.' (Legood, 1999) p.ix) 'Chaplaincy' is assumed to be a clerical ministry throughout, but similarities between the

roles of parish clergy and of chaplains in the various communities they serve are noted: Legood sets out 'pastoral care, spiritual nurture, leading worship and helping the laity in their mission to the world' as the key job components. (Legood, 1999) p.x-xi)

4. Chaplaincy and its wider context

The diversity of the ministry of chaplaincy and its range of contexts are evident from Legood's survey. A further factor which has become prominent since Legood's book is the impact of the wider cultural and political context, particularly on certain kinds of chaplaincy. Notably, health care chaplaincy in the National Health Service (NHS) has become politically contentious, since it is largely staffed by Anglican clergy but paid for by the state. Stephen Pattison argues strongly that Christian chaplains in the NHS should be characterised not by being 'facilitators for the spiritualities of the world' but by being 'deeply Christian' (Pattison, 2007) p. 139, 140). In the multi-cultural, inter-faith climate of the 21st century, however, this raises real questions about the nature of the NHS chaplain's spiritual role and accountability, and there have been pressures to cease the public funding of this ministry. (Swift, 2009) A further complexifying aspect of NHS chaplaincy is that clergy staffing it may be 'refugees', for a range of personal and institutional reasons, from parish ministry. (Hancocks et al., 2008).

Health care chaplaincy presents interesting dilemmas: the development of a 'secular' or non-religious notion of 'spiritual care' in effect challenges more traditional and religious notions of chaplaincy (Wright, 2002); (Gordon and Mitchell, 2004); and there is a clear drift from earlier 'markers' of the religious sphere: M C Wright notes a trend away from establishing chapels as the spiritual focal point in hospitals and hospices (Wright, 2001) and towards the development of 'broader' (ie less formally religious) roles for chaplains. Christopher Swift's recent monograph on NHS chaplaincy also highlights pressures on hospital chaplaincy, arguing that we have an increasingly secularised body politic where there is considerable suspicion about the public

place of religion. (Swift, 2009) A further NHS issue – what Stephen Pattison identifies as the 'utopian' culture of management – is highlighted in his sharp and extended critique of managerialism as a quasi-religious faith in The Faith of the Managers (Pattison, 1997a). It seems that some key issues for the general ministry of chaplaincy are located and being negotiated in the context of health care: What is the nature of 'spiritual care' in an increasingly secularised context? How can the chaplain's traditional religious role be justified in a secular establishment? What values are implicit in chaplaincy and how do they relate to the predominant culture of the institution and the wider society?

Other spheres of chaplaincy seem to hold similar tensions, and military chaplaincy is an obvious locus of potential value conflict. C L Abercrombie argues from the American context that the military environment shields chaplains from changing theological and social attitudes, producing a 'conservative' stance, and supporting a nationalistic definition of Christianity. A 'prophetic' role for chaplaincy, resisting all temporal claims to ultimacy, is, he says, intrinsic to a theologically defined chaplaincy role (Abercrombie, 1977). Similarly, in Chaplains in Conflict: the Role of Army Chaplains since 1914, Stephen Louden concludes that '…institutional pressures … too readily divert chaplains from their primarily religious ministry of preaching the gospel – cura animarum…' (Louden, 1996) p.123)

As far as Higher Education chaplaincy is concerned, there are indications that this sphere too is under pressure. Anecdotal reports indicate that college chaplaincies are becoming lower-profile or part-time appointments, and financial cuts by the Church are reducing university chaplaincies. (Scott-Joynt, 2009) Higher education chaplaincy operates in a sphere where the government drive for 'social cohesion' is evident, as the then Higher Education minister's speech to the 'Chaplaincy for All' conference in January 2008 revealed (Rammell, 2008); and the move towards an inter-faith emphasis prompted 'Welcome to Chaplaincy', a Church-sponsored training programme for multi-faith chaplaincy in the Further Education sector. (Denby, 2008)

Jointly funded by the government's Learning and Skills Council, the programme's dedication to social cohesion is clear: the Preface revealingly notes that '...we have seen a keen interest on the part of government to promote chaplaincy as a way of encouraging respect and reducing tension between adherents of particular faith communities.' (Denby, 2008) p. vi)

This brief survey of some chaplaincy contexts highlights the ways in which chaplaincy may be constrained or influenced in its practice by the institutional or wider socio-political setting in which it finds itself. This illustrates the extent to which chaplaincy – without the territorial securities of parish and the liturgical focus of the parish church – may be an uncertain, contextually-shaped setting in which to pursue ministry. A particular characteristic of school chaplaincy may be the extent to which a Church school offers a more secure setting for chaplaincy, offering an institutional basis of values in closer harmony with the values and work of the chaplaincy itself.

5. The nature of chaplaincy

Chaplaincy is a particular locus of interaction between religious tradition and the contemporary world. Given this, how can this ministry be further clarified? Christopher Moody's chapter in Legood on 'Spirituality and sector ministry' (Moody, 1999), and Sophie Gilliat-Ray's on 'Sector ministry in a sociological perspective' (Gilliat-Ray, 1999) offer helpful insights. Moody suggests that chaplaincy is about holding a 'marginal' position in a community, and links this with the notion of being a 'participant-observer', able to enter into '... the wilderness of people's daily experience ...' (Moody, 1999) p.16) He speaks of chaplains 'loitering on the edge of other people's lives' (ibid p.18), remaining 'religious outsiders'; a chaplain, he suggests, has an 'amphibious' nature, working both inside and beyond the categories and restraints of the institution, and thus able to challenge its thinking: '... [chaplains] have the ability, if they negotiate their role well, to point to the 'something more' in any situation.' (ibid p.19) What Moody characterises as

an 'elusive ministry, mediating between one level of reality and another' (ibid p.20), he then goes on to describe with the aid of a further series of images: chaplains are, he suggests, 'shamans, watchers, resident aliens'. This reaching for images suggests something about the core nature of chaplaincy: the liminality of chaplaincy, its uncertain status in society and its semi-detached position in relation to the institutional Church, means that may best be described in metaphor – ideally metaphor that 'cuts reality at its joints' (Pattison, 2007) p.285)

Sophie Gilliat-Ray writes from a more empirical perspective, drawing much of the substance of her chapter from the results of a study carried out at the University of Warwick between 1994 and 1996 of publicly-funded chaplaincy in prisons and hospitals and of 'civic religion'. She notes that 'sector ministry' has some distinctive sociological features – 'sector ministers' interact with individuals and communities that are often 'set apart' in some way or are 'in transition'; and their work is frequently with the 'unchurched'. (Gilliat-Ray, 1999) p.25) She tellingly notes that 'many chaplains share [a] sense of being separate from the church', whilst being 'at the cutting edge of ministry'. (ibid p.26)

One aspect of this 'cutting edge' is that many chaplains operate, she suggests, in an increasingly 'inclusive' setting, open to people of all sorts, whereas many clergy in parish ministry are increasingly seeking to work within the 'exclusive' community of the local church – which may be in danger of excluding precisely those who share 'the eclectic but deeply embedded spirituality of contemporary Britain' (ibid p.33) This 'common spirituality' – separate from religion – is something which hospital chaplains especially are becoming accustomed to working with, suggests Gilliat-Ray; and it is in this chaplaincy context that she notes '… the increasing professionalism and inclusiveness demanded from those in sector ministry ….' (ibid p.36)

The work of the community theologian Ann Morisy takes further the idea of chaplaincy as a liminal or marginal ministry: a ministry on the edge or threshold of the Church encountering people carrying their own spirituality or

'common religion'. In Journeying Out (Morisy, 2004), she develops the idea of 'the foundational domain', where the Church's task is to help foster within people a sense of 'the possibility of God' (Morisy, 2004) p.152). This involves working with people's own spirituality, and devising 'apt liturgies' for the marking of their lives rather than simply bringing the Church's pre-designed liturgies to bear. Chaplains in all kinds of context, she argues, are at the forefront of ministry; they work at the level of the imagination and are 'practised in the courage of beginning conversations of the spirit.' (Morisy, 2006) p.127)

The institutional church may, as Legood suggests, neglect or undervalue aspects of the ministry of chaplaincy. What is plain, however, is that chaplaincy in its many, varied contexts is a form of ministry where the Church is interfacing person-to-person through its official representatives with people who might very well not have any contact with its parochial provision of worship or pastoral care. To this extent, chaplaincy looks like a kind of ministry which is in a particularly significant way expressing the mission of the Church by 'coming near' people in the contexts of the various communities and networks, and ways of thinking and being, which they actually inhabit. (Ballard, 2009a). Martyn Percy's comment on the clergy might be taken as descriptive of all those – ordained and lay - involved in chaplaincy: they '… occupy that strange hinterland between the secular and the sacred, the temporal and the eternal, acting as interpreters and mediators, embodying and signifying faith, hope and love.' (Percy, 2006a) p.188)

6. Chaplaincy: the theological grounding

How does chaplaincy fit within an understanding of the Church's mission and ministry? A key thinker in this area is Anglican ecclesiologist Paul Avis, who contributed 'Towards a theology of sector ministry' to Giles Legood's book on chaplaincy. Avis argues persuasively for a theology of missio dei – building an understanding of the Church's ministry which emerges from the mission of God to the world: 'The Church's mission means the whole church bringing the

whole Christ to the whole world.' (Avis, 1999) p.4) In the light of this vision Avis goes on to identify the fundamental task of the Church as being to 'carry out a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care' (ibid p.6). The clarity of this formulation leads to a definition of pastoral care as 'simply the extension and application of word and sacrament to individuals in their particular circumstances.' (ibid p.8)

In his later book A Ministry Shaped by Mission, (Avis, 2005) Avis develops the ecumenical dimension of this way of thinking, in which pastoral care is, with word and sacrament, the third essential feature of the Church's ministerial mission. He looks both to the magisterial work of David Bosch (Bosch, 1991) which offers a comprehensive and Protestant theology of mission rooted in the concept of missio dei, and to a Catholic understanding of mission rooted in the work of the Second Vatican Council, in order to argue that '… in the Church, the mission of God takes the form of a ministry.' (Avis, 2005) p.119) Avis's earlier work, A Church Drawing Near (Avis, 2003) shares this emphasis on mission grounded in ministry in what he sees as a 'post-Christian culture'. In this context, he asserts the need for the Church to work with the impulses of 'common religion' (ibid p. 109), and argues that outside parochial structures, to which he remains firmly committed, the Church will be most effectively represented by its officially appointed representatives in public roles - that is, chaplains who are 'publicly identifiable agents' of the Church (ibid p. 169).

Avis's is a clear and powerful voice, and his attempt to build a practical theology – a theology of practice – for the ministry of the Church of England on an ecumenical theology of mission is a substantial contribution to missiological thinking. In this respect it stands in contrast to Mission-Shaped Church (Working Group of the Mission and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England, 2004), which although it suggests an approach built on a theology of mission, turns out to focus far more on the narrower notion of evangelism, and to be preoccupied with 'church planting and fresh expressions of church'. These two 'ways of being church', the Report argues, are the key to the

expansion of the Church in the post-Christendom and post-parochial situation outlined in its earlier sections. It is extraordinary, however, that Mission-Shaped Church fails to consider the many spheres of interaction between the Church and contemporary society represented by chaplaincy.

For the Church's representatives working in chaplaincy, the question 'What is the mission of the Church?' is fundamental. A review of some of the available literature indicates, as I have tried to show, that a clear response to this question, rooted in a theology of missio dei, can provide a rationale for ministry and chaplaincy.

7. Chaplaincy and pastoral care

Chaplaincy as a ministry of pastoral care is a direct expression of the divine mission, says Avis. (Avis, 2003) This raises the question, what is meant by pastoral care?   A key dichotomy highlighted by Stephen Pattison is that between a largely secular 'care and counselling' model (Rogers, 2001) and a more overtly spiritual and religious model: A Critique of Pastoral Care argues that pastoral care involves a necessary element of 'ethical confrontation', alongside 'empathetic listening' in a context of 'acceptance'.(Pattison, 1993) p.50) Similarly, Paul Goodliff's Care in a Confused Climate (Goodliff, 1998), dismisses the 'secular' idea of 'value-free pastoral care', arguing that 'person-centredness' may in fact be an approach which colludes with a '...humanistic and often hedonistic and self-centred moral vision masquerading under the guise of neutrality.' (Goodliff, 1998) p.97)

Pattison's contribution to a wider reassertion of the distinctively Christian nature of pastoral care, and a recovery of its spiritual aspect, is significant. The publication of the New Library of Pastoral Care series in the 1980s saw a clear assertion of an open but distinctively Christian approach to pastoral care, exemplified in A Dictionary of Pastoral Care (Campbell, 1987) and reinforced in Pattison's A Critique of Pastoral Care, first published in 1988. Here, Pattison offers a liberating notion of pastoral care in the context of

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traditional and scriptural thinking. His definition of pastoral care, as '…that activity, undertaken especially by representative Christian persons, directed towards the elimination and relief of sin and sorrow and the presentation of all people perfect in Christ to God' (ibid p.13), is firmly 'theological', in the sense of resting specifically upon Christian and scriptural concepts rather than secular sources. Recent trends in writing about pastoral care seems to build on this: Andrew Purves' Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition (Purves, 2001) reasserts the historic tradition of 'spiritual care', and sees the pastor as a 'physician of souls', recalling the work of Bonhoeffer in his lectures on pastoral care (Bonhoeffer, 1985).

Stephen Pattison offers a footnote to this discussion. In a recent article, he notes that while pastoral care was 'at the leading edge of practical theological development two decades ago' (Pattison, 2008) p.7), it has since been marginalised in a 'mission-led' era, and that the vision of pastoral care as a transformative, liberating and humane process has been lost: 'Pastoral care … would seem to be officially dead as the cutting edge of Christian ministry' (ibid, p.8).   The particular context for pastoral care which is school chaplaincy is, however, unlikely to fall victim to a 'missionary' paradigm; and there is every reason for regarding it as a key part of the 'cutting edge' of Christian ministry.

8. Christian anthropology: the nature of the person

Consideration of pastoral care leads inevitably to consideration of the nature of the human person: at the root of pastoral practice will be a practical theological anthropology.   Bevans and Schroeder have recently identified three 'ideal types' of theological anthropology: conservative/orthodox, liberal, and radical/liberation. (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005). Describing 'liberal' anthropology, they state: '… the best of what is human is, in the last analysis, compatible with the dynamics of God's revelation in the word made flesh… '; and in this understanding, mission is ' … a call to people to fulfil their deepest potential as human beings by allowing Christ to be the answer

to their deepest human desires.'   (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005) p.61) This 'liberal' stance, deriving from Irenaeus, affirmative of human potential and seeking human fulfilment – or in Pattison's terms, 'human flourishing' – seems highly appropriate to the educational context.   It stands in contrast, as John Hick argues, to a more suspicious and Augustinian stance (Hick, 1974); and it is an anthropology which emphasises the Imago Dei, perfected in Jesus Christ, in whom, as David Jenkins argues, '... we are finally confronted with God taking on man's own, true and real image.' (Jenkins, 1967) p.96; see also (Cairns, 1973)

Imago Dei thinking has been developed by Jurgen Moltmann, who offers a threefold vision encompassing the original designation of human beings (imago dei); the messianic calling of human beings (imago Christi); and the eschatological glorification of human beings (Gloria Dei est homo). (Moltmann, 1985) p.215 ff.) The personhood dimension of Imago Dei has been further extended by linking Trinitarian theology with that of the human person. A key figure here is Zizioulas, who argues that 'Man acquires personal identity and ontological particularity only by basing his being in the Father-Son relationship....' (Zizioulas, 1991) p.43).   This reassertion of the dependence of humanity on relationship with and in God is a corrective to any over-optimistic or naïve reading of human nature, and hardens 'liberal' anthropology into realism.

If pastoral care is about being '... committed to human flourishing so that people attain their God-given potential' (Pattison, 2007) p.18), then it needs to be rooted in such a 'liberal' anthropology, emphasising potential, change and liberation, not simply at an individualistic but at a corporate level which recognises the wider vision of the social implications of the Gospel. (Pattison, 1997b)

9. Pastoral care in schools

Stephen Pattison notes that the term 'pastoral care' refers educationally to 'a highly specialised art in schools', focusing on 'the personal welfare and adequate functioning of school students', but with 'no necessary reference to any religious dimension at all' (Pattison, 1993) p.9).   It is significant that there appears to be no link between the religious and educational understandings of 'pastoral care', and Pastoral Care in Education, the journal of the National Association for Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE), contains few references to the religious dimension. An early article traced the origins of educational 'pastoral care' to the influence of Thomas Arnold and his concern for '… first, religious and moral principles, second, gentlemanly conduct, third, intellectual ability.'(Lang, 1984); the 'pastoral care' culture of schools has Christian roots, he suggests, although its real aims remain unclear. (See also (Best et al., 1977, Wilson and Cowell, 1984).

The rise and fall of personal counselling in schools can be seen to parallel its trajectory in the religious sphere. In maintained schools, school counsellors arrived (sparsely) on the national scene in the 1960s but had almost disappeared from it by the 1990s (Robinson, 1996). In independent schools, however, there are indications that fee-paying parents may expect their children's issues to be handled and even resolved by professionals, and this means that many such schools employ their own counsellors alongside chaplains. This raises the question of what exactly is the role of each, and how their areas of work can be demarcated. If at the extremes this might appear straightforward - concerns about spirituality go to the chaplain, border-psychotic behaviours to the counsellor – in the middle ground of (say) adolescent identity issues or of family-related problems the direction of referral is unclear.

Since its inception in 1982, Pastoral Care in Education has only published two articles about school chaplaincy in England. The first describes the initiative of an Anglican parish priest in offering his local comprehensive school

chaplaincy services. (Bishop and Oliver, 1985) The second contrasts older, more authoritarian models of Roman Catholic school chaplaincy with current, more open approaches to the 'spiritual journey' of the young (Glackin, 2004b). School chaplaincy, it is clear, has just not been seen as significant by those most concerned professionally with educational pastoral care in English schools.

