A view from the inside: an ethnographic study of three years in the life of a primary school

This item was submitted to Loughborough University’s Institutional Repository by the/an author.

Additional Information:

- A Doctoral Thesis. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University.

Metadata Record: https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/25622

Publisher: © Ernest Neil Suggett

Rights: This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

Please cite the published version.
A view from the inside: An ethnographic study of three years in the life of a primary school.

by

Ernest Neil Suggett BA, MA.

A Doctoral Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of PhD of the Loughborough University of Technology, January 1986.

CONTENTS

Abstract

Acknowledgements

Introduction. The theoretical and methodological background

Chapter 1 Take the following ingredients ..... 20

Chapter 2 The positive interactions of intra-institutional participants 64

Chapter 3 Negative interaction and conflict with the school 104

Chapter 4 The influence of extra-institutional personnel 149

Chapter 5 Constructing an image 189

Chapter 6 The headteacher's view from the inside 226

Chapter 7 An account of "the account" and a consideration of its methodological efficacy 266

Conclusion An overview of the research 299

Bibliography 319
Abstract

"A view from the inside" is based upon my three years as headteacher of Redland Primary School. A participant-observational, ethnographic methodology is employed to communicate the richness, complexity and reality of the headteacher's existence and my overarching aim is to "tell it like it really is". Chapter One introduces the principal actors involved in the ensuing social drama and describes the nature of the stage and the props. In short, the human and non-human components of the situation. Chapter Two maps the positive interaction of intra-institutional participants, providing an account of curriculum change and staff development. The headteacher's evolving management style is also catalogued. The negative aspects of these social processes are examined in Chapter Three and a number of conflict biographies are considered in some detail. A discussion of the headteacher's conflict management strategies provides a natural postscript to this section. Chapter Four marks a change of focus, moving from analysis of Redland School as a self-contained microcosm to a consideration of its location within its broader social context. The influence of extra-institutional personnel upon the school is rehearsed. Chapter Five involves a reversal of the same telescope, analysing how intra-institutional actors influence significant others within the supporting social network, by creating an "image". The disparate threads of the study are drawn together in Chapter Six and the headteacher's view from the inside is presented. A natural history of my research and an overview of ethnographic methodology is provided in Chapter Seven. Finally, the Conclusion summarises the main findings of the study and identifies fruitful directions for future research.
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my debt to the inhabitants of Redland School, without whom this study would have been impossible. I should also like to thank, Professor Lou Cohen for his encouragement and advice, Leicestershire and the London Borough of Hillingdon for their financial support and my wife and children for their long-suffering forebearance.

Note: The names used in the text are, of course, fictitious.
Introduction

I was the Headteacher of Redland School from April 1981 to April 1984. The following hundred thousand words have been painstakingly chosen to begin to communicate the reality of this deceptively simple statement. This autonomous, three-year episode constituted a critical period in my personal, professional and academic development and provided "a view from the inside" - from the inside of Redland School, from the inside of the Headteacher role and from the inside of myself as a person. The view had both an inward and an outward orientation, focussing upon the inside and outside of the levels identified above, namely the School, the Headteacher and myself. The perspective of this view and the nature of the research methodology employed are clearly indicated by the subtitle of the thesis: "An ethnographic account of three years in the life of a primary school."

The original inspiration for this research project was provided by Wolcott's seminal study of "The Man in the Principal's Office" and my prime motivation derived from an overwhelming desire "to tell it like it really is" for a primary school Headteacher. My appointment to the Redland post presented a unique opportunity to realise this desire and my MA dissertation, appropriately entitled "An interpretive view of the first term of a primary headship", began to explore the internal workings of the school from an ethnographic perspective. This initial sortie into fieldwork, however, generated more questions than it provided answers and the constraints of time and degree structure dictated a simplified view of the complexity of the social situation by concentrating solely upon a small number of intra-institutional actors for a relatively short period of time. Notwithstanding, the perspectives derived from this ten week period provided the basis of a much refined and extended research proposal and the observation period was expanded by a further eight terms. The decision to undertake a three year observation period was both arbitrary and fortuitous, designed in the first instance to generate an adequate amount of data within the temporal parameters of the degree requirements and ultimately coinciding with my promotion to an inspectorial/advisory post in another Local Education Authority. Indeed this research report has been written from the social, temporal and geographical distance of this changed social position and has been enhanced by the detachment inherent in these altered circumstances.
In short, the aim of this study is to observe, catalogue and explore three years in the life of a primary Headteacher and his school from an interpretive perspective. What is praiseworthy in Wolcott's ethnography is the effort to describe, and through description understand, the everyday life of the fictional Ed Bell. However, the understanding is flawed in so far as it fails to describe lived experience. What is felt, fantasised and thought - the reality underneath the words, events and schedules - is not made explicit. My autobiographical account of the man in the Headteacher's Room seeks to delve beyond the professional persona into what Gray describes as the psychological level of behaviour, casting light on uncharted areas such as what motivates his actions, how is this job situated in his life, how does it provide a medium for his continued development and what are the recurring frustrations in his daily existence? My desire is to move beyond a rehearsal of the routine and lifeless surface of social life by creeping beneath habitual explanations of the Headteacher's actions. "To become more truly qualitative in their focus and method, ethnographies must relinquish their obsession with the obvious and mundane, and become exegetical, must excavate layers of intention and experience which antedate and live below the text which is daily life, of which language and event are deposits." My autobiographical methodology provides the opportunity to return to situations and reconstruct my intellectual agendas, the method is intuitive and one falls back upon oneself rather than upon the words of others. "Know thyself' does not enjoin me to find explanations of myself in what lies outside myself, in what is NOT me. 'Knowing' is not necessarily explanatory, but it might be regarded as elucidation: that is raising to explicit, reflexive consciousness that which is already implicitly grasped, 'Know thyself' invites me to become explicit as to who I am, what it is for me to exist." Thus I am seeking a dialectical self-self relation, which then permits a dialectical relationship between self and work, self and others. Earle describes this phenomenon as 'divestment', it represents reflexive awareness of one's participation in the affairs of life, a reflexivity which captures the mutual determinancy and mutual creation of both self and situation. "Autobiographical method permits such awareness as it reconstructs the past, as it lays bare the relation between self and work, self and others which has prevailed in the past." It portrays, for instance, the ways in which my intellectual interests functioned psychologically for me. Further, through one's self-understanding one comprehends - from a participant's rather than observer's point of view - the function of
ideas and episodes in daily existence. Understanding of self is not narcissism, it is a pre-condition and concomitant condition to the understanding of others. "In another sense autobiographical work, because it focuses upon the self and its history, slows down movement, makes it stay, so it becomes more visible, its detail discernible. It is like a blow-up in the photographic sense"\(^4\).

In this way an autobiographical, ethnographic approach facilitates the holding still of the organic and dynamic existence of Redland School in order "to tell it like it really is" for me. Complementary reasons for undertaking this research emerge as constituent elements of this over-arching objective. As Nixon\(^6\) suggests so economically, "the case for action research may be stated briefly. By investigating and reflecting upon their own practice teachers may increase their understanding"\(^6\). For the Headteacher, to seek understanding of the institution and the actors who imbue it with life, is a very worthwhile professional objective and legitimises a comprehensive participant observer strategy. The validity of data generated in this way is enhanced by the fact that the Headteacher-researcher "is in a position to negotiate and reconstruct meanings from the data with the actor himself." Professional performance will be enhanced by developing accurate knowledge and understanding of the nature of the new Headteacher's inheritance, as a clear perception of your current territory. Thus, this research initiative had 'very obvious' professional ramifications and instrumental value, informing the practice and performance of headship on a dialectical basis. Indeed the full instrumental value of this research was only dimly perceived at the outset and has been enhanced by the recent upsurge of interest in management training for Headteachers, initiated by Sir Keith Joseph, and the author's promotion to a post involving Headteacher induction. In short, the research was undertaken to increase the Headteacher's understanding of the school, to inform his future decision making and planning and to make him a better qualified commodity in terms of future professional preferment. I had no delusions of grandeur in terms of generating new theories, or even modifying existing ones, I simply wanted to provide an account of how it feels to be Headteacher of Redland School and in so doing allow the reader to gaze upon my accumulated experiences. It is my hope that these readers will not only recognise the social action I am seeking to describe, but will be led to re-appraise, or re-orientate, or simply justify their existing view in the light of my "view from the inside."
I sought to approach Redland School with a completely open mind, addressing myself to particular areas of interest as I deemed worthy and as they attracted my attention. Wolcott describes this strategy as "the process of waiting to be impressed by recurrent themes that re-appear in various contexts"⁷. Initially I tried to immerse myself in the totality of the place, to muddle about, attempting to observe everything, and as recurrent themes impressed themselves upon my consciousness, I began to sharpen my focus upon particular elements. It is widely recognised that one must discover how to research a particular setting in the course of studying it⁸ and my strategy was progressively amended as the observation period unfolded. In this process I drew upon my own limited experience of ethnography and the knowledge of ethnographic method provided by relevant texts. An account of my methodology and refinement of my research design is presented in full in Chapter Seven. The advantage of working in the way described above resides in the freedom it provides to discover what the problem actually is, rather than pursuing some predetermined problem which may, in fact, only exist in the mind of the investigator.

The uniqueness, and at one and the same time, the major strength and the major weakness of my research strategy resides in the capacity to simultaneously operate as both a Headteacher and an educational researcher. It is axiomatic that professional considerations must always outweigh research concerns and that ethical problems preclude the elaboration of certain sensitive issues. Notwithstanding the Headteacher role provides legitimate access to areas of data which would be beyond the scope of a normal researcher, and this role duality truly allows "the ethnographer ... to understand and convey how it is to walk in someone else's shoes"⁹. The Headteacher's innermost thoughts, feelings and perceptions are immediately available for inspection in a way that they would not be to any other researcher. In Laing's¹⁰ terms, within this design, the observer can actually experience the actor's unique construction of reality! In order to achieve a better understanding of the behaviour of the other actors involved, interpretive methodology suggests that the researcher should attempt "to interpret the real world from the perspective of the subjects of his investigation"¹¹. Empathy, however, must be handled with some caution as it conceals as well as reveals. Empathy is a pre-requisite for understanding the intention of others, but invites he who empathises to participate in those intentions in a way which can function to rationalise, forgive and obscure ideas.
One easily risks complicity with another's delusions and legitimations, and independence and critical judgement must be retained by the ethnographer.

Who are the subjects of this investigation? Obviously telling "it like it really is" from the Headteacher's perspective, centrally involves that actor as the principal character and one facet of his existence is dealing with the myriad of diverse individuals and groups involved in the school. My MA dissertation focussed almost exclusively upon intra-institutional actors, the scope of this account is much broader including any participant who directly or indirectly influences the existence of the Headteacher. The cast list for the ensuing drama is presented in some detail in Chapter One. However, the actors with the biggest roles can be quickly introduced at this point. The Headteacher is necessarily the star of the show, and the other groups of actors vary in involvement in relation to the particular scene under the microscope. "The pupils" are the most important group in the drama and yet they play a relatively minor part in the action.

"The teachers" and "the non-teaching staff" figure much more prominently in the intra-institution interaction, which is acted out against a background influenced by a number of discrete, external groups. "The parents" have an obvious emotional commitment to the school and interest in the behaviour of the Headteacher towards their children. "The Governors" have a statutory obligation to immerse themselves in the affairs of the school and to monitor the professional performance of the Headteacher they appointed. "County Hall" encapsulates the involvement of two groups of people who perform under its ambit, Schools' Branch and The Advisory Service. The representatives of County Hall also have a legal and professional relationship with the school and loom large in the Headteacher's list of "significant others". The Headteacher's perception of the influence and interrelatedness of this enormous cast list is the substantive focus of the ensuing text.

The decision was taken not to inform the participants that an observation study was in progress on the grounds that such information might contaminate the research findings and might increase anxiety in the actors involved. Professional and ethical considerations dictated that the Director of Education should be informed at the outset and a subsequent decision to interview other County Hall personnel necessitated
the partial breaking of my cover. The only other participants to be implicated in the design were Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings, who were interviewed in the final year of the observation period and were informed that the interviews were part of an undisclosed and confidential research project. To the best of my knowledge this confidentiality was maintained. Thus, in the main, the prey was approached unobtrusively and with the exception of my interaction with four representatives of County Hall, I operated from behind my Headteacher mask. The availability of this account for public scrutiny has encouraged me to err on the side of caution in describing sensitive issues or in betraying personal confidences placed in me as a detached professional. Notwithstanding, in retrospect I feel my decision to work unobtrusively has been vindicated by the uninhibited access it conferred to social drama and the actors involved.

An inductive, ethnographic approach is vulnerable to criticism insofar as it simply presents the viewpoint of one individual and the study of one school with its own idiosyncratic circumstances may not have broad applicability. This reservation, however, has been proved unfounded in my experience as an Inspector/Adviser visiting a large number of schools and working closely with two separate groups of new Headteachers. The recurrent themes highlighted in this account occur and re-occur in a variety of settings and are discernible to a greater or lesser extent in most primary schools. Further criticisms of the methodology relate to the process, elaborated earlier, of at least figuratively holding still the organic and dynamic social processes involved in the school, in order to make a sketch of it. By holding it still it becomes artificial, but I believe the roundabout has to come to rest in order for the researcher to climb aboard and find an appropriate vantage point from which to observe subsequent gyrations. The very real constraints of time and energy may reduce the view and inevitably the researcher has to restrict himself to manageable parameters and in this way it could be argued that the view is skewed. Nevertheless, in this case I believe that the researcher's vantage point afforded such a magnificent vista that little eluded his gaze and in looking inwards he had a particularly privileged standpoint. The criticisms Eysenck levels at Freudian Theory, however, appear to have some applicability with regard to this Headteacher-researcher role duality, in that self-analysis is not scientific. There is no quantification of measures, no check on their reliability, no check on their accuracy, no check on the subjectivity of memory, no use of
controls. A variety of mechanisms have been built into the research design to overcome these potential criticisms, notably objective data has been gathered from a number of primary sources, written materials produced by other actors have been included and a number of interviews have been conducted. I do not propose to either defend or justify my research strategy at this stage, I simply desire to summarise its underlying rationale and subsequent development. A number of factors cohered to dictate an ethnographic, autobiographical approach, namely, the freedom conferred by beginning fieldwork with only a "foreshadowed notion" of problem areas, legitimate access to the inner workings of an unknown school and the mind of its Headteacher and the chance to approach the prey unobtrusively under an ideal research front. Obviously the field technique was amended in the light of ongoing experience and included some methodological twists and turns, nevertheless it very clearly reflected my underpinning frame of reference and paradigmatic persuasion. I deemed my research strategy to be the most appropriate and efficacious and had no wish to be a normative, neutral, detached observer, but acknowledge that as a scientist of a particular persuasion I might "depending on the particular paradigm espoused ... identify certain issues of interest ... and ignore others".