10. School chaplaincy: the available literature

There are very few texts dealing specifically with school chaplaincy in England. The earliest is J B Goodliffe's School Chaplain (Goodliffe, 1961), located in the independent school context and describing the author's ministry in the immediate post-war era.   Goodliffe, a World War 1 veteran formed in the Edwardian age, comes from another world: '...the chapel is the shrine of eternal youth' (ibid p.148). However, he has a strong pastoral focus, and appears profoundly committed to the pastoral care of pupils. He writes: 'I have tried to link all my teaching with pastoral work as so many boys and girls today are bewildered, hurt and lonely.' (ibid p.viii).

The book rests on an experiential base: Goodliffe writes of drawing his conclusions about the young from '...hundreds of discussions, talks and essays in which they have taken me into their confidence and given me their trust.' (ibid, p.viii) At the heart of his conception of chaplaincy are the effective teaching of Divinity, the worship of the chapel, and the relationship between chaplain and pupils. His understanding of chaplaincy gives an important place to the passing of cultural aspects of faith across the generations – and he is concerned that all pupils should have 'a genuine religious experience.' (ibid, p.13) He is also clear about the representative function of the chaplain - '...we represent the Church in their eyes... the chaplain, [pupils] know instinctively, should be a man of God.' (ibid, p.17).

Despite resonances which recall Alan Bennett's ludicrous school chaplain in Forty Years On (Bennett, 1969), or even Lindsay Anderson's grotesque public

school fantasy If... (Anderson, 1971), there is a profound genuineness which animates Goodliffe's book. There is an evident pastoral concern for pupils' spiritual well-being, and for sharing with them the values of the Christian faith. His observations derive in effect from his own experience and reflection, a kind of qualitative research: Goodliffe is writing a kind of practical theology, rooted in his interaction with pupils.

Sister Mary McKeone's Wasting time in School (McKeone, 1993) presents a view of (Roman Catholic) school chaplaincy as a pastoral ministry, but for her there is a greater emphasis on the provision of pupil worship, prayer groups and retreats. Beginning her chaplaincy work in 1980, Sister Mary served in RC comprehensive schools in the North-East over a twelve-year period in a hugely different era from the post-war world described by Goodliffe. Her book grew out of a sabbatical year in which she reflected on her work and undertook research among her fellow-chaplains, the detailed results of which are regrettably not reported. She writes experientially rather than theoretically, and is more focused than Goodliffe on the young people who were her clients. Removed from the teaching role which was at the core of Goodliffe's work, she identifies her task as 'wasting time in school', or 'lavishly' giving away 'quality' time to pupils in quiet listening (McKeone, 1993) p. 9).

Pastoral concern is at the heart of her ministry. She describes '... walking alongside the pupils' and helping them 'to reflect on their lives and experience in an informal, friendly way.' (ibid, p.16). She describes setting prayer groups in the context of lighted candles and Taizé music, encouraging a reflective spirituality and assisting pupils towards the possibility of religious experience; as she writes, 'I believe those sessions revealed a nostalgia for God which they will never lose completely' (ibid, p.19). McKeone's emphasis on '... listening and reflecting with [pupils] in such a way that they will deepen their perception of God in their lives ...' (McKeone, 1993) p. 97-8) is a compellingly attractive one.

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For A Dictionary of Pastoral Care, the model of school chaplaincy is largely that offered by Goodliffe, modified by time: Roger Marsh (Marsh, 1987) offers an account of the chaplain's role from his (then) perspective as chaplain at Marlborough College. His distinctive emphasis is on the independence of the chaplain within the institution; his ability to hold a 'prophetic' role 'over and against the system' (ibid p.244); and the assertion that chaplaincy and teaching are essentially intertwined. A chaplain is 'counsellor and confidant', 'pastor and befriender' of pupils and staff; in summary, the role is to be '… a living reminder of the Christian foundation and ethos, responsible for worship and initiation into the Christian faith, a prophet and a conscience, and a competent teacher in the classroom…' (ibid p.245)

In 2000 The Bloxham Project published the pamphlet 'Chaplaincy Papers' (Cameron, 2000), the first attempt to offer an account of independent school chaplaincy in terms of rationale, role description and managerial issues such as appointments, contracts and conditions of service.   Aiming to help chaplains 'understand their work … and to do it well' (ibid p.1), the pamphlet describes school chaplaincy within its independent school context.   The chaplain's extra-institutional loyalty is emphasised: the chaplain embodies '… a witness to the transcendent power and immanent presence of God.' (ibid, p.4); and he is seen not only as a counsellor to individuals, but also one who has to grasp and express the feelings of the whole community. In this, the place of the chapel is central: both chapel and chaplain are ' … explicit symbols of the presence of God in the world.' (ibid, p.5)   There is less emphasis on the pastoral and spiritual ministry of the chaplain than on his public, institutional, representative and symbolic role; but it is clear that for the writers the chaplain stands at the interface of Church and the young of an unchurched society, with the task of '… opening up to them the possibilities of spirituality' (ibid p.6).

At about the same time, David Lindsay contributed to Giles Legood's Chaplaincy the brief chapter on chaplaincy in schools.   (Lindsay, 1999) Lindsay writes from an independent school context, and like Marsh, brings out

the 'almost prophetic' role of the chaplain in an independent school, since he '… owes another and greater loyalty to the gospel.' (ibid p.119). He also assumes the teaching role of the chaplain, although he recognises (as Marsh does) the possible tensions arising from role strain between 'teacher' and 'pastor'. The chaplain's most important function is '… to preach the gospel of undeserved and unlimited love and acceptance to an institution that runs on a doctrine of justification by works.' (ibid, p.120) Lindsay shows an awareness of the inter-faith dimension, seeing his task as to encourage his school's varied faith communities '…to explore and deepen their identities…' (ibid, p.121)

At the Heart of Education: School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care (Norman, 2004) is an Irish collection of contributions from twenty educationalists, surveying three aspects of pastoral care: humanistic, programmatic and spiritual (in effect, 'pastoral care', 'the pastoral curriculum' and 'school chaplaincy'). Chaplains, whether priests, religious or laypeople, report their main activities as '… one-to-one counselling, providing liturgical celebrations, supporting other staff, bereavement support, addressing the causes of student indiscipline, meeting with and visiting parents, and hospital visitation.' (ibid, p.192) The volume also contains the results of a qualitative empirical study of pupils' experiences and perceptions of school chaplaincy. (Murphy, 2004) The researcher perceives a '…depth of respect and genuine feeling exhibited by pupils towards their chaplain.' (ibid p.211); and goes on to suggest that '…the findings indicate that the chaplain may be a pivotal force in the personal development of pupils.' (ibid) This is the only instance so far of published research outcomes on school chaplaincy; although Maureen Glackin has undertaken PhD research involving teachers, chaplains and students in Roman Catholic schools in England. (Glackin, 2004a)

The Effectiveness of School Chaplaincy in State Schools in Australia (Hughes and Sims, 2009) is the latest text on school chaplaincy, but from the Australian context. State schools were '…offered the possibility of a chaplain becoming a member of the school community financed by the local churches.'

(Agombar, 2007) p. 1); and this essentially voluntary system became the object of national financial support in 2006, when the federal government committed AU$90 million '… so that every school could employ a chaplain'. (ibid, p.2) Hughes and Sims report on the working of the system, which aims to offer '… a formal Christian presence in the school community, representing the local churches in a broad, non-sectarian sense and … to offer services to students, staff and parents and requested and appropriate.' (ibid, p.9) Their report presents a strongly positive evaluation of the work of chaplains from both school principals, pupils and parents as well as from chaplains themselves (Hughes and Sims, 2009), although it is clear that the assumptions about chaplaincy in Australian state schools, and also the role of chaplains, are not wholly comparable to those in Church of England schools in England.

11. Current website material and institutional guidelines

A small number of websites offer material on school chaplaincy. The website of The Bloxham Project (Bloxham Project, 2009a) contains a range of resources, and the School Chaplains' Association (SCA) website (School Chaplains' Association, 2009) offers contemporary reflection from school chaplains on the nature of their work. This is material direct from the experience of working school chaplains, and has a clear rootedness in practice – a genuine kind of practical theology.

Less convincing is the current website of the National Society, which carries a section on 'Chaplaincy in Anglican schools' drawn up by a working group of chaplains. (National Society, 2009) The section sets out 'A generic person and job specification for a chaplain in an Anglican school' and lists personal qualities and capabilities under the heading 'The Chaplain should…'. Whether through poor editing, or a felt need to include a summary of all the deliberations of the working group, this website regrettably leaves a confused impression both of what school chaplaincy is and of how the Church of England regards it.

A Woodard Education (Harvey, 2004) offers theologically-underpinned institutional guidelines for Woodard schools, with a clear section on chaplaincy. Recommending that each school should have a 'full-time Anglican priest' as chaplain, the paper goes on to assert the importance of the chaplain's 'prophetic role'; to urge the chaplain's 'significant' involvement in the school's pastoral system; and to define the chaplain's particular areas of concern as 'ethos, worship and pastoral care', areas which at leadership level should have the chaplain's participation. Woodard is defining a key role within the school for its chaplains.

The Bloxham Project has also produced guidance on school chaplaincy in its Chaplaincy Review Pack (Bloxham Project, 2009b). This offers to schools and chaplains a framework for review which tries to incorporate both the 'vocational' perspective of chaplaincy and the managerial needs of schools to be clear about accountability and job descriptions. The pack offers a range of model role descriptions for school chaplains, built around a five-fold structure of the liturgical, pastoral, spiritual, missional and prophetic aspects of the chaplain's role.

From a Roman Catholic perspective, there is clear guidance on school chaplaincy from both national and diocesan sources. Guidance from Portsmouth Diocese, for instance, has a firm base in theological conviction: 'The chaplain recognises the face of Christ in each member of the community and treats them with respect as people who share in the life of God and are unique and of infinite value.' (Diocese of Portsmouth, 2009) p.2). There is an emphasis on the chaplain's task of 'spiritual accompaniment', 'challenging members of the community with the gospel' and offering a 'prophetic message that can challenge norms and assumptions' (ibid p.3). An earlier paper from the Catholic Education Service offers practical guidance on interviews, contracts and associated employment matters for lay chaplains, but again has a substantial theological basis: 'Chaplains become companions of every member of the school and college community to help them to

embrace and further the memory of Jesus and his Word.' (Catholic Education Service, 2004) p. 11). There are lessons here for Anglicanism.

12. Conclusion

Chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England is an unresearched area, and one in which there is a minimal literature. Chaplaincy in general can be seen as a key, frontier or liminal ministry of the Church, its shape set by the calling to share in the Missio Dei, the mission of God to the world, its nature focusing on the pastoral care of people, with the intention of fostering 'human flourishing' in the context of Imago Dei theology. School chaplaincy is therefore a key area for exploration for practical theology, and in the liberal/radical approach of Stephen Pattison there is a model of critical, interactive engagement which can be employed to illuminate it.

7000 words

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Stage 1 Unit 2: The self-understanding of school chaplains in Church of England schools

Origins and images of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools

The origins of school chaplaincy lie in the traditional public schools of England. The older, mediaeval school foundations were specifically religious, and either associated with monastic establishments or with royal or aristocratic initiatives: Westminster (founded in the 12th century), Winchester (founded 1382) and Eton (founded 1440) fall into these categories, and Sherborne School traces its foundation back as far as St Aldhelm in the 7th century. The revival of the public schools in the 19th century associated with the work of Thomas Arnold at Rugby echoed this older pattern, and public schools routinely had chaplains, people whose role was essentially to conduct Anglican public worship and to act as the guardian of Christian morality – to be a major influence in the moral development of the young. Arnold is said to have regarded his position at Rugby as finally supreme when he contrived in 1831 to take on the role of chaplain alongside that of head: educational and moral control had come together combined in one person.(Newsome, 1961:38) Both Alan Wilkinson (Wilkinson, 1978) and Peter Parker (Parker, 1987) consider the impact of the public school ethos and the 'old lie' on the attitudes and values of men serving in and supporting the war effort between 1914 and 1918; what remains so far unexplored is the specific influence of public school chaplains in forming the ethos of deference to 'traditional values', including Anglican religion, which characterised the public schools right through to the 1950s.

The rejection of deference which began around 1960 profoundly impacted – may even have had its origins in – the public schools. When bright young men began to query the dominance of daily Anglican worship in their schools, and to see their chaplain less as a man of God and more as a pillar of the

establishment, trouble was on the way. Beyond the Fringe, the satirical review first staged in 1960, included a merciless parody of a public school chapel sermon based on the text Genesis 27:11 – 'My brother Esau is an hairy man, but I am a smooth man.' (Bennett et al., 1987:103) Full of meaningless platitudes, and taking its authority from the orotund 1611 translation of the Bible – the use of 'an hairy man' is masterly – the sermon pilloried 'public school religion' as essentially laughable and phoney. The figure of the chaplain came in for further, robust critique in Alan Bennett's play Forty Years On, a joyous de-bunking of 'traditional' sources of social and cultural influence set in a fictional English public school. One scene memorably offers a vignette from a Confirmation class: 'Now Foster,' says the chaplain, 'we've been through the 39 Articles together, we know one another pretty well … what I want to tackle now is this problem of your body … I suppose you must have wondered how it is that God, who by and large made such a splendid job of your little body, made such a bosh shot at that particular bit?   But God, whatever else he is, and of course he is everything else, is not a fool. It's not pretty, but it was put there for a purpose. Point taken, Foster?' (Bennett, 1969:60-61)

The image of school chaplaincy is clear: it is associated with ancient, ridiculous-sounding and pointless scriptures; with platitudinous sermons; with an inability to deal with sexuality: in sum, it is part of an old and despised institutional version of religion.   The critique of school chaplaincy as essentially Erastian rather than spiritual is developed further in Lindsay Anderson's dark film If… (Anderson, 1971). Here, a small group of boarding school rebels set themselves up against authority: their first act of rebellion is to shoot the school chaplain (who doubles as Commanding Officer of the school's cadet force) on school manoeuvres; their next is to raid the armoury on speech day and mount an armed attack on the dignitaries present. For Anderson, a key feature of school chaplaincy in the public schools is the chaplain's complicity in the establishment, the power-structure; he is a muscular Christian in the pay of the head. There is a marvellous moment when while interviewing the boys who had shot the chaplain, the head opens

a drawer in his study to reveal the chaplain himself – he is clearly in the head's cupboard, if not exactly in his pocket.

Beyond the public schools: school chaplaincy in the maintained sector

These cultural images of school chaplaincy remain powerful, despite the uncertainty of their relation to any experienced reality. What is clear is that the 1960s saw real heart-searching in the public schools about how to make sense of the traditional pattern of chaplaincy and chapel worship in an increasingly un-deferential age. The Bloxham Conference of 1967 brought together heads and chaplains of the major boys' public schools to consider what in this new climate might be the way forward for 'public school religion'; and since that time there have been significant changes in the practice of 'public school religion' and of chaplaincy. Broadly, a less deferential and more sceptical and secular age has seen less emphasis on the daily performance of Anglican ritual, and even the most traditional of the public schools have moderated their earlier insistence on the key significance of religion in daily school life and have moved subtly towards a stance in which 'educational excellence' rather than religious and moral formation is seen as the goal of independent education.

Whilst school chaplaincy had been firmly established in the public schools, this was not initially the case in the growing number of Church of England secondary schools emerging in the maintained sector after the 1944 Education Act. However, as these schools sought models for their own developing ethos in the public school sector, the number of maintained school chaplaincies began to grow. With the tally of Church of England secondary schools and academies now around 300, it is probably the case (although there is currently no clear, factual information available) that almost all now have some form of school chaplaincy – either provided as part of local, parochial provision on a part-time basis, or through a full time, school-employed chaplain, lay or ordained.

In the Roman Catholic maintained school sector, by way of comparison, there is a core assumption that the provision of school chaplaincy is an essential element of a Catholic understanding of education, a key part of the spiritual support for pupils and staff. There are for Roman Catholic schools clear national and diocesan guidelines covering the theology and practice of chaplaincy (Catholic Education Service, 2004); and although the shortage of priests means that very few of these schools have priests as chaplains, lay chaplaincy – and some diaconal chaplaincy - is widespread, with chaplains generally enjoying non-teaching, pastoral roles, leading non-Eucharistic liturgies and assemblies, and drawing on the assistance of local priests for the celebration of Mass.

Currently, therefore, the situation could be set out as follows. School chaplaincy originated, and is widespread, in Church of England foundations in the independent sector; it has become established in Church of England secondary schools in the maintained sector since 1944, and is also now developing both in Church academies sponsored by their local Anglican dioceses, and in Church-related academies sponsored by charities with a Church foundation, for example The United Learning Trust – currently the sponsor with the largest number of academies. However, in contrast to chaplaincy provision in Roman Catholic schools, Anglican school chaplaincy has no national rationale or guidelines, seems generally to have uncertain support at diocesan level, and appears in effect to be something of a Cinderella ministry, despite the huge, potential strategic significance of its engagement with the young.

School chaplaincy as a key interface

The disconnection of young people from the institutional Church has been clearly documented. Grace Davie even notes that for significant groups of young people, '… disconnected belief is giving way to no belief at all …' (Davie, 1994:123) Davie cites in support of this claim the empirical work of Leslie Francis, and further evidence is provided by the work of Peter

Brierley's Christian Research, who in a 2005 survey showed that the number of young people attending church had fallen from 2 million in 1980 to a mere 200,000 twenty-five years later. (Brierley, 2006) In this context, the potential significance of school chaplaincy can scarcely be exaggerated: it represents a key interface between the institutional Church's authorised ministers and the young, whom they encounter and relate to in the 'workplace' they inhabit for the forty weeks or so of the school year.

Paul Ballard has recently argued, against the deeply-engrained Anglican assumption that the normative pattern of ministry is that based in and speaking to the congregation or parish, that 'The chaplaincy model is not … an aberration of ministry but an attempt to express the relevance of the gospel to every facet of life…' (Ballard, 2009 p.19) School chaplaincy may be seen as an instance of what Ballard describes as 'embedded' ministry, deriving his metaphor from the recent practice of journalists living and working within military formations in action. (Ballard, 2009) An alternative metaphor is that of liminality, being at the threshold, in a place of negotiation between the values and customs of the world and the kerygma and praxis of the Church. (Gilliat-Ray, 1999, Morisy, 2006) School chaplains, it can be argued, inhabit this place with the special distinction of being with the young as they form their attitudes and values for life in the maelstrom of adolescence: their potential influence is vast.

The study of school chaplaincy

Despite its potential significance, however, school chaplaincy remains currently an unresearched and even unrecorded area. At present, there is no database of chaplains working in any capacity in Church of England Schools. This means, in effect, that we have no clear idea how many clergy or lay ministers are involved in school chaplaincy, although the clear impression is - as Paul Ballard has suggested - that school chaplaincy, alongside other kinds of chaplaincy, is on the increase. (Ballard, 2009b) Nor do we have any extensive bibliography covering the field. Instead, there is simply a handful

of texts, despite the fact that school chaplaincy is a key locus of interaction between the growing generation and the ministry of the institutional Church.

The earliest relevant text is J B Goodliffe's School Chaplain (Goodliffe, 1961), a memoir describing the author's teaching and pastoral ministry as a public school chaplain in the immediate post-war era. Goodliffe, a World War 1 veteran formed in the Edwardian age, comes from another world in which '...the chapel is the shrine of eternal youth' (Goodliffe, 1961:148): it has to be said that we are not very far here from the imagined world of school chaplaincy as satirised by Alan Bennett. A more recent text is Sister Mary McKeone's Wasting time in School (McKeone, 1993), which presents a view of Roman Catholic school chaplaincy as pastoral and liturgical ministry. Beginning her chaplaincy work in 1980, Sr Mary served in RC comprehensive schools in the North-East over a twelve-year period in a hugely different era from the post-war world described by Goodliffe. Her book grew out of a sabbatical year in which she reflected on her work and undertook research among her fellow-chaplains, the detailed results of which are regrettably not reported. Removed from the teaching role which was at the core of Goodliffe's work, she characterises chaplaincy as 'wasting time in school', or 'lavishly' giving away 'quality' time to pupils in quiet listening (McKeone, 1993:9).

The pamphlet 'Chaplaincy Papers' (Cameron, 2000), was the first attempt to offer an account of independent school chaplaincy in terms of rationale, role description and managerial issues such as appointments, contracts and conditions of service. There is less emphasis on the pastoral and spiritual ministry of the chaplain than on his public, institutional, representative and symbolic role; but it is clear that for the writers the chaplain stands at the interface of Church and the young of an unchurched society, with the task of '... opening up to them the possibilities of spirituality'. (Cameron, 2000:6)

In Chaplaincy: the Church's Sector Ministries (Legood, 1999) – so far the only book to consider the significance of chaplaincy ministries in the Church of

England – there is a single, brief chapter on chaplaincy in schools. (Lindsay, 1999) Lindsay writes from an independent school context, and brings out what he sees as the 'almost prophetic' role of the chaplain in an independent school; he also assumes the teaching role of the chaplain, although he recognises the possible tensions arising from role strain between 'teacher' and 'pastor'. The chaplain's most important function he defines interestingly as: '… to preach the gospel of undeserved and unlimited love and acceptance to an institution that runs on a doctrine of justification by works.' (Lindsay, 1999:120)

At the Heart of Education: School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care (Norman, 2004) surveys from an Irish context the humanistic, programmatic and spiritual aspects of pastoral care in schools (in effect, in the English context, 'pastoral care', 'the pastoral curriculum' and 'school chaplaincy'). School chaplains - whether priests, religious or laypeople - here report their main activities as '… one-to-one counselling, providing liturgical celebrations, supporting other staff, bereavement support, addressing the causes of student indiscipline, meeting with and visiting parents, and hospital visitation.' (Norman, 2004:192) The volume also contains the results of a qualitative empirical study of pupils' experiences and perceptions of school chaplaincy, (Murphy, 2004) at the time of writing the only piece of qualitative research on school chaplaincy to have been published. Murphy suggests from her research that the school chaplain may be a pivotal force in the personal development of pupils, and this tentative view is one which further research could helpfully explore in the English context. In an unpublished PhD thesis, Maureen Glackin has explored the attitudes of Roman Catholic pupils to school chaplaincy, and again this points to the need for further research in the Anglican context. (Glackin, 2004a)

Against this background, the Bloxham Project, in collaboration with the Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT), set up a project to research school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England, funded by a number of charitable trusts and supported by the National

Society, the educational division of the Church of England. The aim of the study is to clarify the nature, extent and effectiveness of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools; to identify and assist in the dissemination of good practice; and to discover the professional development needs of chaplains and to assist in the process of supporting these. So far the study has included an initial series of exploratory interviews with school heads and chaplains; a review of the theological and practical literature in the fields of mission, ministry, pastoral care and chaplaincy; and a series of in-depth interviews with school chaplains working in a range of school contexts. The present paper draws its conclusions largely from these interviews, carried out in the early months of 2010.

The interviews: sample, schedule and methodology

The factual context of the interviews can be set out in the table below, where location (for reasons of anonymity ethically implicit in research of this kind) is given in only very general terms by environment types (urban/city; suburban; town; rural) and regions (N, S, E, W). The school chaplains were approached with an invitation to participate in the research, conducted under the aegis of Anglia Ruskin University where the researcher is undertaking doctoral studies leading to the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology, and the sample was designed to be broadly representative of the different school contexts in which chaplaincy is situated. Semi-structured interviews – the interview schedule is at Apppendix 1 - were usually conducted in the chaplains' schools in locations chosen by them – a chaplain's office or vestry – and lasted on average about 50 minutes. Beforehand, chaplains had been given an information sheet explaining the rationale of the research, and had signed a consent form according to the required procedures of Anglia Ruskin University. The interviews were digitally recorded, and partially transcribed, the transcriptions amounting in all to some 30,000 words.

Chaplain	Ordained/ lay	Male/ female	School type	Location
A	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Town, S
B	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day	Suburban, S
C	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city S
D	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Town, S
E	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day/boarding	Town, E
F	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day/boarding	Town, E
G	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day/boarding	Town, S
H	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day/boarding	Rural, S
I	Lay	Male	C of E academy	Town, S
J	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city N
K	Ordained	Female	Independent girls day/boarding	Town, N
L	Ordained	Male	Independent co-ed day/boarding	Town, S
M	Lay	Male	C of E comprehensive	Town, W
N	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Town, W
O	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
P	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
Q	Ordained	Female	C of E comprehensive	Suburban, S
R	Ordained	Male	C of E comprehensive	Urban/city S

The methodological stance implicit in the interview process and the analysis of the data is essentially hermeneutical, and is well described by Swinton and Mowat in their Practical Theology and Qualitative Research, where they argue as follows:

Qualitative research seeks to create deep and rich insights into the meanings that people place on particular forms of experience. In order to access these experiences, it is necessary to engage in forms of deep conversation that will elicit this knowledge. Such conversation is necessarily deep, intense and rich

…. Interviews are concentrated human encounters that take place between the researcher who is seeking knowledge and the research participant who is willing to share their experience and knowledge. Such encounters are designed to enable the researcher to access and understand the unique meanings, interpretations and perspectives that the participant places on the chosen subject. (Swinton and Mowat, 2006:63-64)

A search for the 'unique meanings, interpretations and perspectives' of school chaplains being at the heart of this research project, the interview schedule was designed to assist and structure an open conversation in which the chaplains felt able to speak frankly about both the context of their chaplaincy – its external features – and also about the nature of their role as they understood it. The search for the 'inner meaning' of school chaplaincy revealed rich and fascinating data. It was the researcher's clear impression that the opportunity of speaking at some length about their role was one which chaplains relished, and which also gave them the opportunity to reflect on their roles and their practice in ways which were illuminating.

Diversity of context

The chaplains interviewed covered not only the different sectors of the secondary education system – independent, maintained and academies – but a diversity of school contexts which ranged from high-status, long-established schools with extensive estates and distinguished Grade 1 listed architecture, to those where utilitarian, un-aesthetic buildings were squeezed into inadequate spaces in down-town neighbourhoods; in imaginative terms, from Harry Potter to Grange Hill.

Diversity of context was echoed by diversity of status. At one extreme was the priest chaplain in an independent school who carries the heady combination of traditional and charismatic authority (to borrow Weber's terminology) attached to the mystical role of celebrant at the Eucharist. In this school the context of weekly worship is a magnificent gothic chapel whose architecture

leads the eye towards the elevated position of the high altar where the celebrant stands, clothed in sumptuous vestments and haloed by incense. Such religious high drama provides a certain stardom for its chief actor; and it seems evident that this will be an inescapable feature of this chaplain's life in the community: his role carries a high degree of authority and status.

In other schools, the chaplain may never be seen as the chief actor in a liturgical drama. One chaplain's small office was the only 'sacred space' in the maintained Church comprehensive in which she worked, but still provided a place where pupils could light a candle or pray in silence. Another chaplain's space – the size of a small classroom – offered both a place for reflection for pupils, and a space where staff can meet for prayer before school. Another school's chapel is a small, first-floor room, plain and un-atmospheric, overlooking a bleak, tarmac play area. Yet another school is situated in a cathedral quarter, and holds its regular worship in that ancient building. Diversity of physical environment, and associated diversity of status within their communities, characterise the school chaplains interviewed.

Diversity of ecclesial stance

The gowned prefects of a Harry-Potter style school might prompt the assumption that a chaplain in that context would similarly favour the traditional and formal, with its strong connection to position and status; conversely, at the opposite end of the spectrum one might expect a less formal approach to status and formality, and to clerical attire. In fact, however, all the ordained chaplains interviewed were in the custom of wearing identifiable, basic clerical dress, the minimal mark of role and status being the clerical collar. The accompaniment of black shirt and suit, marking a distinctly priestly understanding of ministry within an Anglo-Catholic context, was only observed in very few of the interviewees, but there was no mistaking the clerical 'badging' of all the priests interviewed. Lay chaplains were, as might be expected, in semi-formal work dress, indistinguishable in appearance from the teachers among whom they worked.

For chaplains at the 'catholic' end of the ecclesial spectrum, the celebration of the Eucharist is typically characterised by formality and dignity, by vestments and incense, and is carried out in an evidently 'holy' place, the chapel. Those of more evangelical stance may be situated (as was one chaplain interviewed) in a school without a chapel, and may celebrate the Eucharist entirely informally with a group of half-a-dozen pupils in a small office, where ritual and formality are otiose. Ecclesial stance was widely varied in the interview cohort, and covered the spectrum of evangelical to catholic, and liberal to conservative.

The variety of 'formal' theological background and of the (linked) ecclesial stance of the chaplains was considerable. Whereas three of the chaplains interviewed named Thomas Aquinas as their key theological influence (one adding to Aquinas the philosophers Wittgenstein and Derrida), others highlighted F D Maurice, and yet others Rick Warren and Steve Chalke. On this basis it might be possible to identify 'ideal types' of school chaplain using ecclesial-theological labels drawn from this kind of identification, such as - in these instances - 'intellectual Catholic'; 'liberal Catholic'; and 'charismatic Evangelical'. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, these categories simply seem broadly to echo the nineteenth century labels of high, broad and low Church, pointing perhaps to continuing streams of Anglican thought, attitude and practice.

But it is by no means clear that such an approach to ideal types is helpful: at present, the research indicates that ecclesial stance, whilst being an evident and identifiable feature of school chaplains, is not actually that significant in distinguishing different 'types' of chaplaincy. It may be, rather, that the very nature of school chaplaincy is that it tends towards a 'pastoral' focus in which there is an inherent, open inclusiveness: that is, whatever the ecclesial stance of the chaplain, whatever his or her theological preferences, or intellectual substructure, the actual practice of chaplaincy is determinant rather than the stated or espoused theology of the chaplain: 'praxis' may in fact precede and shape 'theology'.

Espoused and operant theologies

The varied ecclesial and theological backgrounds of school chaplains became evident in the interviews, not only through specific questions on formal theology. Other interview questions prompted distinctly theological reflection emerging from practice; and it became clear to the researcher that there was potential value in adopting for analytical purposes the typology developed in the Action Research Church and Society (ARCS) project jointly run by OxCEPT and Heythrop College (Bhatti et al., 2008). In this typology there are four dimensions of 'theology': espoused theology (the specifics of someone's articulation of their beliefs); operant theology (what is embedded in the person's practice of their faith); formal theology (what theologians do); and normative theology (the theology of scriptures, creeds and official church teaching).

What became of particular interest to the researcher was a comparison of two different perspectives, the 'espoused' and 'operant' theologies of school chaplains. One chaplain, for example, stated adamantly that she read no 'deep theology', although her actual interview responses appeared profoundly theological and reflective: she spoke of Jesus living authentically and non-judgementally, and this led her to say that the Jesus of the Gospels himself modelled ministry for her, demonstrating the significance of humanity being created in God's image. For this chaplain, 'theology' is assumed to be an intellectual activity removed from practice ('what theologians do'); whereas for some other chaplains the theologians they nominated as influential may indicate an intellectual heritage indicative of the way they see their position in the Church and in ministry, but may again not be wholly indicative of how their ministerial practice is shaped.

Core commonalities of school chaplaincy: the pastoral focus

Despite the considerable variety of stance and theological heritage revealed by the chaplains interviewed, it was notable that in whatever school context

the interviews took place, the interviewees themselves were speaking about recognisably broadly the same kinds of activities and commitments: there is clearly such a thing as 'school chaplaincy' which those engaged in, from whatever theological or ecclesial stable, tend to describe in similar, recognisable terms. The core features, the essential commonalities of school chaplaincy which appeared to emerge from the interviews, might be set out like this.

Whether ordained or lay, male or female, the school chaplain sees him or her self as a minister to the whole community in which the chaplaincy is set, though with a particular focus on, and care for, the student members of that community: this is at heart a Christian ministry to the young, and only then to those who work with and support their education- teachers, school governors, support staff, parents. And although there are some chaplains who would say that their arrival in school chaplaincy was accidental or adventitious, most of those interviewed described being drawn to this ministry quite specifically through a desire to work with the young, or through a familiarity with such work as teachers or youth workers at an earlier stage in their careers.

School chaplains describe their ministry as pastoral, and seem to see this above all as a matter of finding time and space to listen to pupils and staff – there being perhaps few if any others in the school who have the opportunity to do so. Overwhelmingly, chaplains see their listening role as non-directive, and even non-religious: the notion of spiritual direction or counselling as a technique to be applied with pupils appeared not to feature strongly with chaplains, and 'pastoral' in their understanding appeared to mean in effect a kind of concern which is disinterested, focused on the well-being of the person, and the whole person rather than simply the religious sense or awareness; as one chaplain expressed it, 'the gentle offering of unconditional care to the whole community'.

Core commonalities of school chaplaincy: the liturgical role

Moving to a further, core aspect of school chaplaincy, the chaplains interviewed all had a leading, liturgical role in the school. At one level this might be filling the high-status, high-profile role of president at the regular school Eucharist, which will be celebrated with splendour and a sense of mystery and awe in a worship space which is sanctified by centuries of prayer; at another, it may be that a chaplain is devising an 'apt liturgy' (SeeMorisy, 2004:156-164) to take place in a school sports hall for the accidental death of a student, where no specifically 'liturgical' content would be recognisable to a churchgoer. At another, it may be in the regular preparation of weekly, multi-media material for collective worship or assemblies, either held in year groups or tutor groups: this appeared to be a major aspect of the role of chaplains in maintained schools particularly. At the core, though, is a role which has to do with enabling people – especially the young – to reflect, pray and worship in whatever style is the custom of the place, or is appropriate, and to have a sense of the presence and reality of God.

In summary, although school chaplaincy covers a wide diversity of school context and style; although chaplains themselves come from very different ecclesial and intellectual backgrounds, and have a range of 'espoused theologies'; there is a remarkable coherence in their practice: these are people doing 'school chaplaincy', a ministry focused on the young and their extended educational communities and being characterised primarily by pastoral and liturgical activity.

Beneath the commonalities: a 'theology of presence'

These basic commonalities – a Christian ministry to the young of disinterested, person-focused, pastoral care, combined with a liturgical ministry which makes prayer and worship available to the young and their teachers – might be held to describe the core of school chaplaincy. However, one way in which chaplains characteristically described their ministry was as 'a ministry of

presence', being 'alongside' people: the role has to do with simply being in the school as a publicly-authorised representative of Christian faith, a 'God-person', available to listen to and support all comers, and to lead the worship of the community.   This notion of presence' deserves attention.

At one level, the ministry of presence is seen as simply physical: being in and around the school.   Chaplains speak of 'being there and being around'; of 'roaming purposefully', 'loitering', or 'loitering with holy intent'; even, self-deprecatingly, of 'a kind of desultory hanging around': the chaplain's physical presence is itself felt to be significant. But significant of what, exactly? Beyond the physical, the presence of the chaplain is felt to be indicative, a sign or 'representative symbol', as one chaplain expressed it, of 'spiritual values'.   From here it is a short step to the notion of incarnation, of embodiment. One chaplain spoke of 'modelling what I believe is Christ's way … of showing … unconditional love … it's trying to be incarnational, incarnate in my understanding is God being here … I want to signpost God.' Another chaplain, perhaps reluctant to use the theological term 'incarnational', spoke similarly of '… being Christian in a particular way … the Gospel being embodied and lived, living the faith in a different way, that is accessible and embodied and human…'

This suggests an awareness that the chaplain is a representative Christian, one trying to embody the Gospel though a lifestyle and an approach to others.   A ministry of presence is, then, perhaps a matter both of representing and of signposting God, and this in itself is a way, suggested one chaplain, of 'being that presence in a school which encourages, legitimises people's faith.'   A visible, representative figure of the Christian faith, embodying its values, the chaplain supports and enables, even, the faith of others in the community. There is also the notion of being 'available' to people. One chaplain, new to his role (although he had earlier worked as a teacher) spoke of '… realising that a big part of my role is being there and being around and smiling at people and building up lots of little relationships and sometimes big

relationships…' . The chaplain's presence in the school is the way in to establishing relationships which may become pastoral.