Redland School and the role of its Headteacher could be analysed from two contrasting perspectives: the normative and the interpretive. The normative paradigm seeks "to represent the institutional (or what has been called the nomothetic) dimension of behaviour within an organisation". The proliferating collection of recently published books on primary school management tend towards this normative genre, of which the works of Waters, Jones, Whitaker and Paisey provide an illustrative and influential sample. Contrastingly the interpretive paradigm I have employed seeks to uncover the unique reality of individual actors, the Headteacher, the Caretaker or the Chairman of the PTA to mention a few, in order to be cognizant of their perceptions of the situation - the idiographic dimension. Schutz believes the relationship between man and society is dialectical in nature and whereas the normative approach begins with society and views man's response to it, the interpretive approach focusses upon the opposite end of the relationship, giving primacy to the way in which each individual construes his social world. Hence Redland School is not viewed as a structure subject to universal laws, but rather as a cultural artefact dependant upon the meaning and intention of the people involved in it.
Unlike positivistic approaches, "which ignore or presume its subjects' interpretation of situations," I will endeavour "to come up with an understanding of what that person was doing in a particular episode". For example, why were a particular section of the parent population inordinately eager to form a Parent Teacher Association? I will attempt to answer such interesting questions by starting with the individual actor's construction of reality and seeking to analyse it on its own terms through observation, conversation and unstructured or unobtrusive interviewing. By unobtrusive interviewing, I mean the researcher has an underlying, undisclosed agenda for casual conversation with a chosen target. Filstead maintains that data derived in these ways, far from being unscientific, is valid and reliable, as it seeks "to picture the empirical social world as it actually exists to those under investigation, rather than as the researcher imagines it to be." By participating as Headteacher in the activity under investigation, the researcher is able to get close to the data. Thus he cannot be a neutral, detached observer, but rather an active participant whose own insights may affect and be affected by the definitions of the situation of the people he is studying. As a consequence, data derived in this way could be criticised as subjective, internal, qualitative, in fact, a unique function of my own perceptions and negotiation with individual actors and as such subject to subsequent re-negotiation.

Notwithstanding, the aim of my interpretive methodology is explanation and clarification of one unique organisation and the culture which is supporting it at a particular period of time. Clearly the Headteacher's perceptions and orientations are subject to modification and elaboration over a period of nine school terms, reflecting the dynamic quality of social life, and these changes and re-negotiations in themselves must be charted, in order to understand the Headteacher's lot. Critics may further argue that "whilst patterns of social relations and institutions may be the product of actors' definition of the situation, there is also the possibility that those actors might be falsely conscious." The identification of false consciousness, however, is in itself a subjective exercise, from a phenomenological standpoint each actor's consciousness is as valid as any other's and the attribution of "true consciousness" is a social impossibility.

My interpretive, case-study approach could also be censured for its microconceptuality, in that it compartmentalises conclusions, making them inapplicable to a wider theory of social order. Situational specific
factors at Redland could be viewed as rendering the insights and conclusions of the research inapplicable to a broader spectrum of schools. As indicated above, however, my admittedly limited experience as an Adviser regularly visiting a hundred schools in a very different social and geographical area of the country, suggests that this is not the case. Indeed the experience of having unlocked the social reality of one institution provides a master key with which to gain entry to other primary schools. Bernstein further criticises the interpretive approach on the grounds that "the very process whereby one interprets and defines a situation is itself a product of the circumstances in which one is placed". The power of others to impose their definitions of situations on participants and the wider context and historicity of negotiated meanings may not be fully accounted for. These reservations appear unfounded with regard to my methodological approach - the strategy is underpinned by the desire to map the influence of the wider context and the power of its inhabitants to impose their definitions of reality upon the Headteacher and through him the other intra-institutional participants. Chapter One provides an account of the existing ingredients of the ensuing social drama and thereafter the historicity of negotiated meanings permeate the text. A more "objective", normative approach to Redland would in my opinion furnish an even less valid background "for the more intersubjective personal knowledge sociologists have at their disposal, the more accurate will be their interpretations and predictions of human behaviour". For this reason participant observation was a particularly appropriate method of data collection as it uncovered information which would have been inaccessible to more objective techniques. I was able to observe ongoing behaviour in its natural field setting with a legitimate explanation for being there, however, there is no question of the researcher remaining neutral and detached for "most likely he himself will be changed by the events he is part of. Indeed, this kind of change will provide him with the fresh insights he seeks". In this way, I was able to derive first hand knowledge of the way the group views the world and the socially constructed reality of other participants in the life of Redland School, as well as investigating the means by which an orderly social world was established and maintained in terms of shared meanings.

To paraphrase Bailey, the inherent advantages of participant observation are as follows:
1 Observation studies take account of the nuances of non-verbal behaviour, for example, the quick exchange of knowing glances in a staff meeting, while experiments and surveys may ignore this dimension of human action.

2 In observational studies, such as this one, the investigator is able to discern ongoing behaviour as it occurs and is able to record appropriate notes about recurring themes, like the developing biography of conflict, as they appear.

3 Because case study observations take place over an extended period of time, in this case over three years, the researcher is able to develop an increasingly intimate and informal relationship with those he is observing, generally in more natural environments than those in which experiments and surveys are conducted.

4 Case study observations are less reactive than other types of data gathering methods, especially when the prey is approached unobtrusively.

In an ideal research design the observer may take no part in initiating and influencing the behaviour he is observing, clearly this was impossible in this case study as I had a professional obligation as Headteacher to lead the enterprise. Hence, as suggested earlier, these observations could be viewed as "subjective, biased, impressionistic, idiosyncratic and lacking in precise quantifiable measures". As Wolcott points out an ethnographic approach, like the one I have chosen to pursue, is very much a high risk, low yield venture. The risk resides in the hope that viable, identifiable recurring themes will
actually emerge during the prescribed observation period. The approach is low yield in that a considerable investment of time is required for observation, note-making and writing up the report. A full account of this process is presented in Chapter Seven and suffice to say at this stage that an enormous amount of raw data was generated during the three years, a very small proportion of which will find its way into this text. Notwithstanding this methodology was pursued on the basis of its utility in shedding light on the micro-social processes being acted out beneath the apparently calm surface of this educational institution and to identify fruitful directions for future research initiatives. Chapters Two to Six each flag a fruitful research direction worthy of closer inspection and the conscious decision was taken to maintain a broad spectrum of interest, in keeping with the demands of the Headteacher's professional existence, rather than "home-in" at a greater depth upon any one of these recurring themes. Nevertheless, "failure to make explicit the limitations and difficulties of participant observation would be a failure to assess, however unquantitatively, the margin of error incurred by this "method"21. Ultimately the scientific solution could be to employ triangular techniques "to explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour, by studying it from more than one standpoint, ... making use of both quantitative and qualitative data"7. Triangulation involving the qualitative data of my research and the more quantitative initiatives being accumulated at the National Development Centre in Bristol22, could be particularly relevant in the study of the behaviour of newly appointed Headteachers.

Clearly, simply assuming the role of an observer does not allow an individual to advertise himself as an ethnographer, nevertheless the approach pursued in this research is very much ethnographic. Wolcott9 asserts that certain skills and techniques can be practised, but other personal qualities are also important. "One such set of skills includes those of the sensitive and perceptive observer, at once sympathetic, skeptical, objective, and inordinately curious"9. The presence, or absence, of these desirable attributes will become all too apparent as this account unfolds! Another set includes physical stamina, emotional stability and personal flexibility. My personal experience indicates that mental stamina and a willingness to plunge oneself back into emotionally demanding episodes should be added to this list. My participant observations were scribbled out at convenient moments during the day and rewritten each evening, in accordance with Denzin's23
strategy. This invariably proved the most exacting task of the whole day. A third set requires the skills of the story-teller and writer, a person who can transform a morass of notes and impressions into an account of sufficient merit that others will feel compelled to read and led to understand. Wolcott believes that there is a very fine line between good ethnography and good journalism and suggests that, in fact, good journalism is preferable to poor ethnography. A final consideration in discussing my ethnographic approach resides in the already mentioned fact that my essential research instrument is indeed myself. As Pelto indicates, "the anthropologist himself is the main instrument of observation". Thus the adequacy of the candidate for the role of ethnographer is particularly crucial in any appraisal of the approach.

Normative social science cautions the researcher to maintain distance with regard to the phenomena he is studying, so that "objective" data can be obtained. Clearly this was both impossible and undesirable in this research project, for as Mehan and Wood suggest, "if the purpose of the research is to know the reality of the phenomenon, then the researcher must begin by becoming the phenomenon. The researcher must become a full-time member of the reality to be studied". They go on to assert that membership cannot be simulated and therefore the researcher must not hold back. Contrastingly, as stated above, traditional fieldwork techniques counsel the observer to withhold a part of themselves in the interests of objectivity, a device Bittner believes ensures that the researcher will not experience as his subjects experience, he will only be able to infer the meanings events have for bona fide participants. In this way methodological aloofness effectively prohibits the researcher from becoming "one of them" and relinquishes any possibility of seeing inside their reality. The degree to which a Headteacher can truly become one of them, in terms of some of the constituent groups involved in Redland School, poses a problem, nevertheless by being Headteacher he is one of them in a very real social sense. He may not have total access to the innermost thoughts and feelings of the parent group, but he experiences daily how it feels to sit in the Headteacher's seat. He has become one of them by being the Headteacher. Indeed Mehan and Wood assert that the validity of an inquiry cannot be ascertained by comparison with the existing corpus of scientific knowledge, but rather it should be "tested against the everyday experience of a community of people. Researchers must be able to demonstrate to the natives that they can talk as they talk, see as they see, feel as they feel, do as they
do. This capacity to empathise into another actor's situation would also seem to be a desirable quality for a Headteacher, with the qualification, noted earlier, of knowing exactly how "native" to go. Indeed, professional constraints were more influential than research considerations in defining an appropriate degree of "nativeness".

The foregoing discussion indicates that the new Headteacher and the ethnographic observer share a number of common tasks. To elaborate the more obvious, the initial problem of gaining entry and establishing rapport, endeavours aimed at gathering information in a variety of settings employing a variety of techniques, and discovering how the people involved in the enterprise confront the problems of being human. Schutz's concept of "The Stranger" is particularly appropriate within the context of the early days, as the initial task involves "living one's way into another culture". The School Log Book, pupil profiles and staff record folders present one method of gaining access to the reality of Redland School, however, data generated in this way, simply provides what Shipman describes as "a pruned synthetic version of reality". Participant observation, supported by interview data and recourse to primary, objective source material, on the other hand, provides the basis of a much more vibrant view, as "examining cultural behaviour with a variety of different approaches greatly enhances the credibility of the research results". At exactly which point a new Headteacher or researcher attempts to gain access to the realities of life in a particular school like Redland, may be a function of the unique circumstances which pertain at the time, his distinct frame of reference and his order of priorities. These factors may to some extent predispose his attention towards particular areas of study, in spite of the desire to wait to be impressed by recurring themes. As a stranger entering and operating within a new social world, I inevitably came into contact with the ideational system which held sway, an almost institutionalised blue-print for dealing with the minutiae of every-day life. It was important that I analysed the uniqueness of this system while I was still a stranger, for "as particular kinds of activity become established as routine and habitual they become taken for granted". In the ethnomethodological sense it was important to retain the capacity to become a stranger in relation to the routine and habitual. Notwithstanding, knowledge of the prevailing ideational system provided access to the shared world view of the inhabitants and a desire to understand the specific social organisation which had generated it. To a
new Headteacher, the means by which people organise themselves into interacting social systems and the locus of informal power within these systems are of great interest and inestimable instrumental value.

With the exception of Chapters One and Two, this thesis has been written up during 1985, a period of at least eight months elapsing between the conclusion of the observation period and the final penning of the research report. A number of chance circumstances have conspired to dictate this time-scale, nevertheless this fallow period away from Redland has enabled me to develop a clearer perspective from which to present a lucid, valid and unbiased account. Even at this distance, particular personalities are more appealing than others, some issues rapidly rekindle forgotten frustrations and other recollections beget acute personal embarrassment. Nevertheless these considerations are "grist to the mill" for the ethnographer and I propose to elaborate my own feelings and attitudes as the Headteacher where these considerations illuminate the text and provide the reader with an added dimension in his understanding of the social action. Indeed my overriding intention is to provide the reader with sufficient insight to be able to either agree or disagree with my interpretation of particular events, or even to come to a new interpretation of his own.

C Wright Mills agrees that the authors of the best social science present themselves as people rather than as depersonalised automatons whose heavy style depends on some reified knowledge of "how it is done". He says "we must distinguish two ways of presenting the work of social science according to the idea the writer has of himself, and the voice with which he speaks. One way results from the idea that he is a man who may shout, whisper or chuckle - but who is always there. It is also clear what sort of man he is: whether confident or neurotic, direct or involuted he is a centre of experience and reasoning; now he has found out something, and he is telling us about it, and how he found it out. This is the voice behind the best expositions available in the English language.

The other way of presenting work does not use the voice of any man. Such writing is not a 'voice' at all. It is an autonomous sound. It is a prose manufactured by a machine. That it is full of jargon is not as noteworthy as that it is strongly mannered: it is not only impersonal; it is pretentiously impersonal. Government bulletins are sometimes
written in this way. Business letters also. And a great deal of social
science. Any writing - perhaps apart from that of certain truly great
stylists - that is not imaginable as human speech is bad writing. 27

Notwithstanding these considerations I have encountered some stylistic
problems in differentiating between "I" the Headteacher, "I" the
researcher and "I" the person and consequently have decided to write in
the following mode to avoid confusion. I will refer to myself in my
professional role as "the Headteacher", my references to my personal
existence will be in the first person singular and as a social scientist
I will appear as either "the researcher" or "I" according to the
context. To refer to myself as "the Headteacher" does not imply any lack
of personal involvement or identification, it is simply a device designed
to avoid semantic strangulation. To present the data as if I had not
been involved would be to impoverish the insights conferred by my dual
status and obscure the rationale of the research, therefore, "the
Headteacher" remains the central character in the drama. Indeed as
Davies 28 observes, "in reading similar research, but without personal
knowledge of the author, I have sometimes been bothered by lack of such
knowledge and found myself turning continually to the dust jacket and the
front pages of the book hoping to pick up a glimmer of information about
the person writing that I have missed on first perusal" 28. For this
reason quite lengthy autobiographical sections have been included in the
text, in Chapter One there is a full account of my professional
background and in Chapter Three I have included a consideration of the
conflict generated by attempting to concurrently pursue a variety of
competing careers. Furthermore glimpses of my idiosyncratic personality
and other snippets of personal information inevitably fall from many
other pages.