'You have to be where people are', said one chaplain; and this may be seen as the prerequisite for - as well, possibly, as the essence of - ministry. Being there, among people – and the school chaplains interviewed conveyed a strong sense of concern not simply for their young people but also for their whole, extended community – is the heart of what school chaplaincy is about: it is 'an enactment of belief', as one chaplain said, 'that each person is of value'. And although chaplains did not speak in terms of mission or evangelism, of adding numbers to the flock, there is a clearly-expressed feeling that whether or not they would offer to pray with people (and some certainly would not) there was a call to be 'a prayerful presence'.

Accompanying presence: a key theme of biblical spirituality

This almost tacit, operant practical theology of significant presence seems to lie at the heart of the practice of school chaplaincy as it is carried out by those interviewed, and to animate the ministerial commonalities of the pastoral and liturgical roles which they carry out. It remains, at least as far as the interviewees are concerned, a theology which is intellectually undeveloped and unelaborated, which almost struggles to find clear expression, but it appears to draw on well-known themes in traditional pastoral theology. For instance, Peter Speck's book on 'pastoral care in time of illness' from 1988 is titled 'Being There' (Speck, 1988) and the assumption behind the title seems to be that the precursor to any offering of pastoral care is simply 'being there' with the person. A more recent book, concerned to support all those who seek to offer 'helping relationships' rather than simply those who do so in a representative capacity as Christian ministers or laypeople, is tellingly entitled The Art of Helping Others (Smith and Smith, 2008) and is subtitled 'Being Around, Being There, Being Wise'.

This notion of presence, of 'being there' is a key one for ministry and pastoral care, and has a long pedigree in the spiritual sphere. It is rooted in the idea of divine care and presence, a theme which runs deeply through the scriptural heritage, perhaps most memorably in the Psalms: 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me...' (Psalm 23:4). The whole biblical narrative can, in fact, be read as one in which the actuality and recognition of divine presence and accompaniment is the key theme, its culmination being in the person of Christ, the 'Emmanuel ... God with us', the one who says 'I am with you always...' (Matthew 1:23, 28:20); the one who '... drew near and went with ...' the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:15). The school chaplain who described her ministry as being modelled for her by the Jesus of the Gospels was, perhaps, enunciating something about 'presence'.

There is therefore something profoundly theologically rooted about the notion of ministry as presence, even though the idea may be undeveloped. What school chaplains may be doing in hinting at or expressing the idea of a ministry of presence, or spiritual accompaniment, is simply drawing on a deep, narrative theme in biblical spirituality. That this theme is also recognised by people whose framework of thought and response may not appear at all religious could be indicated in talk of 'being there' for a friend in trouble or difficulty. Further empirical research, however, could helpfully seek to illuminate how school chaplains and those to whom they minister understand and experience this ministry of presence and accompaniment.

Conclusion: an age for chaplaincy

Despite the current marginality of school chaplaincy in the strategic thinking of the Church of England, there are indications that what school chaplains are doing, and their particular understanding of ministry, may be significant for the future of the Church. Stephen Pattison has recently argued that the Church needs to re-assess its focus on being a 'mission-shaped' community, and to restore its traditional emphasis on pastoral care. He suggests that in an

age of institutional decline, when the Church's focus has shifted to 'missionary mode' and 'Pastoral care … would seem … to be dead as the cutting edge of Christian ministry …', the Church must recover a sense of the pastoral as '…attending to and nurturing God's world, and all that is in it, for God's sake'. (Pattison, 2008:8-9)   Pattison's call for the restoration of pastoral care as at the heart of a Christian vision of human flourishing, encountering and nurturing the divine wherever it is found in human individuals and communities, would probably find strong support among school chaplains.   Here are people who are offering the very disinterested care this earlier vision of the Church's purpose put centre stage.

And others also see the offering of pastoral care as especially valid and significant in an uncertain age.   In her oddly-titled Bothered and Bewildered: Enacting Hope in Troubled Times, Ann Morisy argues that the ministry of pastoral care is of particular significance in an age of anticipation of a dystopian future. (Morisy, 2009:102)   This age, Morisy suggests, referencing Pope Benedict in his Encyclical Spe Salvi, calls not for an 'informative' Christianity which insists on the 'believing' of certain doctrines, but for a 'performative' Christianity, which is a living response to the radical life and teaching of Jesus. (Morisy, 2009:18).   There are strong grounds for arguing that school chaplains are doing exactly what Morisy suggests, trying themselves to live a performative Christianity within their communities, sharing their faith through disinterested care and concern, and modelling – as 'God-people' – a way of life for their communities which is a radical alternative in values and outcomes to the lifestyles predominant in the age.

(6441 words)

Appendix

Interview schedule

1. What brought you into school chaplaincy?

   o *Do you have any background in teaching?*
   o *How much ministerial or youth work experience did you have beforehand?*
   o *Did it feel like a special vocation?*

2. How full-time is your school chaplaincy work?

   o *Do you have other work in the school alongside your chaplaincy?*
   o *How much are you involved in teaching and/or school leadership?*
   o *If you work part-time, what is your other employment?*

3. What does your job-description look like?

   o *Do you actually have a formal job-description? If not, might one be helpful?*
   o *If yes, how far do you think it describes or represents what you actually do?*
   o *Is there anything in it you would want to query? Or to re-phrase?*

4. Can you talk me through what you did yesterday?

   o *How typical was yesterday of your chaplaincy work overall?*
   o *How did you feel at the end of all that?*
   o *What did you enjoy most about the day? What did you find most difficult?*

5. What do you think are the most important aspects of your chaplaincy work?

   o *What do you see as your major responsibilities?*
   o *How would you prioritise these in terms of the significance you give them?*
   o *What do you see as the single most important aspect of your work?*

6. Looking at your work as a whole, what gives you most satisfaction, and what do you find
   most frustrating ?

   o *Why do you think this is?*
   o *How do you deal with the frustrations you feel?*

7. Who would you say are the most significant theological influences on your

understanding of your work?

- o *Theologians? Church leaders? Other inspirations?*

8. Who do you feel you are accountable to for your work as a school chaplain?

- o *Are there opportunities for review or appraisal?*
- o *Who do you take your problems or professional issues to?*

9. How do you see your work in school relating to the wider Church?

- o *How much contact do you have with local Church communities?*
- o *How is your own spiritual life nourished or supported?*
- o *How much do you feel part of the diocesan or national mission of the Church?*

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Appendix C

Stage 1 Unit 3: Research proposal

'School chaplaincy in Church of England Schools in England: the nature of the ministry of school chaplains'

The context for this research proposal: autobiographical background

An autobiographical introduction may be helpful. I am a former school teacher, whose professional work over a period of some forty years involved teaching English and Religious Studies in secondary schools. I had also been ordained in mid-career as a priest in the Church of England, and in my last post was head of a Church of England comprehensive school of some 1300 pupils, and also licensed by my bishop as school chaplain. The practical difficulties of carrying out both the leadership role and the ministerial role in a school are perhaps self-evident; and the school chaplaincy I exercised was a collaborative, team enterprise with a sharing of ministerial functions, although the role of Eucharistic president was one I generally retained as the only priest available.

I had experienced and observed the ministry of school chaplaincy in two of my early posts, first in a Church boarding school in East Africa, and then in a Church day school in England. After my ordination, I moved from a county (secular) day school to a Church school, and there collaborated with the part-time school chaplain in leading worship before taking up my headship. In short, my educational career involved some quite extensive association with school chaplaincy. When, following my retirement, I was appointed to the directorship of the Bloxham Project, I once more found myself in a context where school chaplaincy was part of my context and responsibility.

The context for this research proposal: the Bloxham Project

The Bloxham Project is a small educational charity whose origins lie in the social and religious unsettlement of the 1960s. A deferential age was then passing (Brown, 2006) and one of the issues for heads and chaplains in the independent sector of education, the public schools, was managing what they experienced as an increasing resistance to the traditional religious aspect of a public school education – usually comprising compulsory daily chapel services in accordance with the liturgy of the Church of England, with further compulsory worship on Sundays in boarding schools. At its most extreme, resistance could involve 'chapel strikes', when pupils would simply refuse to attend chapel or, when attending, decline to participate as expected.

How to understand this new phenomenon – clearly threatening to the whole notion of good order in schools – and how to respond to it were urgent questions; and in 1967 a conference was called at Bloxham School, Oxfordshire, to consider them. The gathered group of public school heads and chaplains reflected on 'Public School Religion', and the outcome was the establishment of a research project exploring the religious attitudes and values of young people in Sixth form education – in both maintained schools, colleges and independent schools. Based at the Oxford Department of Educational Studies, the research team comprised Robin Richardson and John Chapman, who published their conclusions under the title *Images of Life: Problems of religious belief and human relations in schools* (Richardson and Chapman, 1973).

Three years later, in 1976, the Bloxham Project was set up as a charity with the twin objects of promoting education and the Christian religion, and it has continued since then to link a group of around a hundred schools – now including some from the maintained sector – with a practical focus on the support of pupil wellbeing, spirituality and pastoral care in schools, as well as on school leadership. A main theme of the Project's concern has been the

support of school chaplaincy, and the charity's Trustees have regularly included chaplains or former chaplains in their number.

It was on taking up the post of director of the Bloxham Project in 2006 that I found myself faced with the question: what exactly is school chaplaincy all about?   My initial contact with school chaplains in and beyond the Bloxham network, initially through the school chaplains' conference of that year, took me into the world of independent education of which I had only slight prior knowledge, having once spent just a year as a teacher in a preparatory school. I was introduced to a wide range of highly individual priests and some lay people who worked as school chaplains and whose ministry, I felt, would be characterised by real commitment and effectiveness. At the same time, many of these new colleagues appeared to me, as a former school head, to be adrift from some of the core habits and assumptions of the professional world of education as I had experienced it.

The context for this research proposal: the Bloxham Project/OxCEPT research project

It was in this context that I found myself asking fundamental questions about school chaplaincy - what it consisted of, what it was for, what was its value – and discussing them with Dr Helen Cameron, the newly-appointed director of the Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT) at Ripon College Cuddesdon, the theological college outside Oxford which is the base for the Bloxham Project. Dr Cameron agreed with my proposal that proper empirical research was needed to investigate the present state of school chaplaincy, and we agreed that OxCEPT would collaborate with the Bloxham Project in conducting such a study. Financial support was sought from a number of grant-giving charities, and a sufficient sum raised to undertake a two-year research project.

Following unsuccessful attempts to recruit a researcher externally, it was agreed both by the Trustees of the Bloxham Project and by OxCEPT that I

should undertake the research myself, in a new and additional capacity as a part-time research fellow at OxCEPT. A research reference group was drawn together, comprising the former professor of Educational Policy at Oxford, the professorial vice-principal of Ripon College Cuddesdon, the deputy education officer for the Church of England, a Bloxham Project trustee who was a serving school chaplain, Dr Cameron and myself. As a start, it was agreed that I should undertake an initial series of scoping interviews with heads and chaplains to assess the current picture.

Dr Cameron suggested at this point that the research could also be undertaken within the framework of one of the professional doctorates in Practical Theology available at a consortium of universities in England. Although initially unenthusiastic about this idea – the prospect of adding further to my workload was not attractive – I explored the possibility with Zoë Bennett at Anglia Ruskin University and, invited by her to attend a doctoral programme day with the then student cohort for the PrD, was excited by the quality and content of the programme and the strong sense of collaborative endeavour and support. The decision to enrol for the PrD was taken, and following the programme represents, I believe, a specially relevant context for the professional element of the doctorate, given that I am both undertaking the Bloxham Project's research into school chaplaincy and at the same time reflecting on this in the doctoral work I am doing.

The context for this research proposal: research so far

The Bloxham Project's research study has so far involved a number of dimensions. Initially, the scoping interviews mentioned above gave a clear insight into a wide range of visions of school chaplaincy: there was a common core of values, but a wide diversity of expressions, contexts and styles. Among the emerging issues potentially fruitful for further study were the following:

The school and the diocese: how does the wider Church relate to chaplaincy in schools, and how does it seek to support chaplaincy in schools as part of the diocesan ministry and mission?

Job descriptions, contracts and accountability: given some unclear arrangements for employment and accountability, how could these be clarified in ways that reflect and support the real nature of chaplaincy while at the same time providing managerial strength for school leaders?

Pastoral support and 'making God present': given a range of implicit but undeveloped theologies operating in school chaplaincy, what can be discovered about the varied theologies of chaplaincy, and how might they be clarified to the benefit of this ministry?

Models of chaplaincy: given a range of sometimes unclear operational models, are there broad and helpful models which could be developed?

Resourcing: what patterns of resourcing most effectively support school chaplaincy, and what might be a resourcing strategy based on a re-evaluation by the Church of the significance of school chaplaincy?

Valuation and status: what is the extent of the diversity of understandings of chaplaincy and also of the value and status of the role, and might a broader and more shared and explicit understanding benefit both the mission of the Church and the quality of schools with chaplaincy provision?

What are the benefits of school chaplaincy: could a descriptive account of the ministry of school chaplaincy both justify it in resourcing terms, support it in terms of ministerial career patterns, and also offer a model of it which is compelling for policy-makers and attractive for talented people to enter?

A further dimension of the Bloxham research involved undertaking a literature review of the field of school chaplaincy which also – given the extreme paucity of published material on school chaplaincy itself – led into broader considerations of chaplaincy in general, mission, ministry and the Church's strategy in relation to the younger generation. Both the scoping interviews and the literature review had been undertaken by the point at which, in the academic year 2009-10, I joined the PrD programme at Anglia Ruskin University.

The research question

As indicated above, my interest in school chaplaincy is long-standing, and I come to this research with a broad group of questions about this special sphere of Christian ministry: What exactly is it? What is it for? What is its value? At the same time, a number of more detailed issues emerged from my initial scoping interviews, as has just been explained. It is clearly difficult to wrap up all of these questions into a single research question, although it is possible to argue that the answers to more specific questions might appear as more general issues are being pursued. It seems best, therefore, to define the central research question as follows:

What is the nature of the ministry being undertaken by school chaplains in C of E secondary schools in England?

Within this central research question, however, reside others which it may be helpful to set out as follows:

How extensive is this ministry?

How is this ministry understood by chaplains themselves?

How is this ministry valued by those who are its recipients?

What is the impact of this ministry upon the lives of those who experience it?

What is the contribution of school chaplains to the ethos of their schools?

What training resources are needed for the development of school chaplaincy?

The rationale for this research

Although the motivation for this research topic is grounded in personal interest and professional involvement, there is a wider and more significant rationale to bear in mind. If we assume that one of the motivations of the Church is to ensure its own survival across the generations – to hand on the gospel for those in each age – then it is clear that there must be a real and, it could be argued increasingly urgent, need for the institutional Church to

examine its points of connection with the young. The background to this is the secularisation debate; and whether or not we take the view of Grace Davie that there is a level of continuing 'believing without belonging' in post-modern Britain, or the more gloomy view of Callum Brown that we have in effect already witnessed 'the death of Christian Britain' (Davie, 1994, Brown, 2001), it remains the case – according to the evidence to hand, that the influence of the institutional Church among the young has declined and continues to decline. One figure which is relevant is that from the 'Religious Trends' report of Christian Research following their religious census of 2005. (Brierley, 2006) Even if we grant an element of unreliability in the figures, the general picture seems plain: from an estimated two million young people attending church in 1980, by 2005 the numbers had dropped to 200,000 - a mere tenth.

Even Grace Davie's generally more optimistic research indicates a loss of connection between the Church and the young: she concludes that in a context where 'Orthodox Christianity and popular religion have ... been drifting apart', there is 'a generational shift' in which for significant groups of young people '... disconnected belief is giving way to no belief at all' (Davie, 1994-123) – a conclusion which is supported by the Kendal study. In The Spiritual Revolution: why religion is giving way to spirituality, Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead argue, noting in passing that the average age of a churchgoer is now higher than that of the population at large, that ' ... a significant and growing proportion of the children of churchgoers cease to attend as soon as they are able to do so, and that this haemorrhage is a major and accelerating cause of congregational decline.' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005:140) A further conclusion of the Kendal study, that formal religion is being replaced by spirituality, may be seen as an indication of the privatisation of religion in the post-modern era; and since the Church is essentially a community committed to teaching which values highly the notion of interdependence (See Romans 12:5) the privatisation of religion may be seen as something just as worrying as numerical decline.

The rationale, then, for the research now proposed is that it is potentially of real significance to the institutional Church, in that it is exploring one area of ministry where there is inevitable, close and potentially transformative interaction between the appointed representatives of the Church and significant numbers of young people. The case was put powerfully by one school chaplain married to a parish priest, who commented that whereas in her husband's parish some twenty or so young people might be in contact with the Church via the Church youth group, she herself went to work each day with 1,400 young people. It is also worth mentioning that the ministry of school chaplaincy, as far as we can see, is not held in any great esteem in the Church, or considered to be of real significance. Anecdotally, one bishop has been heard to comment on the regret he felt that a promising young priest had decided to go into school chaplaincy, since otherwise he had a very promising career; and the idea of the school chaplain being a 'failed parish priest' has also been heard.

As far as the strategy of the Church of England is concerned, there has been a realisation for some time that the young are of key importance for the future. However, this has resulted in a characteristically institutional response by the Church – there has been a commitment to increase the Church's institutional stake in the education system, and this is indeed happening both in the maintained and academies sectors. It is however notable that the key report The Way ahead: Church of England schools in the new millennium, despite stating that 'Church schools stand at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation' (Dearing, 2001) and having something to say about chaplaincy in Church colleges, has only a single, meagre section on school chaplaincy, and certainly presents no vision of the potential significance of this ministry. It is as if more thought has gone into holding a stake in the education system, than into what spiritual and pastoral needs Church schools might have and how these might be ministered to.

In summary, the rationale for the research is rooted in personal interest in school chaplaincy; in professional involvement with school chaplaincy; and in

the conviction that this ministry has potentially a key part to play in the task of enabling the gospel preserved in the Church to be heard and understood through the pastoral, liturgical and other work of school chaplains, and thus transmitted across the generations.

School chaplaincy in the wider context of practical theology

Practical theology is essentially concerned with praxis, the outworking of belief in action. In the classic formulation of David Tracy, theology as a whole may be described as having three dimensions: the fundamental, the systematic, and the practical. Tracy argues that: 'Practical theologies will ordinarily show less explicit concern with all theories and theoretical arguments. They will assume praxis as the proper criterion for the meaningful truth of theology, praxis here understood as practice informed by and informing, often transforming, all prior theory in relationship to the legitimate and self-involving concerns of a particular cultural, political, social or pastoral need having genuine religious import.' (Tracy, 1981:57) If we accept Tracy's characterisation, and take praxis to be 'the proper criterion for the meaningful truth of theology', then it is arguable that whatever the philosophical and systemic theologians may be up to, the real test of Christian faith is whether it works, whether it makes a difference in the 'real world' rather than in the library or the study.

Now chaplaincy in all its various forms may be considered a classic context for praxis. The most recent study of chaplaincy in the Church of England (Legood, 1999) encompasses a wide range of what, following official Church nomenclature, are called 'sector ministries – that is, ministries defined by being non-parochial and having their context in what a Church report from 1983 calls a 'sector', defined as 'a slice of social life which contains ideas, values, concepts, activities with common roots and outlets in public life' (National Society, 1983). Implicit in this thinking is, perhaps, the assumption that parochial ministry somehow embraces 'society', whereas 'sector' ministry is concerned only with a 'slice' of society; and it seems clear that for

the Church of England there is an inherent difficulty in conceiving of ministry outside what is still seen as the normative context of the parish.

The traditional ministerial context has been shaped and defined over the years since the origins of the parish system in the early medieval period as essentially territorially-based. But chaplaincy is a ministry in the workplace, the living space, the world of daily interaction; it is, it could be said, situated at the intersection of the Church and the world. There is therefore a special attunedness between the varied ministries of chaplaincy and the practical theological concern with praxis: chaplaincy is ministry taken out of the Church and into the workplace, making a difference in 'the real world'.

That the Church of England is concerned to make this difference is clear from recent thinking about mission and ministry. The report Mission-Shaped Church (Working Group of the Mission and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England, 2004) was a serious attempt to review the mission of the Church in a post-modern age in which the Church is in visible numerical decline; its main impetus, however, which been towards the development of church-planting and 'fresh expressions of church', may have been misdirected. What is remarkable is the fact that the report ignores chaplaincy, which makes no appearance even in the index: the ongoing series of interactive encounters between the daily social world and the Church represented by the whole range of chaplaincies is simply by-passed. There is a clear need for chaplaincy to be re-evaluated, even taken seriously by the Church, and the particular perspective of practical theology is one utterly suited to undertake this task.

Research methodology

The background to the present research proposal, as I have explained above, is research being undertaken by the Bloxham Project, and the methodology for that research is clearly relevant. Apart from the literature review already referred to, which employed conventional library search methods, the

Bloxham research has so far been limited to qualitative methods, relying heavily on semi-structured interviews. The initial scoping interviews were undertaken with a very simple series of questions for heads and school chaplains, and were only recorded manually in note form. However, a further series of interviews have since been carried out on a more academically rigorous basis with a representative sample of eighteen school chaplains in a range of secondary schools. For these interviews, again using a semi-structured interview format but also employing a digital recording device, the schedule was focused on seeking the chaplains' own perceptions of the various dimensions of their work and its significance. Ethical approval was sought and forthcoming for the interviews from the relevant committee at Anglia Ruskin University, and an article based on the analysis of the interview data is being submitted as a Stage 1 Unit 2 paper for the professional doctorate in Practical Theology.

The work so far undertaken can be seen very much as background research for the main study now to be embarked upon. Drawing on the recent interviews with school chaplains, a survey questionnaire has now been created which seeks responses in four areas: the school and employment context for the chaplain's work; the chaplain's understanding of his or her chaplaincy; theological and spiritual perspectives on school chaplaincy; and school chaplaincy and the wider Church. It is proposed that this questionnaire should be sent to every person who can be identified as involved in school chaplaincy in a Church of England secondary school. A database of school chaplains has been compiled for this purpose from public sources, and some further work needs to be undertaken in collaborating with the dioceses of the Church of England to ensure that all those known to them as engaged in school chaplaincy are able to be contacted.

It is planned to use the internet-based system Survey Monkey for circulating the questionnaire. An initial e-mail will be sent to all identified school chaplains inviting their participation in the research and their responses to the questionnaire; this phase of the research has again been ethically

approved by the appropriate Anglia Ruskin University committee. The chaplains will be able to access the questionnaire from a hyperlink in the e-mail, and can return the responses direct to the research office.

The opening section of the survey questionnaire should provide the opportunity to undertake the first factual analysis of the state of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools: how many chaplains are employed, in what different kinds of school, and on what basis – full or part-time. It should also provide figures of those working voluntarily in a chaplaincy context. It has to be recognised, however, that the survey can in this respect only be indicative: it is unlikely, to be realistic, that it will be possible to contact every single person working in school chaplaincy, and similarly wholly unlikely that there will be a 100% response.

There are also issues in defining what exactly counts as school chaplaincy: there is a case for arguing that parish priests who relate in some way to their local school may be engaging in chaplaincy even while not officially referred to as 'chaplain'. Equally, there will be schools where both officially recognised and ordained ministers - non-stipendiary priests, for instance, and licensed lay workers – will be working as teachers and experiencing ministerial relationships with those around them while not being formally designated 'chaplains'. Similarly, active lay Christians in the school community may be exercising some kind of ministry outside the context of chaplaincy, for instance in the support of school Christian groups. The research will work on the basis that only those who are formally designated 'school chaplain' will be contacted, but there is certainly no assumption that chaplains are the only point of contact between members of the school community and the community of the Church.

Apart from the first section of the questionnaire, the analysis of which will be quantitative, the analysis of the questionnaire responses will rely largely on qualitative methods. The questionnaire includes a number of opportunities for chaplains to express their own views in free writing, and in addition a number

of opinion-seeking questions where statements about the chaplain's role and activity – again drawn from the earlier interviews – are set against a Likert scale. This essentially interpretive, hermeneutical approach – already employed in the analysis of the interview data from school chaplains – is, I believe, the key to understanding from the chaplains' own perspective the nature of their work. The general methodological approach draws substantially on the thinking of Swinton and Mowat in their Practical Theology and Qualitative Research where they argue that: 'Qualitative research seeks to create deep and rich insights into the meanings that people place on particular forms of experience.' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006:63) Through both the earlier interviews and, it is anticipated, through the survey questionnaire, there is the opportunity of grasping something of the meanings that people engaged in school chaplaincy place on their particular, and so far unexplored, form of experience.

Further research stages

The survey questionnaire contains an invitation for any school chaplain contacted to express an interest in collaborating further with the research project. Although I already have access to a considerable number of school chaplains through the networks of the Bloxham Project and the School Chaplains' Association, and through Anglican dioceses where relationships helpful to the research have already been established, it is hoped that this invitation will widen the circle of those engaged in school chaplaincy who are aware of the research programme and begin at least to feel a stake of some kind in it. This should present helpful opportunities for extending the research to its further stages.

Although it is hard to predict what kind of picture will emerge from the survey when the data is analysed, it seems likely that the clear impression already obtained from the earlier interviews of a ministry which is carried out in very diverse school contexts by people whose espoused theologies differ widely will be confirmed. However, it is possible that there will be among those who

indicate their willingness to participate further, those whose approach broadens the picture of school chaplaincy already gained, and that a series of follow-up interviews might be indicated. This possibility is related to the resources available for the research, a subject which is treated in a later section of this proposal.

What is clear is that if the research project is to be able to gauge anything of the reception or impact of the ministry of school chaplaincy, that phase of the research will need to be undertaken through direct contact with school pupils and others in the school community. At this stage I am hoping that it will be possible to undertake a series of focus group explorations with pupils and others in a number of schools in order to begin to understand the way in which school chaplaincy is experienced and valued by those who receive it. One possibly helpful development in this respect is that from the standpoint of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) it is now incumbent upon all Section 48 inspectors of Church maintained schools to consider and to report upon any provisions for school chaplaincy. Although the process of school inspection is not calculated to produce the kind of qualitative data which would pass the threshold of socio-scientific acceptability, it may be nevertheless that an analysis of SIAS reports could at least point this research project in helpful directions, offering indications of areas in which further qualitative work might be undertaken.

There are therefore, in summary, several phases of the research:

The initial scoping interviews already undertaken as part of the Bloxham Project research;
The initial literature review already undertaken similarly;
The in-depth interviews already undertaken with school chaplains, the analysis of which is reported in the Stage 1 Unit 2 publishable article;
The survey questionnaire to be sent out in September 2010, for which ethical permission has been given;

Possible follow-up interviews with a further selection of school chaplains who indicate their interest in the research programme following the survey;

Focus group interviews with a range of pupils and others in a selection of schools to gauge reception of chaplaincy;

Possible documentary analysis of SIAS inspection reports and follow-up interviews.

All of this followed by a final research report and the dissemination of the research results.

The linkage of the Bloxham research and the PrD research

The Bloxham Project research, as explained above, was designed to fit within a two-year window, that being the time for which the secured funding would last, and the period concerned runs through the academic years 2009-2011. An indication was initially given to funding charities that at the end of the two-year period, a report would be presented and disseminated, and the covering letter for the questionnaire survey includes the information to participants that the initial results of the research will in fact be presented at a conference on school chaplaincy in June 2011, jointly organised by the Bloxham Project, the Woodard Corporation (an Anglican educational charity), the School Chaplains' Association and the Church of England's education division, the National Society. A research time-line has been put in place with this framework.

However, it will be evident that the PrD research described above will need to extend beyond the summer of 2011; it is highly unlikely that, for instance, the follow-up interviews with more school chaplains and the focus group interviews with pupils and others can be fitted in before then. Not least among the reason for this is this is that I continue to carry responsibility for the leadership of the Bloxham Project until September 2011, and this has evident implications as far as time and workload are concerned. The clear conclusion is that the Bloxham research and the PrD research will in effect run on parallel time lines, with the PrD research extending beyond the

Bloxham research to the summer of 2012, allowing for the writing-up of the research dissertation.   There are some resource implications in this which need to be explained.

Resourcing the research project

As described above, funding charities initially donated sufficient resources for a two-year research programme. It is not impossible, however, that some of these charities could be persuaded to fund an extension of the project, should the initial results prove to be sufficiently encouraging. Should this be the case, I could continue as an OxCEPT research fellow funded for a further year to complete the further phases of research set out above, while no longer being director of the Bloxham Project. Careful management of the presently-available funding could also possibly allow for some financial support – say for travel expenses – for the extended research in 2011-2012, which would be helpful. Should this not be the case, and should no funding be available to support the research during that year, however, I should be willing to fund its continuation from my personal resources, so as to allow for the final phases to be completed sufficiently for the dissertation to provide a substantial contribution to knowledge. I should also say that I am happy to continue to support the costs of the PrD programme from my own resources throughout the period of my registration.

In addition to a final research dissertation, there is also I believe a need for some kind of publication, or possibly two, to be developed from the research project. There is currently no published guide to good practice in school chaplaincy, and this represents a significant shortcoming in the resources available to those working in this ministry.   The research project offers the experiential base from which such a practice guide could be written. There is also, arguably, a need for a more reflective publication that looks at school chaplaincy in the wider context of the Church's mission and ministry, and which makes the case for the strategic significance of this ministry.   Both these potential publications could in principle derive from the extended

research programme, and be a significant contribution towards resourcing the ongoing mission of the Church of England, not least in the respect of having potential policy implications for ministerial training and deployment.

As far as non-financial resources required to undertake the whole extended research project are concerned, the support of those organisations represented in the research reference group, as well as the particular individuals concerned, is significant. Ripon College Cuddesdon's OxCEPT research unit has an academic partnership with the Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture, based at Regent's Park College, Oxford, through which there is full access to the library and research facilities of that university. The ongoing support of the Church of England's educational division, the National Society, offers access to the network of Church maintained schools and academies. The Bloxham Project offers access to its own network of 100-plus schools, and the School Chaplains' Association, in partnership with which the Bloxham Project operates, to those in school chaplaincy beyond these other networks.

The support of the academic team responsible for the various doctorates in Practical Theology across the country is also of significance. In my experience of the first year of the doctoral programme, I have found the intellectual stimulus provided by these academic colleagues, by the day and residential courses offered, and also by my fellow doctoral researchers very important. Belonging to a community of research in an area – Practical Theology – of such significance for the Church has been an enjoyable and stretching experience, one which is hugely more satisfactory than my earlier experiences of undertaking at various times Masters' level research in both literature, theology and education. In brief, there is in the leadership and community of the doctoral programme a powerful resource for research.

Resourcing the researcher: skills and development

I came to this research with a fairly strong academic background, fortunately, and with long experience as a priest and as a school chaplain. My earlier Masters' research in education (1981-3) had involved me undertaking a small-scale empirical research project among school governors in Oxfordshire, using semi-structured interviews. This project led to a dissertation entitled 'What are Church schools for?', and subsequently to a substantial article based on its findings in The Church Times. (Caperon, 1985) My work as a secondary school deputy head in the late 1980s had also involved me in the development and management of teacher appraisal systems, which meant undertaking training in supportive interviewing and subsequently training others.

My later experience of Masters' level theology and hermeneutics (1997-9) had given me an overview of some (then) current leading figures in nineteenth and twentieth century theology, and I wrote a dissertation on the theological writings of Matthew Arnold in the 1870s – works which in some respects foreshadowed some of the radical theology of the twentieth century and which emphasised, interestingly, the practical dimension of theology: for Arnold, 'the object of religion is conduct'; and conduct is 'three-fourths of life' (Arnold, 1924) It was not, however, until I began my work with the Bloxham Project, and we had taken up our new base at Ripon College Cuddesdon that I began to become acquainted with the discipline of practical theology. The writings of Dr Martyn Percy, the college principal, first stimulated my interest in this (to me) new field, and it has in the past three years radically affected my understanding of what is meant by 'theology'.

In this respect I have also found particularly illuminating the work of the ARCS – Action Research Church and Society – project jointly run by OxCEPT and Heythrop College, London. The key text here is the research report Living Church in the Global City: Theology in Practice (Bhatti et al., 2008). The authors offer a typology of theologies as follows: normative theology (what Churches teach); formal theology (what theologians do); espoused theology

(what people articulate as their belief); and operant theology (what is embedded in a person's practice of their faith). Although not wholly original in conception- there are echoes of Jeff Astley's Ordinary Theology (Astley, 2002) - this formulation seems to me particularly helpful when examining the ministerial practice of school chaplains – let alone the daily lives of professing Christians. Discovering practical theology, in short, has been a significantly transforming experience, and one which has prompted the research which is proposed here.

However, the general stance I continue to hold and which has prompted the research preference for qualitative methods and interpretive approaches outlined above is a belief in the priority of the person: a standpoint nurtured by the academic study of literature, and the educational thinking, of the 1960s, the decade in which I undertook my initial higher education. This is also, though, a key driver in practical theology: the personal focus, a concern for what leads to human flourishing (Pattison, 2007:123) is at the root of the discipline.

A further note on research training is necessary. Although I had a slight background in empirical research, as I have indicated above, I found the brief but comprehensive research methods training course run by OxCEPT in September 2009 a very helpful introduction to the issues raised by the research process, especially the range of approaches to the interpretation of qualitative data. I have since extended my awareness of the research methods field by further reading, and adopted as a result of this the analytical stance I employed in the examination of the interviews with school chaplains mentioned above. Deciding that the computer-aided system NVIVO would not in fact be helpful in the analysis of my interview data was a further indication of my research commitment to humanistic and interpretive approaches and methods.

Conclusion

This research proposal represents, I believe, a clear instance of the very kind of approach which the professional doctorate is designed to encourage and validate. My interest in the research topic originates in a long acquaintance with school chaplaincy, professional experience in that role, and in my present responsibility directing the work of the Bloxham Project a serious concern that this ministry is insufficiently recognised or supported by the institutional Church.   The research question is one within which inhere several possible lines of research, not all of which it will be possible to encompass or explore in detail in the time available or within the available resources. However, I believe that I am in a position over the next two years to add significantly to our knowledge of school chaplaincy, to assist towards a more general understanding of and respect for this ministry, and to aid in increasing the profile of what I believe to be a vital ministry for the future of the Church.

(6390 words)

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The Interim Research report 2011

Project Papers 45: School chaplaincy: what does research tell us?

Preface

The Bloxham Project has always had a concern for school chaplaincy. The foundational Bloxham Conference in 1967 brought together school heads and chaplains to reflect on the mission of Christian education, and since then the Project has been active in the support and development of school chaplaincy, offering induction for new school chaplains, and encouraging their continuing development through courses and conferences, as well as through individual support.

School chaplaincy is a key part – arguably the leading edge – of the Church's mission to the young. There are very few children and young people who still attend churches – Christian Research estimated a total of 200,000 under-20s in 2005 - but all our young attend schools. School chaplains minister in Church schools – maintained, independent and academies - to far more youngsters than are reached by parish churches. Anything up to half a million people, it has been estimated, are ministered to by chaplains in these schools.

However, school chaplaincy appears to be both unrecognised by the wider Church, unsupported and unexplored: almost a 'hidden ministry'. The research project reported in this paper was rooted in a desire to explore and understand the nature, extent and impact of this ministry in all sectors of the Church school system, to try to establish what chaplaincy practice looks like in our schools, and to consider how those working in school chaplaincy could best be supported and developed. The research question was, in effect: what

are the characteristics and needs of this vital, hidden ministry to the young and to the extended communities of their schools?