In concluding this brief introduction to the main text I will quickly
elaborate the conceptual framework upon which the following account has
been constructed. Chapter One provides an extended introduction to
Redland School and the actors who perform upon its stage. The cast list
includes the principal intra-institutional actors and the other
characters who largely operate outside its walls, but who nonetheless
either directly or indirectly influence the drama. The stage, the props,
and the material and human resources provide the Headteacher with the
ingredients for the ensuing social action and the implicit imperative "to
stir". Chapter Two charts the positive interactions of
intra-institutional participants resulting from this "stirring" and includes an account of the curricular modification and development undertaken during the observation period. Curriculum development, however, does not take place without the involvement and purposes of real people and therefore staff development is considered as a parallel issue. Likewise curriculum and staff development depend to a large extent upon the interest and contribution of the Headteacher and his evolving management style is catalogued in this section of the text. Thus Chapter Two considers positive intra-institutional interaction and Chapter Three presents an account of the obverse of these social processes, the negative interaction and conflict within the school. Conflict within and between individuals and groups provides the substantive focus of this third chapter and examples of differing conflict biographies are described in some detail. A consideration of the Headteacher's conflict management strategies arises as a natural postscript to these case studies and the data is further illuminated by reviewing it from an overtly phenomenological perspective. Chapter Four marks a change of focus, moving from an analysis of Redland School as a self-contained social microcosm to a consideration of its location within the broader, interactive, social context. The intention is to elucidate the external social environment and the influence of extra-institutional personnel upon the internal life and workings of the school and its inhabitants. Chapter Five involves a reversal of the telescope and views the interaction of the school and it supporting social environment from the opposite end of the equation. That is to say the analysis seeks to illustrate the strategies employed by intra-institutional actors to influence significant others within the broader social context, in effect by constructing an image. Chapter Six provides a fitting conclusion to the ethnographic account of three years in the life of a primary school and its Headteacher. The aim is to turn my attention back upon myself in order to feel once again the impact of the views of others upon me and my view. An elaboration of the construction and nature of the Headteacher's meta-perspectives is particularly significant in this process. In short, Chapter Six seeks to draw together the disparate threads of the other five chapters in presenting the Headteacher's view from the inside. Chapter Seven provides a natural history of my research design and an overview of ethnographic methodology. It has been included as a chapter in the main account, rather than appearing as a discreet appendix, as I believe, like Hitchcock²⁹, that it is of critical importance that the reader is provided with "a detailed account of how, in the normal course
of the researcher's everyday contacts with participants, a pattern of involvement and particular findings emerged. Finally, in the conclusion, an attempt is made to highlight the major findings of the study and to provide a broad overview of the efficacy of the research undertaking.


22 National Development Centre for School Management Training, Bristol.


Chapter One

Take the following ingredients........

The new Headteacher and the researcher are confronted by the same initial problem of gaining access to the ongoing social reality of the school, "a searching for handholds and footholds, for 'ways in'. Like the rockclimber, he has to make the best of what he finds and carry his gear with him." ¹ This first chapter is an elaboration of these 'handholds and footholds", involving an introduction to the human and non-human components of Redland School. At the risk of pushing the rock climber analogy too far, a decision had to be taken regarding where to start the ascent. Clearly this decision determined the fissures and crevices which had to be traversed and the particular vista the chosen route afforded.

During the three years it became more and more obvious that individual actors view Redland from varying standpoints and have radically different understandings of the generic term "the school". Thus in the interests of conceptual clarity, I propose to present my working definition at this early stage. Redland School is a unique aggregation of people, material provision and resources, called into existence to provide education for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years in a prescribed geographical location.

It is axiomatic that participant observations are situationally specific and in order to fully understand them the reader must be furnished with some background information relating to the institution's historical, geographical, physical, educational and social context. Indeed the substantive focus of Chapter One is descriptive, providing a foundation upon which succeeding chapters may be constructed. Schutz's concept of "the Stranger" ² seems particularly relevant to the context in which the new Headteacher operated and the initial task involved "living one's way into another culture" ³ In fact this was a continuous process throughout the observation period and as a result of this fact it is difficult to identify the chronology of the dawning of particular apprehensions. Furthermore, the component parts of Redland School are inextricably interwoven and exist in a state of dynamic equilibrium and attempts to isolate them could be criticised as artificial.

Nevertheless, the mechanism of describing these component parts separately, as a precursor to discussions reflecting their inter-relatedness, simplifies the presentation of background data. This strategy has been summarised in tabular form in Figure 1.
The ensuing descriptions of these "ingredients" represent the cumulative insights derived from working in the school for nine terms and the Headteacher (or researcher) clearly had to decide which components to explore first. This choice was partially determined for him in that a good deal of his time was expended in a reactive mode, responding to people and events which demanded his attention. Nevertheless, a plethora of guidelines and frameworks were available to inform his strategy for looking at the school. During the second term a two day course for new headteachers had been arranged by the primary advisers entitled "Exploring and Discovering a School". The first two paragraphs of the document produced to accompany the course encapsulated its focus.

"The following aspects of the life of the school need to be observed and analysed before an assessment of the quality of the school can be properly made.

Some of these aspects are easier to observe than others. We suggest that you begin by choosing those items which you feel will be the easiest to analyse and assess."
This advice is reflected in the organisation of this chapter, in that I will progressively move across the data continuum, commencing with objective, verifiable information and culminating in a presentation of more subjective, personal insights. In this way the analysis of objective facts and figures provided an obvious entree and the above document and "Management and Headship" furnished strategies for accomplishing this task. Waters allocates four pages to the assessment of building, furniture and fittings within a lengthy discourse on evaluation in the school. In a similar vein Whitaker devotes a whole chapter of his book to "Taking Over", a discussion of methods of collecting information and taking stock. The Leicestershire advisers, Waters, Whitaker and numerous self-evaluation documents, exemplified by the "Oxfordshire Pink Book", all share a common emphasis on the value of checklists in these analyses. It appeared to me, however, that in the same way as motives are often developed retrospectively to justify actions, these frameworks were employed to re-order and formalise judgements rather than inform them. Indeed my presentation of "An interpretive view of the first term of a primary headship" at the aforementioned conference involved these frameworks, not to shape, but to lend credibility to my own insights. My personal strategy for exploring and discovering Redland School was a more haphazard and open-ended process than the above authors suggest it should be and to advertise my approach as clinically pseudo-scientific would be misleading. In fact using self as the research instrument concealed some of the criteria upon which judgements were made, as the finished article often became embedded in the consciousness without recourse or articulation to another person. Thus retrospective analysis, reconstruction of the criteria employed and scientific induction are complicated undertakings.

The long history of the school appears to furnish the institution with an identity of its own which is distinct and separate from the actions and purposes of its present inhabitants. Redland School was founded in 1774 and endowed with six hundred pounds of three per cent Bank Annuities by Edward Chandler, a prosperous member of a village family. The following is a copy of the inscription which still greets entrants to the present building, the slate plaque dominating the main door.

"This school was erected by Mr Edward Chandler, a citizen of London, for the education of 20 poor children for this parish, who endowed the same with ten pounds per annum. AD 1774".

- 22 -
The trust deed specified the schoolmaster was to be a fit and able person who was to teach gratis twenty poor children to read and write, and to instruct them in the principles of Christian Religion according to the Doctrine of the Church of England as by law established.

The School Log Books provides an interesting insight into the life and development of the school over the past two hundred years, during which time the village steadily increased in size. Approximately thirty years ago the small village schools in the surrounding area began to close and the children were transported to Redland. For these reasons the school went through a phase of rapid expansion as the catchment area increased, culminating in the school servicing the primary educational needs of Redland and six additional villages.

The school was moved to its present premises in 1964. The building had hitherto been Redland Rectory, a formidable structure of approximately 200 years of age. A semi-open plan Infant Block was added in 1974 and two additional mobile classrooms were acquired during the last six years.