The report which follows sets out the genesis of the research project; the funding sources which enabled it to take place; its methodology; and its initial outcomes.   It is offered to those working in school chaplaincy as a tribute to their 'hidden' ministry, and with grateful thanks for the generous collaboration and friendship of the very many school chaplains who allowed themselves to be interviewed, who completed questionnaires, and who made their students available for interview. Without them, this initial report could not have been written.

1. The Genesis of the research project

The Revd John Caperon took up the role of Director of the Bloxham Project in 2006. He had previously, as a maintained Church school head, also acted as chaplain in his school, supported by a chaplaincy team of colleagues drawn from among the actively Christian members of the school staff. On taking up the Director's post, one of his earliest encounters had been with the school chaplains gathered at Trinity College, Oxford for the School Chaplains' Conference.   This event triggered for him a strong interest in the wider ministry of school chaplaincy, and a clear sense of the Bloxham Project's key role in supporting chaplaincy in schools.

At about the same time, the Trustees of the Bloxham Project determined to seek an institutional base for the Project, and in September 2006 the administration of the Project was invited to move to Ripon College Cuddesdon, a leading Church of England theological college.   The college Principal, The Revd Canon Professor Martyn Percy, had come from a background in the sociological study of religion, and undertaken his own research in 'the concrete Church' – that is, the actual Church experienced by its members.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, a focus on what the Church actually is and does, and how it is experienced by its members and those outside it, had become a key feature of Cuddesdon's thinking.   One particular result of this was the establishment in May 2007 of the college's own research unit, The Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT), under the direction of Dr Helen Cameron.

In 2007/8, Helen Cameron and John Caperon had a number of conversations about school chaplaincy, the eventual outcome being a decision that empirical research into school chaplaincy was needed as a first step, and that the Bloxham Project and OxCEPT should collaborate to undertake this.   For the Project, this was in some ways a return to its origins.   Following the original Bloxham Conference in 1967, the first priority agreed had been to research the attitudes and values of young people, and Images of Life by the Bloxham researchers Robin Richardson and John Chapman had been published in 1973.

In 2008, with the support of the Trustees of the Bloxham Project and of Martyn Percy at Cuddesdon, a research proposal was drawn up, a budget established and a researcher sought.   The next need was to acquire the necessary funding.

2. *Funding, oversight and staffing*

The funding charities

Funding applications were next made to a number of charitable trusts with an interest in the areas of education and Christian faith, assuming a two-year research project to be carried out by a post-doctoral researcher between 2009 and 2011.

In the event, donations were forthcoming from a number of charities. The Dulverton Trust, the Haberdashers' Company, the Mercers' Company, the St.

Gabriel's Trust – the major donor - and the Woodard Corporation all agreed to support the research project. In addition, the Bloxham Project contributed funds from its own reserves. In all, the cost of the two-year research project, including academic supervision from OxCEPT; part-time researcher's salary; expenses of the research itself and of the research reference group amount to some £47,500.

Research oversight

The research project was overseen by OxCEPT in the person of its Director, Dr Helen Cameron. The research reference group, which guided the direction of the project, comprised The Revd Professor Mark Chapman (Ripon College Cuddesdon), Mr Nick McKemey (National Society), Ms Samantha Stayte (Bloxham Trustees), Professor Geoffrey Walford (Oxford University), with Dr Helen Cameron (OxCEPT).

Staffing

National advertisements were placed for a researcher, and there were eventually six applications forthcoming. Three candidates were invited for interview; two withdrew, and one candidate was interviewed, but the consensus of the interviewing panel was that an appointment was not appropriate. In the light of this, a solution was subsequently agreed in which the Director of the Bloxham Project, John Caperon, would complement his part-time work for the Project with a part-time research role, with additional administrative support being brought in to strengthen the Project at its base at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. Keith Glenny, who had taken on the role of Bloxham administrator in 2008, agreed to adjustments in his work programme to enable this to take place; and without his skilled support the research project would not have been sustainable.

3. The Research Project: constituent elements

The research project was envisaged as a two-year, multi-method process, culminating with the presentation of a research report to the national conference on school chaplaincy held at Liverpool Hope University in June 2011 and arranged jointly by the Bloxham Project, the National Society, The School Chaplains' Association and the Woodard Corporation, in celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary both of the National Society (founded 1811) and of the Anglican educational pioneer Nathaniel Woodard (born 1811). The research project was conceived as having several elements, as follows:

Scoping interviews: The initial phase of the research consisted of a series of semi-structured, 'scoping' interviews with school heads and chaplains in three independent schools, three maintained Church of England schools, and two academies.

Literature review: A full literature review was next undertaken, locating school chaplaincy within the wider context of the Missio Dei – the divine mission to the world; of the Church's ministry of pastoral care; and of the so-called 'sector ministries' of the Church of England.

In-depth interviews: A series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with chaplains in schools across the system then followed, drawing on the literature review and the earlier scoping interviews to identify the issues to be explored.

National questionnaire: All those school chaplains the research project had been able to identify as working in Church of England secondary schools, a total of just under 400 chaplains, were then contacted by e-mail or letter. They were invited to complete an on-line questionnaire about their employment context; their understanding of school chaplaincy; the resources for sustaining chaplaincy; and the relation of school chaplaincy to the wider Church.

Student focus groups: Focus group interviews were carried out with students from all sectors of the system, to test student understanding of the nature and impact of school chaplaincy.

Data analysis: Data from the scoping interviews, the in-depth interviews with chaplains, from the questionnaire responses, and from the student focus groups were extensively analysed using an interpretive or hermeneutic model.

4. Research outcomes: the scoping interviews

Ten scoping interviews were conducted: two individual interviews with academy principals; two individual interviews with academy chaplains; two joint interviews with Church of England maintained school chaplains and heads, one interview with a Church of England maintained school head and deputy; and three interviews with independent school chaplains. Exploring some key issues - why a chaplain is employed; what the chaplain's role is; what impact the chaplain's work has in the school community; how the chaplain's work relates to the wider Church – the interviews painted a picture of school chaplaincy as having a common core of values but a wide diversity of contexts, styles and visions. Following analysis of the interview data, a number of broad questions for school chaplaincy were identified:

How does school chaplaincy relate to the mission and ministry of the wider Church?
How professionally structured are the arrangements for the employment, accountability, support and development of school chaplains?
What are the implicit theologies operating among school chaplains?
What are the main models of school chaplaincy?
Who pays for school chaplaincy?
How valuable is school chaplaincy perceived to be, and what is its status in the Church?

5. Research outcomes: the literature review

The literature review explored the idea of chaplaincy in the context of the participation of the Church in the mission of God to the world (the *Missio Dei*) through its ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care. Looking at the specifically Anglican understanding of chaplaincy, the review identified Giles Legood's (edited) book *Chaplaincy: the Church's Sector Ministries* (Legood, 1999) as a key text; noting, however, that the chapter on school chaplaincy (Lindsay, 1999) occupies only six pages from a total of 176. Could this perhaps symbolise the wider Church of England's awareness - and valuation - of school chaplaincy, despite the book's fundamental recognition that chaplaincy itself is to be seen as a liminal, or frontier ministry?

Extant book-length studies of English school chaplaincy were identified as J B Goodliffe's *School Chaplain* (Goodliffe, 1961) – a retrospective, autobiographical account of public school chaplaincy in the immediate post-war era; and Sister Mary McKeone's *Wasting Time in School* (McKeone, 1993), an account of and reflection upon the writer's chaplaincy ministry in Roman Catholic maintained comprehensive schools in the 1980's.

The later compilation *At the Heart of Education: School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care* (Norman, 2004), written from within the Irish and Roman Catholic context, offers the first empirical account of student valuations of school chaplaincy. The most recent relevant publication, Diane Tregale's *Fresh Experiences of School Chaplaincy* (Tregale, 2011) is the first attempt to describe models of school chaplaincy within an ecclesiological framework, but in the very brief compass of a 28-page Grove Booklet.

Recent publications from Roman Catholic sources – both the Catholic Education Service (CES) and various dioceses – indicate a far clearer and more purposive understanding of school chaplaincy than within the Anglican context, the dominant model being that of lay chaplaincy, with an emphasis on the 'spiritual accompaniment' which is seen as the chaplain's task in

relation to the students in her care. There is one (unpublished) PhD study of school chaplaincy in Roman Catholic schools (Glackin, 2004).

Beyond the British context, an Australian federal-government-funded scheme to provide Christian chaplaincy from voluntary sources in (non-religious) state secondary schools in Australia has been described in *The Effectiveness of School Chaplaincy in State Schools in Australia* (Hughes and Sims, 2009).

In all, the literature review confirmed that school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England had so far been largely undescribed and had so far remained completely unresearched from the empirical standpoint.

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6. Research outcomes: the in-depth interviews

Eighteen in-depth interviews were carried out with school chaplains in a cross section of schools, designed to be representative of the range of contexts in which Anglican school chaplains work. The schools selected covered all regions of the country and all sectors of the Church school system: maintained Church of England secondary schools, academies and independent schools, both day and boarding. Some 30,000 words of the digitally-recorded interviews were transcribed.

The wide diversity of contexts, people, and job framework contained within the field of school chaplaincy was the first and most powerful impression gained from the interviews. The contexts of school chaplains interviewed ranged from the most traditional and prestigious boarding schools with their rolling acres and noble chapels to the most cheaply-constructed, overcrowded, maintained Church schools set in the midst of run-down council housing estates.

The chaplains themselves also span a wide range. Ordained and lay, male and female, young and middle-aged, chaplains come from widely differing social, academic and religious backgrounds; evangelical or catholic, liberal or charismatic, chaplains inevitably bring who they are and their personal understanding and experience of faith to their ministry.

That ministry is structured in widely differing ways. In the most traditional context, the ordained chaplain has a high profile in the school's daily life as he leads communal worship and is seen to have close access to the head and other sources of power in the school. The chaplain will also be a classroom teacher, most often in the Religious Studies department, and will have a strong reputation in the school as someone who grasps the philosophical and ethical dimensions of Christian faith at an academic level.

At the other end of the scale is the non-teaching, lay chaplain in the all-ability Church school – perhaps untrained in academic theology and from an independent evangelical church background, but with a rapport with youngsters which animates her ministry and makes her office or ad hoc chapel a buzzing social centre at break and lunch times.

But if diversity is the first impression of school chaplaincy, further exploration reveals a common core of conviction and vocation: there is such a thing in Church of England schools as 'school chaplaincy', with a distinctive and recognisable identity, despite the wide variety of contexts in which it takes place and the wide variety of people who offer it.   Its key features emerged from the interviews as follows:

o   School chaplains have a specific vocation to work with the young within the extended community of the school: both children, staff, parents and governors – and the community within which the school is set – comprise their 'parish'.

o   Their work is missional and inclusive: it is a service offered to all by the Church in a context where personal faith commitment may be minimal; it is prime mission in a liminal or frontier context.

o   School chaplains place the pastoral dimension of their vocation as its heart: it is a ministry involving a range of functions, but pastoral care for the person is what matters most.

o   In whatever form and style are appropriate to the context of the school and its pupils, liturgical leadership is treasured by school chaplains as an opportunity to create the conditions in which the presence of God may be experienced.

- o Beyond and through all their ministerial functions, school chaplains exercise a ministry of presence, representing and embodying the Christian faith.

From the in-depth interviews a number of questions also arose for further exploration, including:

What are the employment contexts and conditions of those working in school chaplaincy?

How do school chaplains understand their role and prioritise the range of functions they have?

What are the varying espoused theologies of school chaplains, and how do these relate to their operant theologies, or practice?

What helps school chaplains sustain their ministry?

How do school chaplains see themselves and their ministry in relation to the wider Church?

7. *Research outcomes: the survey questionnaire*

The survey offered the opportunity to seek the views of school chaplains across the country on these issues, and a four-section questionnaire was constructed around employment context; the role of the school chaplain; theological resources for school chaplaincy; and school chaplaincy and the wider Church. A range of questioning strategies was incorporated, including factual, box-ticking exercises, the use of Likert scales to weigh opinion, and sentence-completion free-writing tasks. The intention was to seek the personal views and convictions of school chaplains rather than simply to obtain external facts.

Using e-mail and letter, contact was attempted with a total of 382 people working as school chaplains, including 296 named persons, with a further 71 e-mails sent to schools with a request to forward the e-mail to the (un-named) chaplain, and letters being sent to 15 schools without available e-mail

contact. Those contacted were invited to complete the questionnaire on the SurveyMonkey website. A link was also placed on the Bloxham website, enabling chaplains who had heard about the survey, but who had not themselves received an invitation, to participate.

The database of 367 schools and chaplains includes 242 independent schools; 108 maintained schools; and 17 academies. Although no definitive register yet exists, it is recognised that this may well not cover the entire spectrum of schools with Church of England chaplaincy provision; it is also accepted that other forms of chaplaincy – ad hoc or informal - may be operative in Church schools and also beyond.

During the two-month period when the survey was active, October and November 2011, 218 school chaplains responded to the invitation to undertake the questionnaire, an initial response rate of 57%. Given drop-out during the questionnaire itself, however, the final number of completed questionnaires was 160, representing an encouraging response rate of 42%.

Just under two thirds of responses to the survey (65% - 141) came from independent schools; just over a quarter (26.6% - 58) from maintained schools; fewer than a tenth (8.3% - 18) from academies. This inevitably means that there is an inbuilt bias in the sample – independent schools are over-represented. Analysis of the data, however, has taken this into account and distinguished between the different sectors' responses.

8. *The survey: key findings*

Accepting that the data is inherently incomplete and that the respondents to this survey may not be representative of the wider community of school chaplains, the questionnaire produced some clear findings, set out here under the headings of the four questionnaire sections.

a. The employment context:

o There is an overwhelming preponderance of ordained ministers working in school chaplaincy; only 31 of the 218 respondents (14.2%) identify as lay chaplains.

o Over two-thirds of chaplains (70.2%) are employed by their school, with fewer than a tenth (8.3%) being directly employed by the Church at local or diocesan level.

o A fifth of chaplains (20.2%) describe themselves as working on a part-time basis.

o The 'typical' chaplain in this sample is ordained, employed by his or her (independent) school, and spends a substantial proportion of his time – even a full timetable – in teaching.

o Almost three-quarters of respondents overall (72%) have a formal, written job description. However, all academy chaplains responding had a job description, although among maintained school chaplains the proportion was lowest at 63% (compare independent schools at 73.3%).

o Almost three-quarters of respondents overall (74.3%) have a regular review or appraisal in the school context. Here, the highest proportion is in the independent schools (80.3%), with the lowest proportion (58.6%) being in the Church maintained schools.

o Only 43.1% overall describe themselves as having a regular review or appraisal in the Church context; with something over half of academy and maintained school chaplains (55.6% and 56.9% respectively) having this, by comparison with just over a third (35.9%) of independent school chaplains.

b. The role of school chaplain:

In this section of the questionnaire, school chaplains were asked to prioritise six aspects of their chaplaincy set out in the Bloxham Project's own developed, functional model of school chaplaincy. There was a strong degree of convergence in the responses. Chaplains rated the importance of the

different functions in the following order, with the two latter functions being seen as significantly less important than the others:

1. Pastoral: caring for the whole community
2. Spiritual: leading the spiritual life of the community
3. Liturgical: leading prayer and worship
4. Missional: commending the Christian faith and supporting other faiths
5. Prophetic: 'speaking truth to power'
6. Pedagogic: teaching about the Faith, and catechesis.

The unambiguous priority placed on pastoral care reflects and endorses the stances of chaplains interviewed earlier in the research project; and whilst the prophetic and pedagogic functions are seen as far less significant than others, it seems clear that the shape of the Bloxham model is endorsed by practising chaplains.

Further findings from this section of the survey include:

o   There is a very strong sense of personal vocation (88.4%) to this specific ministry.
o   School chaplains overwhelmingly (97.7%) see their ministry as one to the whole school community, not just the young.
o   However, there is a strong (89.0%) conviction that school chaplaincy offers particular opportunities to influence the young and change the course of their lives.
o   Fewer than half of respondents (42.8%) felt they would at a later point be in parochial ministry.
o   More than half of respondents (52.0%) said that pupils of other faith traditions saw them as a faith leader.
o   Only just over a third of chaplains (34.1%) - and only a quarter in maintained C of E schools (25.6%) – were keen about working with committed pupils in the Christian Union.

In the personal response question of this section of the questionnaire, respondents were powerfully eloquent about their own 'take' on their ministry: a key, recurrent theme was the idea of chaplaincy as a 'ministry of presence', expressed in various ways but in strong endorsement of the perceptions of the chaplains interviewed earlier in the study: the chaplain is 'the God person', the representative embodiment of the Christian faith in the school community.

c. Theological perspectives on school chaplaincy

What theological and spiritual resources animate and support the ministry of school chaplains? This section of the questionnaire provides some clear and unambiguous responses.

o Predominant theological influences for school chaplains are the Christian scriptures and the field of pastoral and practical theology.
o Chaplains in independent schools appear to have the broadest theological heritage, by comparison with their colleagues in C of E maintained schools and academies.
o Chaplains in academies rate liberation theologies and contemporary evangelical theology more highly than their colleagues elsewhere.
o Chaplains in C of E maintained schools rate the inheritance of Anglo-Catholic thought more highly than others.
o Lay chaplains rate contemporary evangelical theology more highly than their ordained colleagues.
o Contemporary radical/sceptical theology appears to be a relatively minor influence among school chaplains.

Broadly, school chaplains appear to be animated by the whole sweep of the theological tradition rather than by more temporary fashion, and to bring to their work a rich heritage of theological thinking, with a focus on the scriptural sources of faith and the practical resources of pastoral theology. This acknowledged debt to pastoral and practical theology indicates clearly a

group of ministers for whom theology is less an intellectual interest than a 'way in' to the practice of ministry itself.