This cursory summary of the school's history begins to etch in the background to current interaction and illustrates the existence of objective verifiable facts relating to the institution's past. In addition to lending a historical dimension to the study these objective facts also appear to have important ramifications for the school's present inhabitants. The full name of the school instantly reveals its continuing church affiliation - Redland Church of England Aided Primary School. Apart from consequences for the teaching of Religious Education and the constitution of the Governing Body this "Aided" status confers important statutory rights and obligations. The Governors' autonomy and freedom of action is greatly enhanced and thereby the Headteacher may have very much more room for manoeuvre than his County School colleagues. The Governors enjoy the power to control pupil and staff recruitment and exercise the right to state in all teaching post advertisements "a regular communicant member of the Church of England would be preferred". Furthermore, they retain the right to insist on national advertisement for teaching posts, even in times of the severest financial constraint. Indeed the last appointment made during the observation period exemplified this right. Another consequence of the school's relationship with the Church is the obvious introduction of other participants into the social equation, such as the Diocesan Religious Education Adviser, the Diocesan Education Officer, the Bishop's Visitor and the Bishop himself.
The gradual annexation of the smaller village schools in the area is reflected in the composition of the school's Governing Body. Inter-village rivalries seem to provide another historical dimension and particular care must be seen to be exercised in ensuring equality of provision. The hiatus which arose over the selection of the venue of a Christmas Carol Concert from a list of six possible churches illustrates the delicacy of such decisions. The older residents of the villages seemed particularly concerned with "fair play" being seen to be done in matters such as the allocation of Harvest Baskets and the distribution of invitations to the Christmas Concerts.

The history of the school buildings is long and interesting. The nature of these buildings may provide the first visual information upon which prospective participants begin to formulate impressions and their architectural idiosyncracies may predispose certain views of the interaction within those walls. To illustrate, one new parent on entering the school immediately asserted "it is an idyllic setting in which I would be delighted to have my child educated." Contrastingly a prospective applicant for a teaching post reacted negatively to the appearance of the building, telephoning to withdraw her application saying "I have looked at the school from the outside and it seems to be a bit of a hotch-potch."

In the same way as historicity, the geography and location of the school exert their own particular influences and contribute another dimension in the construction of parameters within which present actors operate. Redland is a village of approximately 700 inhabitants, situated 12 miles from Leicester and three miles from the nearest small town. The other six contributory villages are in varying degrees smaller than Redland and are located within a three mile radius of the school. The fact that 60% of the children do not live in Redland and are transported by school bus has a myriad of consequences. Notably over 40% of disciplinary infractions and expressions of parental concern during the observation period relate directly to the times children were travelling on the school buses. The physical remoteness of some of the villages, particularly for parents with only one car or no car at all, may create a socially distancing effect. One new mother bemoaned the lack of opportunity to meet other parents at the school gate or the chance to casually converse with her child's teacher. Indeed it would seem each village community has developed its own response to this perceived isolation and constructed its own mechanisms for the discussion of matters pertaining to the school. In one very small village mothers meet
informally at the bus stop, in another the P.T.A. Village Representative holds a monthly coffee morning manifestly to communicate information. It could be postulated that the latent function of this gathering is to provide a forum for the exchange of views of the school. In this way it would seem that geographical remoteness may create social networks that would not otherwise exist.

The rural nature of the school's catchment area and the type of housing available within it may influence the nature of the pupil population. A survey conducted by Class J4 in 1982 revealed that less than 10% of parents are employed in agriculture or traditional village occupations. Indeed the majority of fathers commute to Coventry, Hinckley, Leicester or London and many provide mother with a second car to overcome rural isolation. Thus the school's proximity to the motor and railway system may be a determining factor in the clientele it attracts.

Geographically the school is situated in Leicestershire and the particular ethos of this Local Education Authority had obvious consequences for the nature of the education the institution provides. Interviews with prospective new parents to the school consistently reveal that the perceived quality of the Authority's provision, and particularly the reputation of the High and Upper Schools Redland feeds, are of critical importance in the selection of a home. Parents seem to be looking for a coherent educational package and enrolment at Redland may have more to do with the Upper School's "A" level results and University successes than that quality of education the primary school provides. Additionally, the ethos and organisation of these linked secondary schools may exert a powerful downward pressure in defining the sort of educational experience which is the pre-requisite of future success. To amplify this point it appears noteworthy that the High School Redland serves allocates children to ability-defined sets from the beginning of the First Year. Contrastingly the neighbouring High School, which has no connection with Redland, embraces total mixed-ability teaching perhaps liberating its feeder primary schools from the selection function. Interested parents quickly investigate the specific demands of the secondary schools their children will attend and appear to apply pressure to Redland in the light of their perceptions of these demands. In this way it could be suggested that Redland's location determines the secondary school it serves, which in turn by virtue of its educational philosophy, influences the nature of the primary education parents desire.
As indicated above geographical location furnishes the criterion for membership of a particular family of schools. Indeed the Authority's response to the Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act has been to regionalise the County and provide Area Co-Ordinators, responsible for particular families of schools. These familial links are further strengthened through Liaison Meetings for Headteachers, Lutterworth Headteachers' Groups and regionalised meetings with the Director of Education. Assistant teachers meet with Heads of Department from the High and Upper School to discuss specific areas of the curriculum. All of these mechanisms appear to strengthen a common definition of criteria of relevance in education and it would appear contribute to the development of a "common ethos" in this part of the County. Clearly the existence of shared meanings and understandings and a particular educational climate provides a further parameter in which Redland School operates.

It is noteworthy that Redland is situated some 20 miles from County Hall and 30 miles from Beaumanor Hall. The Advisory Team and Schools' Branch Officers are based at County Hall and the majority of In-Service Courses are conducted at Beaumanor Hall. The physical distances involved in travelling from the school to either of these venues may have considerable consequences for the frequency of interaction between the respective groups of people. Redland teachers, for example, find it very difficult to attend In-Service Courses at Beaumanor Hall which commence at 4.30 pm and for this reason the importance of school-based In-Service work appears to be increased. Furthermore, Advisers and Schools' Branch Officers are unlikely to be passing the school en route to any other institution and no unplanned or "surprise" visits by such people were recorded during the three year observation period. This apparent isolation seems to have great implications for the degree of professional autonomy the Headteacher enjoys and the strategies he must employ to overcome the school's physical remoteness. The subject is considered in some depth in Chapter 2.

To summarise, it would appear that at the commencement of the observation period in 1981 the new Headteacher entered a social situation reflecting a network of objective facts beyond his immediate control or influence. As has been indicated the school has a unique history, documented in Record Books and archive material and its physical location is a verifiable geographical fact. Another dimension of the school's existence which may be experienced as a quantifiable, objective facticity is the provision of resources. The following scheme provides a framework
for an analysis of this resource provision.

**CLASSIFICATION OF RESOURCES**

1. **Physical environment**
   a. Building, grounds
   b. Furnishings

2. **Equipment and materials**
   a. Non-book: machines and materials
   b. Book

3. **Money**
   a. Capitation, delegated spending
   b. Unofficial funds
   c. Governors funds

4. **People**
   Headteacher, teachers, non-teaching staff, Governors, County Hall, parents, community

5. **Services**
   Support services - educational psychologist
   Maintenance of the building, grounds etc.