So what sustains school chaplains in their ministry? Again, there were clear responses.

o School chaplains are spiritual people: their inner life of prayer and meditation is described as sustaining by 98.8% of respondents, and they are also sustained (97.0%) by their private spiritual reading. Recreation is also significant for them: holidays and personal interests receive the endorsement of 97.7% of respondents.

o Equally, school chaplains are relational people: the backup of family and friends is described as sustaining by 97.7% of respondents.

o Worship is important for school chaplains: 85.5% of respondents name the Eucharist as a sustaining source for them; although participation in a worshipping community beyond the school is far more significant for academy and C of E maintained school chaplains than for those in independent schools, of whom fewer than three-quarters (74.3%) say this sustains them.

o Collegiality matters to school chaplains: over 80% of academy and C of E maintained school chaplain respondents refer positively to their involvement with local clergy and church workers – but for independent school chaplains this drops to fewer than half (49.5%).

o The 'college' of school chaplains counts for less, however; worryingly, fewer than half (48.8%) of C of E maintained school chaplains feel sustained by the nation-wide community of school chaplains, and overall the figure only rises to under two-thirds (61.8%).

o Almost all chaplains, though, (94.5%) feel sustained by the appreciation of pupils: here are people who relish being with the young and who are appreciated by them.

In the personal response question of this section of the questionnaire, chaplains were again eloquent about their personal, spiritual lives, displaying

a rootedness particularly in the two dominant spiritual traditions of the Church of England, the Evangelical and the Catholic. For many, there was a strong sense that their vocation as school chaplains was validated by the difference which their work potentially made to the lives of the young people in their care.

d. School chaplaincy and the wider Church

Concerns expressed by school chaplains interviewed earlier in the research prompted this section of the questionnaire, and respondents echoed the views previously expressed. There appears to be little confidence among school chaplains that – despite support from their bishop, perceived by two-thirds of chaplains overall (67.5%) – the wider Church of England either understands or properly supports school chaplaincy. Some of the responses are as follows.

o Fewer than half of respondents (40.1%) perceive their diocese as having a strong sense of the significance of school chaplaincy for the future of the Church; and over half (56.9%) of respondents agree that the national strategy of the Church takes little account of the potential of school chaplaincy.

o Almost two-thirds of all respondents (64.4%) feel 'somewhat detached' from the work of the diocese and deanery, although among academy chaplains the proportion is fewer than a third (30.8%) and among independent school chaplains it rises to almost three-quarters (72.6%).

o Although only some 7% of chaplains in academies and C of E maintained schools agreed that their work was 'unsupported' by their diocese, the proportion of independent school chaplains agreeing rose to 20.7%.

o Whilst almost half (46.2%) of academy chaplains consider their diocese offers guidelines and support for school chaplaincy, the proportion of C of E maintained school chaplains is only a third (34.2%) and of independent school chaplains fewer than a fifth (17.9%).

o Only a quarter of academy chaplains see their work admired by the Church as a pioneering ministry; only a tenth of chaplains in the other sectors.

In the personal response section of the questionnaire, school chaplains were outspoken about their relation to the wider Church. They write of the 'crucial opportunity' presented by school chaplaincy but see this ministry as neither understood nor valued, with school chaplains as the 'poor relations' who are seen as having 'sold out / copped out' of the 'real work' of the Church in the parochial setting. There is an alarming lack of confidence that what school chaplains do is seen as remotely as important as what is done by parish priests in 'proper' ministry.

9. Research outcomes: student focus groups

Student focus groups offered the opportunity to gauge senior students' understanding and valuation of school chaplaincy in a selected sample of schools. These interviews with small groups of students in the top years of their schools lasted between a half and three-quarters of an hour and some 10,000 words of discussion have been transcribed. The fundamental question being pursued was, 'What value does your school chaplain add to the life of the community?' Students perceived chaplaincy in remarkably clear ways, often expressing with terse clarity what chaplains themselves might find harder to put into words.

Some key perceptions were:

o Chaplaincy is about helping people on their spiritual journeys – a ministry of accompaniment.
o A chaplain's public role as leader of faith and spirituality in the school is central to the school's ethos: without the chaplain as figurehead, ethos is diminished.
o A chaplain makes faith present in the school as its public representative and as a role model of Christian character and behaviour: she incarnates and exemplifies faith.

- Beyond functions, the chaplain's being and identity are key: 'It's his '-ness', who he is, his essence, his being, not his tasks,' said one pupil.

- A chaplain acts as a 'bridge' between the teaching and disciplinary function of the school on the one hand and its function as a place of care and inter-relation; she is there as a person, humanly, available to all.

- The title 'Father' can express an important aspect of a chaplain's role of care, love and compassionate concern for a 'family' or community of people.

- A chaplain may be seen as a 'scaled-down version of Jesus, a kind of mini-Jesus', as one student expressed it.

The ability of students to 'read' chaplaincy seems clear; their grasp of a chaplain's functional role and of the essence of the vocation is compelling. It is in itself a powerful argument for the significance and impact of school chaplaincy.

10. The research project: overview, implications and issues arising

The specific research activities and their outcomes detailed above were complemented by numerous informal conversations with individual school chaplains, heads, teachers and pupils. The (part-time) researcher's ongoing work as (part-time) Director of the Bloxham Project meant that he was also involved in a number of formal meetings for the induction and development of school chaplains, and in school chaplaincy consultancies and reviews during the research period. The research data were therefore surrounded by a penumbra of informal, additional sources of information; in what follows, conclusions are drawn directly from the research data, but supported by this wider context.

a. Overview

School chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools is a widely diverse phenomenon. Mainly carried out formally by ordained ministers of the

Church, it spans the whole of the social and educational world of contemporary England, from the 'privileged' contexts of the most prestigious independent schools, through the well-established C of E maintained schools, to the newest and most challenging of Church-sponsored academies.

As the number of Church academies grows, so the number of chaplaincies is increasing; but it is not yet standard policy for all C of E maintained schools to have chaplaincy provision, even in the most educationally-engaged of dioceses. Although some diocesan education teams have an enlightened approach to school chaplaincy's potential, see it as a key branch of 'youth work' and invest seriously in it, in other dioceses there is less energy and conviction about school chaplaincy. It is probably the case that it still remains the independent sector in which – for a whole variety of reasons - there is the largest investment, both institutional, financial and ideological, in school chaplaincy.

This wide diversity of context in which school chaplaincy is carried out, and its uneven provision across the sectors, may well have held back its recognition as a key ministry of the Church, and contributed to its 'hidden' nature. The conviction behind this research, though, and one which has been reinforced by the numerous encounters it has involved with school chaplains and others engaged in education, and with pupils, is that this is a vital ministry of potentially transformational contact with the young, whose significance in what is now commonly thought of as a 'post-Christian' society is huge. It is probable that the rising generation's greatest chance of engaging with a licensed minister of the Church, ordained or lay, is in the context of school chaplaincy.

The research has brought out clearly the commitment and dedication of school chaplains in all our diverse school contexts to living and sharing the Gospel with the young, to accompanying them on their own journeys of spiritual development, and to accepting the challenge of 'keeping the rumour of God alive' among the young and in the school communities where they

learn and grow.   In the light of this, some of the research outcomes should be matters of real concern for the Church, and have serious implications, some of which are indicated below.

b. *Implications*

o The Church's most significant ministerial engagement with the young is largely being paid for by the state (in maintained schools and academies) or by private charities (in independent schools): a situation paralleled, as it happens, by chaplaincy in the armed forces and the health service.

o More than a quarter of school chaplains overall and approaching half in Church maintained schools have no formal job-description: in an increasingly professionalized educational world, there is an urgent need for clear thinking about what a chaplain's role is and what a job description should look like.

o Over a quarter of school chaplains have no review of their work carried out by the school; in Church maintained schools the proportion approaches half. Again, this is a matter of real concern: school cultures now assume the entitlement of all staff to careful, reflective and developmental review: an entitlement which eludes far too many school chaplains. Independent schools, seen by some as the exemplars of older, more amateur approaches, are more professionally ordered in this respect.

o Only just over half of Church maintained school and academy chaplains have a regular review in the Church context: nearly half of this key ministry of the Church is being left to its own devices in these schools, and independent school chaplains are even less likely to have a Church-based review.

o That the Church is not regularly reviewing and supporting the development of school chaplains as a matter of course indicates that it is out of touch with many of its most pioneering ministers, apparently unconcerned about their ministry and development.

o There also appears to be a major 'disconnect' between the worlds of parochial ministry and of school chaplaincy, with fewer than half of school

chaplains considering a future in parish ministry: what could be seen almost as an 'apartheid' between these two ministerial and contextual worlds cannot be healthy for the Church.

o There are also strong perceptions within the community of school chaplains that the wider Church neither knows nor cares very much about what ministry in schools involves or what its outcomes are.

o There is an urgent need to re-connect parochial and schools ministry in a shared re-evaluation of what 'youth and schools work' could mean for the Church.

o The sense of detachment from deanery and diocese described by school chaplains is a worrying feature: it appears that isolation may be a problem for many, and that there is a need for greater coherence and collegiality in the wider ministerial community, rather than the apparent current disputes about where the 'real work' of the Church's ministry is done.

o Equally, there is a need to develop a sense of the national and local communities of school chaplains.

o Since the Dearing Report (Dearing 2000), it is arguable, the Church has focused on the establishment of more secondary schools at the cost of concentrating on what they are for, and what kind of spiritual education they might offer to the young.

o Ministry in Church maintained schools has come second to the provision of those schools: there is now a need to focus more closely on the spiritual dimension of a Church school education, including the central contribution of school chaplaincy to the Christian ethos of a school.

c. *Issues arising*

In addition to the implications set out above, there are other issues and dilemmas arising in relation to school chaplaincy which the research programme has brought out, and which should be of concern for the Church.

o The fact that the Church has no national register of those formally engaged in school chaplaincy is a concern. The current Crockfords lists

some 220 school chaplains across the sectors, but this may amount to no more than about half those currently engaged in a formal school chaplaincy. And, of course, Crockfords only lists the ordained: there is also a significant number of lay chaplains. An urgent task is for the Church to establish the full extent of formal school chaplaincy, and to maintain and keep up-to-date such a register.

o Beyond formal, institutionally-recognised appointments as school chaplain, there is also a need to begin to establish what is the extent of informal chaplaincy, by which is meant links developed by parishes, parish priests and lay ministers with their secondary schools, whether Church schools or not.

o There is also a need to set out with clarity what models Anglican school chaplaincy is built around. Understood by its practitioners as primarily a pastoral ministry of care and a ministry of 'presence', is school chaplaincy seen like this by the institutional Church? And how does school chaplaincy 'fit' into national and diocesan models of the mission and ministry of the Church of England?

o Equally, how does what school chaplaincy offers as 'pastoral care' differ from or add to the school's pastoral and support systems – whether through Year or House structures, or through the provision of in-school support by, say, a professional counsellor? What, in brief, is distinctive about school chaplaincy's pastoral care?

o Clear, coherent and integrated national and diocesan guidance on what school chaplaincy is, how it is best understood and practised, what are its distinctive characteristics, and how its practitioners can best be reviewed, developed and supported is also needed.

o One dilemma which needs to be resolved is whether school chaplaincy should be seen as an essentially 'Christian' or 'inter-faith' enterprise. The dominant model embraced for Further Education and for Higher Education by the national Church of England has been – arguably in response to government prompting on the 'social cohesion' agenda – one which is deliberately based on the inter-faith model.

o The conviction behind this research project, and reinforced by it, however, is that Church schools should be places of clearly Christian identity where the ministry of chaplaincy is carried out inclusively, but by Christian ministers. Where this ministry is being carried out in schools with a significant inter-faith population, as is the case with both some inner-city Church comprehensives and some independent boarding schools, there needs to be a clear basis for deciding how best to meet the needs of other-faith pupils.

o There is already evidence that a Christian chaplain is well able pastorally to support pupils of other faith traditions in the school context, although the possibility of inviting other faith leaders into the school for educational or chaplaincy purposes needs also to be considered.

11. *The Research Project: further exploration*

The research project described in these pages is the first empirical study of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools. It has been undertaken within a brief time scale and has produced significant outcomes both for school chaplaincy and for the wider Church.

It has, however, the inevitable limits of a short study, and the topic 'school chaplaincy' is far too important not to be studied further. The research project will therefore be the subject of a doctoral dissertation, which will be able to explore and analyse the research data in more detail and to deal more exhaustively with some of the background and policy issues briefly set out here in this initial report.

Beyond this, however, the researcher remains conscious of the relatively small scope of this two-year project and of further aspects of, and issues in, school chaplaincy which would also benefit from detailed, empirical research.

Two aspects in particular of the impact of school chaplaincy could be explored with profit: first, how closely interconnected are school ethos and

the effective practice of school chaplaincy; or, how does chaplaincy impact on ethos? Second, what is the impact of school chaplaincy on the spiritual and faith development of pupils?

A further dimension of this second question is how well school, FE and HE chaplaincy are linked to provide continuous, ongoing support across the phases of education both for pupils and students of settled Christian conviction and for those of any other faith or non-faith background: the current picture appears to be one of serious 'disconnect' between the phases of education.

There is also the question of lay chaplaincy, and what may be distinctive about lay chaplaincy – in some dioceses a key feature of in-school 'youth work' – as opposed to ordained chaplaincy. This raises the further question, also, of how well school chaplaincy enables other Christian staff in schools to act pastorally and Christianly in their work.

Also, following what is essentially a 'snapshot' of school chaplaincy, there is the question, what is the longer-term impact of school chaplaincy? A longitudinal, qualitative study would be fascinating.

The Research Project: conclusion

The research project was rooted in a desire to understand the nature, extent and impact of school chaplaincy in all sectors of the Church school system, to try to establish what chaplaincy practice currently looks like in our schools, and to explore how those working in school chaplaincy can best be supported and developed. What was initially perceived as something of a 'hidden ministry' has become far clearer through the research process.

What has been revealed is a multi-functional ministry, both lay and ordained, whose core awareness is of being the representative presence of the Church, even of Christ himself, in the educational workplace: the context where the

young are growing, learning and developing their identities and their values for living. Centring on inclusive pastoral care, but offering also spiritual leadership and the liturgical provision which helps people learn to pray, school chaplaincy has a core, missional impulse to nurture and commend the faith-based life. It is a transformational ministry.

From the outcomes of the research project emerge two key insights: that the potential impact of school chaplaincy on the lives of the young is considerable; but that there is as yet little clear, shared understanding of the nature of the role and accountability of school chaplains, who are also in effect asked to undertake their work without any clear structures for effective support and development.

School chaplains exercise a vital ministry among the young – and among all those who work in schools to lead and support them – a vital ministry which should no longer be hidden. It is the researcher's conviction that the Church now needs urgently to grasp the strategic significance of this ministry, and to develop a proper, professional framework for school chaplaincy, together with a well-resourced structure of support and development which is recognised nationally. The pioneering ministry of school chaplaincy, and the young whom it serves, deserve no less.

John Caperon
Director, The Bloxham Project 2006-2011
Research Fellow, OxCEPT 2009-2011

May 2011

Appendix E

Initial scoping interviews: question schedules

This initial interview schedule was developed from the research issues posed in the original Bloxham Project/OxCEPT research proposal, and the questions were as follows:

For headteachers /principals:

- Why do you employ a school chaplain, exactly?
- How do you think your chaplain sees his role in the school? To what extent does his/her perspective mirror yours?
- What kind of impact do you think the chaplain has on the religious development and spiritual understanding of your students?
- More generally, what impact would you say your chaplain has on the attitudes, behaviour, learning and achievement of your students?
- Returning to the chaplain's role, how do you feel your chaplain relates to the structures of the wider church community?

For chaplains:

- Why do you think the school employs you, exactly?
- How would you describe your role in the school? To what extent do you think your perspective mirrors the head's?
- What kind of impact do you feel you have on the religious development and spiritual understanding of your students?
- More generally, what impact would you say you have on the attitudes, behaviour, learning and achievement of your students?
- Returning to your role, how do you feel you relate to the structures of the wider church community?

Appendix F

School chaplain interviews: information sheet and consent form, and question schedule

Information sheet:

The Bloxham Project / OxCEPT	*Anglia Ruskin University*
Ripon College Cuddesdon	*Chelmsford Campus*
Cuddesdon	*Bishop Hall Lane*
Oxford OX44 9EX	*Chelmsford CM1 1SQ*

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Project: The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT study of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England

No research has so far taken place into school chaplaincy in C of E schools. This project aims to find out what school chaplaincy is happening in these schools; who is providing it; how these people understand their role and purpose as school chaplains; and what benefits are derived from school chaplaincy.

The research is being undertaken by the Bloxham Project in partnership with OxCEPT, and funding for the research has been provided by: The Bloxham Project, the Dulverton Trust, the Haberdashers' Company, the Mercers' Company, and the St Gabriel's Trust.   This research is also being carried out as part of a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with Anglia Ruskin University.

The results of the research will be published in a number of ways. Initially, interim findings will be provided as a paper for a national conference for school chaplains arranged by the National Society (C of E), the Woodard Corporation and the Bloxham Project in June 2011. It is also envisaged that a series of further papers will emerge as the analysis of data continues, and there will probably be further events to disseminate the outcomes of the research. It is intended that a monograph will subsequently be published.

For any further information, please contact The Revd John Caperon, the researcher, by e-mail at: johncaperon@btinternet.com, or by telephone at: 01892-667207.

You have been invited to take part in this research because of your experience of working in school chaplaincy, and your participation is, of course, entirely voluntary: you may withdraw at any time by notifying the researcher.   Your participation will simply take the form of allowing yourself to be interviewed by the researcher for about an hour (up to an absolute maximum of two hours) in a semi-structured, exploratory interview which invites you to reflect upon the nature of your work as a school chaplain. We believe there are no health and safety risks attached to this, since the interview will be conducted on your own premises in a place of your choice; and I should also add that your agreement to participate does not in any way compromise your legal rights in the event of any unforeseen problems arising.

Interviews will be recorded digitally, and the researcher may also take notes. The information thus gathered (the data) will be analysed, possibly with the assistance of specifically designed software, and key issues will be highlighted. Although it is impossible absolutely to guarantee confidentiality, every effort will be made both in the keeping of the data and in any publication of any of it to ensure that all sources of data remain confidential, and individual persons will not be named or otherwise identified in any research report or other publication.

We hope that your participation in the research interview will provide the opportunity for extended and thoughtful reflection on the nature of your work in school chaplaincy, and that you may feel this to be of value in itself.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Consent form:

The Bloxham Project / OxCEPT	*Anglia Ruskin University*
Ripon College Cuddesdon	*Chelmsford Campus*
Cuddesdon	*Bishop Hall Lane*
Oxford OX44 9EX	*Chelmsford CM1 1SQ*

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Name of Participant:

Research Project: The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT study of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England

Main investigator : The Revd John Caperon
Sarum
Twyfords
Crowborough TN6 1YE
Telephone: 01892-667207   E: johncaperon@btinternet.com

Participant statement:

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded, and I give permission for any such information to be incorporated anonymously in any future publication by the researcher on school chaplaincy.

4.   I understand that I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5.   I have been provided with a copy of this form and of the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the Bloxham Project, OxCEPT and Anglia Ruskin University 1 processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print)…………………………………
Signed……………….…..Date………………

Name of witness (print)………………………………..…..
Signed……………….…..Date………………

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT study of school chaplaincy in England

I wish to withdraw from this study.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Interview question schedule:

The Bloxham Project / OxCEPT research on school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England

1. What brought you into school chaplaincy?

   o   *Do you have any background in teaching?*
   o   *How much ministerial or youth work experience did you have beforehand?*
   o   *Did it feel like a special vocation?*

2. How full-time is your school chaplaincy work?

   o   *Do you have other work in the school alongside your chaplaincy?*
   o   *How much are you involved in teaching and/or school leadership?*

o *If you work part-time, what is your other employment?*

3. What does your job-description look like?

o *Do you actually have a formal job-description? If not, might one be helpful?*
o *If yes, how far do you think it describes or represents what you actually do?*
o *Is there anything in it you would want to query? Or to re-phrase?*

4. Can you talk me through what you did yesterday?

o *How typical was yesterday of your chaplaincy work overall?*
o *How did you feel at the end of all that?*
o *What did you enjoy most about the day? What did you find most difficult?*

5. What do you think are the most important aspects of your chaplaincy work?

o *What do you see as your major responsibilities?*
o *How would you prioritise these in terms of the significance you give them?*
o *What do you see as the single most important aspect of your work?*

6. Looking at your work as a whole, what gives you most satisfaction, and what do you find most frustrating ?

o *Why do you think this is?*
o *How do you deal with the frustrations you feel?*

7. Who would you say are the most significant theological influences on your understanding of your work?

o *Theologians? Church leaders? Other inspirations?*

8. Who do you feel you are accountable to for your work as a school chaplain?

o *Are there opportunities for review or appraisal?*
o *Who do you take your problems or professional issues to?*

9. How do you see your work in school relating to the wider Church?

o *How much contact do you have with local Church communities?*
o *How is your own spiritual life nourished or supported?*
o *How much do you feel part of the diocesan or national mission of the Church?*

Appendix G

National survey questionnaire and invitation to participate:

Survey questionnaire:

Please complete all sections of the survey questionnaire and when complete send to the Bloxham office by clicking the submit button. Some questions simply require you to tick boxes, while others allow space for you to type in your views.

Section A: Context

A1. Your school:

*Please tick **all** the appropriate boxes to describe the nature and situation of the school in which you minister:*

	Tick		Tick		Tick
Maintained		Below 500 pupils		City	
Independent		501 -750 pupils		Rural	
Academy		751 – 1000 pupils		Suburbs	
Boarding		1001 – 1250 pupils		Co-educational	
Day		Above 1250 pupils		Single-sex	

A2. Your post:

*Please tick **all** the appropriate boxes to describe the nature of your post:*

	Tick		Tick
Full-time chaplain only		Employed by school governing body	
Part-time chaplain only		Employed by Church - diocese or deanery	
Chaplain and teacher		Shared employment by school & Church	
Chaplain and other role		Pensionable employment	
Chaplain and SMT		Voluntary/unpaid chaplaincy	
Ordained chaplain		Lay chaplain	

A3. Your employment framework:

Please answer the following questions by ticking the relevant box:

	Yes	No
3a. Do you have a formal, written job-description?		
3b. Do you have a regular review or appraisal in the school context?		
3c. Do you have a regular review or appraisal in the Church context?		
3d. Do you have an entitlement to regular training or CPD?		
3e. Do you manage a budget which can support your own training?		

Section B: Your role as a school chaplain

B1. Aspects of school chaplaincy

There are several possible ways of describing the role of a school chaplain, one of which sets out six different aspects of the role. Reflecting on the nature of your own work as a school chaplain, please prioritise the six aspects of school chaplaincy listed below, putting 1 for what you consider the most important or significant aspect of your work, down to 6 for the least important or significant:

Aspects of the school chaplain's role	*Priority*
Pastoral: the chaplain's role as someone committed to the care and wellbeing of all members of the school community	
Liturgical: the chaplain's role as a planner, organiser, facilitator and leader of collective worship and other worship events in the school	
Missional: the chaplain's role as a person of faith commending the Christian faith to others, and nurturing faith in all	
Spiritual: the chaplain's role as a spiritual leader in the community, seeking to bring to bear the insights of spirituality on all aspects of the school's life	
Prophetic: the chaplain's role as someone 'speaking truth to power', challenging the school to review its life in the light of Christian faith	
Pedagogic: the chaplain's role as a teacher of and about the Christian faith, in the context both of Religious Studies and of Christian catechesis	

B2. About chaplaincy

Many school chaplains describe their work as a specific and special vocation. Reflecting on the nature of your own work as a school chaplain and your own sense of vocation, please show your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about school chaplaincy by ticking the appropriate box for each:

Statements about school chaplaincy	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Being a school chaplain is a special vocation, to which I feel called by God.					
Being a school chaplain is something I currently enjoy, but I also hope to spend time ministering in a parish.					
As a school chaplain I feel I am called to minister to the whole of the school community.					
Being a school chaplain means you are in close contact with the young people you would never see in church.					
As a chaplain you are the one person in the school community who can offer total confidentiality.					
Celebrating the Eucharist is the most important single thing I do as a school chaplain.					
A school chaplain doesn't have much real influence on the way the school runs.					
Not very many people in the school seem to understand what I do as a school chaplain.					
As chaplain, I have a special relationship of trust with the head, who consults me about key decisions.					
The chaplain has a real opportunity to influence the young and to change the course of their lives.					
Working with committed youngsters in the school's Christian Union is a great satisfaction.					
Pupils from other faith traditions in the school see me as a faith leader, and seek my support and advice.					
The working life of a teacher is very stressful and I am one of the few people teachers can let off steam with.					

B3. Personal perspective

Your role is something you understand better than anyone else. Please help us to grasp how you see your work by completing as clearly as you can the following sentence; and please feel free to extend your response if you wish to do so.

'The core of my work as a school chaplain is about

..,

Section C: Theological perspectives on school chaplaincy

C1. Theological resources

As a specific kind of Christian ministry, school chaplaincy is resourced by theological understanding and insight. Using the list below, identify the significance to your work, if any, of the named sources of theological understanding below by ticking the appropriate box for each (note that recent or contemporary names are given for illustration only):

Possible sources of theological understanding of school chaplaincy	Strongly influential for me	Influential to some extent	Not an influence for me
The whole Bible as the Word of God			
The New Testament Gospels			
Classic theology: St Paul and St Augustine			
Scholastic theology: St Thomas Aquinas			
Reformation theology: Luther and Calvin			
The Book of Common Prayer			
Newman and the Oxford Movement			
Liberal Catholic thought			
Neo-Orthodoxy: Barth			
Existential theology: Bultmann			
Contemporary radical theology: Cupitt, Spong			
Contemporary evangelical theology: Rick Warren			
Modern Catholic theology: Vatican II onwards			
Pastoral and practical theology			
Liberation theologies eg feminism			

C2. Sustaining school chaplaincy

The ministry of school chaplaincy, like other ministries, may be sustained in a number of ways. Reflecting on the nature of your own work as a school chaplain, please identify from the list below by ticking the appropriate boxes the importance for you of the different, named sources of sustenance or spiritual support:

Possible sources of sustenance for school chaplaincy	Strongly sustaining for me	Sustaining to some extent	Not sustaining for me	Does not apply to me
The support of teaching colleagues in my school				

The backup of my family and friends				
The personal support of my school head				
My involvement in a worshipping Christian community outside the school				
My sense of connection and involvement with the wider community of school chaplains nationally				
My own, private spiritual reading				
My personal discipline of prayer and meditation				
Frequent and regular participation in the Eucharist				
My involvement with the local community of clergy and church workers				
My holidays and personal interests				
The opportunity of regular retreats				
The appreciation of school pupils				
Higher-level theological study				
Spiritual direction or companionship				

C3. Personal perspective

You understand better than anyone what inspires and sustains your work. Please help us to grasp this by completing as clearly as you can the following sentence, extending your response if you wish:

'As a school chaplain I am sustained and inspired most of all by

...
....'

Section D: School chaplaincy and the wider Church

D1. Relating to the Church

Chaplaincy in schools is experienced by some chaplains as a fairly isolated or misunderstood ministry in relation to the wider Church. Reflecting on both your own work as a school chaplain and your understanding of the wider Church, please show your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box for each:

Statements about the relationship of school chaplaincy to the wider Church	*Strongly agree*	*Agree*	*Neutral*	*Disagree*	*Strongly disagree*
In my diocese there is a strong sense of the vital significance for the Church's future of the ministry of school chaplaincy.					

I feel somewhat detached as a school chaplain from the mainstream work of my diocese and deanery.					
The national strategy of the Church of England takes little account of the potential of school chaplaincy.					
I am confident that my Bishop strongly supports the work of school chaplains.					
My diocese not only has its own guidelines for the work of school chaplains, but also arranges regular support sessions.					
School chaplaincy is admired in the Church as a pioneering ministry .					
I understand that once out of the parish system and working in a school chaplaincy, it is difficult for a clergy person to get back into parish ministry.					
My work as a school chaplain is I feel unsupported by my diocese.					

D2. Personal perspective

Since your own individual perspective may not be represented accurately in any of the statements above, please help us grasp how you perceive this issue by completing the following sentence as clearly and fully as you can, or extending your response further if you wish:

'As far as the relation of school chaplaincy to the wider Church is concerned, it seems to me that

....…...'

The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT school chaplaincy research project is very grateful indeed to you for completing this survey questionnaire.

Please complete the personal consent box below and click on the 'submit' button at this point, or, if you would be willing to participate in further research, add your details in the following section as well.

Personal consent:

Please tick the box to indicate your consent:

I consent to the Bloxham Project using any information I have submitted in this questionnaire and including it anonymously without attribution in any future publication. I have been fully informed of the nature of the research project of which this questionnaire is a part, and understand that I may withdraw my consent to use information I have supplied at any time by notifying the Bloxham Project in writing.	

In addition, if you would be prepared to take part in further, follow-up research which might involve a personal interview or discussion with either yourself or pupils, please indicate this by ticking the 'Further contact' box. When you have done this, click on the 'Submit' button at the bottom of the page.

Name:
Post:
School:
Address:

Postcode:

Personal e-mail address:

Further contact:

Please tick the box to indicate your consent:
Consent

I consent to the Bloxham Project contacting me in future with a view to further participation in this research, and I understand that I may withdraw consent at any time by notifying the Bloxham Project of this in writing.	

Please tick the box if you would like to have feedback from this research project

I should like to receive a summary of the research findings	

Invitation to participate:

The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT

Dear ………………………….

School chaplaincy research project: please take part!

I am writing on behalf of the Bloxham Project and the Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT) to ask for your help with our research into school chaplaincy in Church of England secondary schools. The research is supported by the National Society (the Church of England's educational division) and also forms part of a doctoral study at Anglia Ruskin University.

You will probably be aware that very little is currently known about school chaplaincy. Our initial aim in this research is to find out, by contacting all those we can identify as school chaplains, how many people – lay and ordained - are working in school chaplaincy, what the nature of their work is, and how they understand their role. At a future stage we hope to be able to look at the impact of school chaplaincy, that is, how the work of chaplains affects the schools they minister in and how it touches the lives of the young people and adults they serve.

Please help us in our research by completing the on-line survey which you can reach by clicking on the link below. This should take no more than 20 minutes, and your response can then be submitted directly to our office at Ripon College Cuddesdon, Oxford.   We undertake that no individual school or chaplain will be identified in any research report that is published, but the questionnaire invites you to indicate, if you wish to, whether you would be willing to be involved in any follow-up stage of the research project.

We aim to analyse the responses of the estimated several hundred people working as school chaplains, and then to present the outcomes of the research at the first national conference on school chaplaincy (arranged jointly by the Bloxham Project, the Woodard Corporation, the School Chaplains' Association and the National Society) at Liverpool Hope University between June 16th and 18th 2011.

You can contribute the benefit of your experience and understanding of the hugely important - but as yet unrecognised - ministry of school chaplaincy by completing the survey here.

Yours sincerely, and with real gratitude for your help.

John Caperon

The Revd John Caperon
Director, The Bloxham Project
Research Fellow, OxCEPT

Appendix G

Student focus groups: information sheet and consent form, and question schedule

Information sheet:

The Bloxham Project / OxCEPT	*Anglia Ruskin University*
Ripon College Cuddesdon	*Chelmsford Campus*
Cuddesdon	*Bishop Hall Lane*
Oxford OX44 9EX	*Chelmsford CM1 1SQ*

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Project: The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT study of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England

No research has so far taken place into school chaplaincy in C of E schools. This project aims to find out what school chaplaincy is happening in these schools; who is providing it; how these people understand their role and purpose as school chaplains; and what impact school chaplaincy has in the institutions where it operates.

The research is being undertaken by the Bloxham Project in partnership with OxCEPT, and funding for the research has been provided by: The Bloxham Project, the Dulverton Trust, the Haberdashers' Company, the Mercers' Company, and the St Gabriel's Trust. This research is also being carried out as part of a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with Anglia Ruskin University.

The results of the research will be published in a number of ways. Initially, interim findings will be provided as a paper for a national conference for school chaplains arranged by the National Society (C of E), the Woodard Corporation and the Bloxham Project in June 2011. It is also envisaged that a series of further papers will emerge as the analysis of data continues, and there will probably be further events to disseminate the outcomes of the research. It is intended that a monograph will subsequently be published.

For any further information, please contact The Revd John Caperon, the researcher, by e-mail at: johncaperon@btinternet.com, or by telephone at: 01892-667207.

You have been invited to take part in this research because of your experience of being in a school which has a school chaplaincy, and your participation is, of course, entirely voluntary. Your participation will take the form of discussing in a focus group for between half and hour and an hour with fellow-members of the school community what value is added to school life by the chaplaincy. Discussion will be facilitated by the researcher and digitally recorded, and your participation in the discussion involves your giving consent to the researcher's use of the recorded data for the purpose of the research. We believe there are no health and safety risks involved, since the group will meet on school premises; but I

should add that your agreement to participate does not in any way compromise your legal rights in the event of any unforeseen problems arising.

The information gathered (the recorded data) will be analysed, and key issues will be identified. Although it is impossible absolutely to guarantee confidentiality, every effort will be made both in the keeping of the data and in any publication of any of it to ensure that all sources of data remain confidential, and no individual person or school will be named or otherwise identified in any research report or other publication.

We hope that your participation in the focus group will provide the opportunity for thoughtful reflection on the benefits of school chaplaincy.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Consent form:

The Bloxham Project / OxCEPT	*Anglia Ruskin University*
Ripon College Cuddesdon	*Chelmsford Campus*
Cuddesdon	*Bishop Hall Lane*
Oxford OX44 9EX	*Chelmsford CM1 1SQ*

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Name of Participant:

Research Project: The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT study of school chaplaincy in Church of England schools in England

Main investigator :   The Revd John Caperon
The Bloxham Project
Ripon College Cuddesdon
Oxford OX44 9EX
Telephone: 01865- 877417   E: bloxhamdirector@btinternet.com

Participant statement:

1.   I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2.   I understand that the focus group discussion will be digitally recorded in its entirety, and I give my consent to this.

2.   I understand that by participating in the focus group discussion I am giving permission for the whole conversation recorded by the researcher including my part in it ('the data') to be used subsequently by him for the purpose of the research.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded, and I give permission for any such information to be incorporated anonymously and without attribution in any future publication by the researcher on school chaplaincy.

4. I understand that I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and of the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the Bloxham Project, OxCEPT and Anglia Ruskin University 1 processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print)...

Signed……………….…..................... Date………………

Name of witness (print)………………………………………...

Signed……………….…..................... Date………………

[1] "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

Question schedule:

The Bloxham Project/OxCEPT School chaplaincy research project

Student focus group questions:

o Let's begin with the chaplain's job. Why do you think your school has a chaplain – or in other words, what is your chaplain for?

o What do you think are the main things the chaplain does? What do you see as the most important elements in his/her job?

o If the school said, 'we can't afford a chaplain any longer', what difference would that make to school life?

o We've discussed why the school has a chaplain and talked about some of the things he/she does. Let's move on now to think about the impact of the chaplain on what happens in school. How do you think the chaplain affects school life?

o   What value is added to people's education here by the chaplaincy?

o   We've thought about the general impact of the chaplaincy on school life; can we get a bit more personal now? Are there things you would consult the chaplain about that you wouldn't want to discuss with other people in the school?

o   Can anyone say something about having been helped or inspired or encouraged by something the chaplain has done or said, either publicly or personally?

o   Summing up, in just a word or two, what does having a chaplain in school add to school life? Let's go around the group…