It is self-evident that the school building and its environs are critical primary resources and although they may be modified or extended they exude a permanence and may be experienced as an objective reality. As indicated earlier the Building exemplifies three distinct architectural styles which are combined in an unusual and idiosyncratic fashion. The old Rectory provides the greatest part of the accommodation, comprising on the ground floor an entrance hall with mosaiced floor, the Headteacher's Room, a large classroom 1 and a small classroom 2 and cloakrooms. An imposing oak staircase gives access to a large landing area, a large classroom 3, and small classroom 4, the Secretary's Room, Caretaker's Room, Staff cloakroom and further cloakrooms. This upstairs section spills sideways over the School Kitchen, providing a
PLAN OF THE SCHOOL

FIRST FLOOR
Pottery Room, Stock Room and Staff Room. The servants' staircase supplies a fire exit and access to the rear of the Hall. This large Assembly Hall was added at the time of the construction of the extension some ten years ago. The extension comprises a semi-open plan design, containing two teaching areas, a shared Art Area, a Quiet Room and cloakrooms. A further two mobile classrooms are housed in the school grounds overlooking what used to be the Rectory Fishpond. A variety of outhouses, including two open fronted garages for the Head's and Deputy's cars, complete the building provision. These buildings are surrounded by extensive school grounds, containing a host of mature trees including the largest Wellingtonia in Leicestershire. The school is located on the village boundary, bordered on one side by Church Lane and encircled by farmland on the rest. To summarise, the physical setting is generally considered by visitors to be picturesque and the village is seen as a typical rural South Leicestershire settlement. This unusual physical setting and combination of architectural styles provides another dimension to the background context in which the school operates.

The nature of the building influences the educational possibilities within its confines. The Plan of the School indicates a generous allocation of space for the two hundred or so inhabitants, however, closer scrutiny reveals that the use of some small rooms and areas is complicated by the difficulty in providing adequate supervision. Indeed the physical remoteness of the school's catchment area is mirrored by the isolation and autonomy of the classrooms. The mobile classrooms are very obvious satellites of the main school and as such do not enjoy a through traffic of parents, teachers or children. Indeed classroom 2 in the main block is similarly isolated, hemmed in by thick walls and a door, and after classroom I was turned into a Library in 1981 the children in classroom 2 were the only pupils on the ground floor of the main block. The upstairs classrooms are linked by a connecting door, but these two classrooms are physically remote in relation to any other teaching areas. The architecture of the extension provides shared working and art areas, nevertheless a sliding door exist to compartmentalize the two rooms. Indeed the extension is a self-contained unit, having its own main door, playground and toilets. Although it is attached to the main block, access has to be gained from the outside or through the hall or the library. With the exception of one room in the extension all the classrooms have their own door and children can enter them directly from the playground without passing through another classroom. This discrete territorial allocation may have important consequences for pupil interaction, for teacher interaction and for teaching visibility.
Furthermore, the design of the building may considerably curtail the breadth of educational possibilities. For example, during the 1981-82 academic year the three teachers working with upper junior children sought to introduce a team teaching situation. Their three parallel vertically grouped classes were based in classrooms 2, 3 and 4 in the main block. (Upper juniors have to be based upstairs in the light of the safety hazard posed by the staircase).

Practicality and safety quickly dictated that the project was modified into a co-operative planning, rather than a total team-teaching situation, because of the dangers and difficulties involved in the free movement of children. In short the project foundered as a result of the isolation of classroom 2 and the hazardousness of the staircase. The topography of the school building is a much more significant influence than it may at first appear and is an important factor in much of the interaction and curriculum development elaborated in later chapters.

The visual impact of the school building and its grounds is clearly influenced by the way in which they are maintained and serviced and reflects the involvement of the "human resources" to be studied later in this chapter. Similarly the interior design, decorative order and the nature of the fixtures and fittings seem to be important considerations in any analysis of the school's provision. In 1981 the main block required a substantial amount of internal redecoration as plaster was dropping and the wallpaper falling off the walls in a number of places. It was some 12 years since any internal redecoration had been undertaken and the school transparently reflected this fact. The institution has also been subjected to a series of temporary caretakers and the general state of cleanliness and tidiness indicated a lack of care. The warren-like rambling nature of the building and the very high ceilings minimised the impact of displays of work. The polished wooden floorboards of the main block exacerbated the rather bare and stark appearance of this section of the school. Occasional oddments of threadbare carpet sat uneasily on slippery floors and did little to enhance the atmosphere or absorb the resonant tones of heavy footwear moving across them. The furniture in the main block bore witness to the age of the school and wore the marks of a long succession of users. The Headteacher's Room epitomized this part of the school, with its peeling wallpaper, drab colours, threadbare carpet and antiquated cupboards. In contrast the extension seemed light and airy and provided a much broader range of potential uses than the main block accommodation. The classroom areas were carpeted in yellow and the art area was situated on wipe-clean
tiles. The quiet room was also neatly carpeted and decorated and contained new furniture. An adequate supply of display boards had been sensibly sited and the children's work they supported added another dimension to the apparently well designed building. The two mobile classrooms situated adjacent to the main block were typical of their genre. Rectangular, flat roofed structure providing basic accommodation for their inhabitants. The inadequate cloakroom and stock room space mirrored the rather cramped nature of the classroom area. The problems inherent in their design were related to their low ceilings and vast number of windows, creating difficulties in regulating the internal temperature and providing adequate display boarding.

The school grounds were a very important educational resource, reflecting the rural splendour of a prosperous rectory and providing endless starting points for Environmental Studies, Science, Art and Mathematics. Indeed the village itself is an extension of the grounds and provided the basis for an integrated study involving the above subject areas in 1982. Furthermore, as indicated earlier, the visual picture of the school participants carry around in their heads seems to be dominated by its rural setting, the splendour of its grounds and the nature of its architecture. The impact of its setting varied, with the standpoint of the perceiver, nevertheless colourful Maypole Dancing on the luxuriant green grass of the natural arena, provided by the drained fish pond conjured up positive images of the school in the minds of some parents and local inhabitants.

The provision of material resources appears to be one element in the objective evaluation of the school that lends itself to quantifiable analysis. Recourse to the Inventory furnishes an itemised list of all the important equipment in the school, encompassing furniture, audio-visual aids, reprographic machines and all the other major pieces of apparatus. The Inventory also indicates the location and the method of purchase of each piece of equipment. With the exception of a photocopier and a computer, in 1981 Redland appeared to be well equipped, especially with many expensive items that had recently been purchased from private funds. One important ramification of this ample provision of hardware was that for the next three years available finances could be used to develop the curriculum rather than purchase machinery.

The Accession Register provided similar access to an assessment of the provision and range of books in the school. For a school of its size, the library was extremely well stocked containing 700 non fiction and
1300 fiction books. The reading scheme was similarly catalogued and while large numbers of books had been purchased many were rapidly becoming dated and showing signs of wear and tear. In this way the relative merits of the alternatives of spending money on library or reading books appeared straight-forward.

The staff library was notable for its paucity, consisting of approximately ten books of a mature vintage. This scant provision may have been indicative of the value attached to curriculum and professional development.

A School Prospectus had been designed to convey relevant information to parents and other interested parties. The curriculum provision summarised in this booklet was amplified in much more detail in a forty-five page "Schemes of Work" document. Each member of staff had a bound copy of this document in their cupboard. Furthermore for the guidance of the Headteacher, an unambiguous statement of the Local Authority's guidelines for the smooth day to day organisation of the school existed in the form of a compilation of fifty "Administrative Memoranda". In this way pupils, parents, the teaching staff and the Headteacher had all been provided with written guidelines prescribing their behaviour.

Money is another resource which is readily quantifiable and at first sight an account of the school's finances seems eminently straightforward. I have attempted to provide this analysis by employing the following classification system.

1. **Official funds**: provided through the Local Education Authority

   a) Direct - capitation allowance, delegated powers.
   b) Indirect - furniture, equipment, repairs, improvements, provision of staff, resources, buildings.

2. **Official Funds**: provided through the Governors.

   a) Direct - grants for specific pieces of equipment or improvements.
   b) Indirect - repairs, improvements, extensions.
3. **Unofficial funds**: provided by parents and teachers.

a) School fund  
b) PTA funds

It is self-evident that many of the decisions taken at central and local government level which critically affect life within the school, such as staffing levels or the improvement of buildings, have more to do with financial rather than educational considerations. Nevertheless, such concerns are largely beyond the scope of this study and at this point the aim is to elaborate Redland's financial resources. At the beginning of each financial year the school is provided with a capitation allowance based on the number of pupils on roll, to defray the internal costs of maintaining the institution. The relative allocation of this money to the purchase of books, equipment and materials is at the discretion of the headteacher. His delegated spending must also be within clearly prescribed limits. The level of indirect funding (see 1b above), however, is a function of the headteacher's ability to compete for resources. A similar mechanism is at work when considering the provision of funds from the Department of Education and Science and the Church of England through the Governors (2a and 2b above). This mechanism is considered in greater depth later in this chapter. In April 1981 the school finances were in a healthy state, there were no debts carried forward from the previous year on the capitation account and the stockroom was full of consumable materials. This healthy state of financial affairs conferred a greater degree of latitude in the new headteacher's allocation of resources and room for manoeuvre. Furthermore, the unofficial finds boasted a balance of some £900 and perhaps more importantly intimated the best prospects for gaining the necessary finance for curriculum development and other financially expensive projects. In this way the headteacher was liberated from pressing financial constraints and money did not become a major consideration in future planning.

It appears to be at this point, in moving from an elaboration of the school's non-human resources to a consideration of the human elements in the enterprise, that any claims for scientific objectivity can no longer maintain. Indeed it would seem that the background data furnished in the foregoing section of this chapter could be uncovered and substantiated by a detached investigator albeit his conclusions may be different. In considering human resources, however, the participant observer obviously
moves into the arena of inter-subjectivity and necessarily writes from
the methodological standpoint of using himself as the research instrument.

Upon taking up my appointment as Headteacher of Redland Primary School in
1981, I was 32 years of age and had been teaching for almost twelve
years. My junior/secondary, three-year College of Education Course had
involved the study of Physical Education and History as main subjects.
My first teaching appointment was at my final teaching practice school,
an urban secondary modern catering for some 700 boys. As a member of the
Physical Education and Remedial Departments I had contact with most of
the pupils in the school, working across the 11 to 16 age-range. My
abiding memory of this institution involves the learning and exercise of
effective custodial recipes for dealing with unwilling children. Indeed
my most "significant other", my Head of Department, was renowned amongst
his colleagues as an exemplary disciplinarian. After two years I moved
to a Roman Catholic Primary School, where I was appointed to a Scale 2
Post for Physical Education. This post of responsibility required me to
teach Physical Education to all the seven classes in the school, working
with children from 5 to 11 years of age. My class teaching duties
included responsibility for classes of approximately forty third year
children and I rapidly became aware of the importance of this age-group
in the light of the 11+ examination the following year. In this way I
was introduced to the exercise of parental pressure and concern. The
Headteacher, a female in Holy Orders, however, provided an example of one
way of effectively dealing with parental pressure. She was totally
honest in her appraisal of children and situations, eminently straight
forward in the way she dealt with them and brooked no interference
whatsoever. After a year at this school I gained internal promotion to a
Scale 3 Post, with added responsibilities for Environmental Studies.

In 1975 I was appointed to a Scale 4 post in a large, urban junior
school, with responsibility for Science, Social Studies and Resources.
This school furnished experience of working in an educational priority
area and operating as a member of a team of twenty staff. My
responsibility for Science proved particularly challenging as very little
of this work was going on in the school. During my three years in this
establishment I implemented a wide range of strategies designed to
involve other members of staff in Science teaching and sought to develop
a coherent programme of work. My duties as Year Leader responsible for
co-ordinating the activities of four parallel classes also proved to be
invaluable experience and once again the Headteacher's particular
management style provided a possible template for future imitation.
Clearly my most formative preparatory experience for the post of headship was gained as the deputy headteacher of a large, open plan County primary school. This appointment provided valuable insights into the tasks and functions of headship and the nature and location of the school significantly broadened my experience. Most importantly the Headteacher of this school exemplified and amplified the efficient execution of his role for my benefit. This Headteacher proved to be a critical reality defining figure and a truly significant other in my eventual exercise of Headship. By working very closely for three years with this very able practitioner, I was able to re-consider and re-define my own philosophy of education. Furthermore, I was given every opportunity to take responsibility without having to accept the ultimate degree of accountability. The school was involved in an ongoing programme of curriculum development and members of staff were invited to contribute to Authority-based curriculum initiatives. The Headteacher had also begun to formalise his approach to staff development and had experimented with a variety of approaches. He considered himself a "progressive" in that he was prepared to compare any new initiative with his own practice and amend his behaviour in the light of his conclusions. His quiet, thoughtful approach in his dealings with pupils, parents and staff also proved quite illuminating and provided another strand in the eventual construction of my own management style. I consider myself very fortunate to have worked with this exceptionally able headteacher and can trace many of my actions during the observation period back to the seeds sown during this three year period. At a more pragmatic level I also gained valuable experience in the day to day organisation of the school, dealing with teachers and parents, and developing Mathematics throughout the school.

My teaching and academic careers have developed in parallel. In 1974 I commenced an Open University BA Degree in Education and found the "School and Society" course particularly challenged my ways of thinking about education, the children I taught and the methods I employed. Other modules in Social Science, Psychology and Language provided a broader background for future behaviour and thought. "Management in Education" obviously had important ramifications for my later view and exercise of headship. Enrolment for an MA Degree in Education at Loughborough University coincided with my period as a Deputy Headteacher and the school in which I was working provided the focus for most of my written work. In particular courses in "Educational Research Methods", "Sociology" and "Management" could readily be applied to the school.
situation. In this way professional and academic concerns cohered in my involvement in education and I sought to reconcile pragmatism and theory in the classroom. In the course of this process my overarching desire was to observe, analyse and communicate insights reflecting the colour, depth and complexity of a real school.

In this way, I arrived at Redland in 1981 partially reflecting my own particular historical and educational development. Four schools which varied enormously in terms of size, location, inhabitants, age-range and ethos had all made their unique impression in conjunction with a variety of academic experiences. Self analysis is particularly difficult and fraught with obvious scientific shortcomings, nevertheless I have elaborated my preparatory experiences in some detail as this background amplifies the focus of the next five chapters. Clearly behaviour also reflects the individual's personality, his attitudes and value system. Such an analysis, however, is largely beyond the scope of this study. Behaviour is also usually in relation to someone or something other than self and in considering the Headteacher's actions it is necessary to consider the other participants involved in the social situation. I propose to provide a very brief account of these actors from the perspective of the Headteacher and in the approximate order of priority with which he viewed them. Once more it may be somewhat artificial to consider individuals in isolation but as a precursor to a later discussion of their interaction this strategy appears defensible.

The teaching staff were identified as the most significant group of people involved in the enterprise, despite the fact that the school was manifestly called into existence to serve the needs of children. The crucial contribution the teachers make to the performance of the Head cannot be overstated as it is through them that a large proportion of his role is vicariously executed. They also constitute his most powerful reference group and critical audience, by virtue of their professional, social and physical proximity. A simple schedule has been constructed in order to summarise information about each member of the teaching staff. The criterion for the inclusion of data in this profile is whether it is germane to an understanding of incidents or phenomena elaborated in subsequent chapters. The schedule reflects a desire to commence with objective information and systematically provide more subjective insights, culminating in a description of the Headteacher's perceptions or impressions of each individual after approximately one term in the school. Clearly this impressionistic data could be viewed as lacking
scientific credibility, nevertheless it is elaborated as these impressions appeared to constitute the basis from which the Headteacher considered future action and institutional development. Miss Russell and Mrs Jones have been included in these profiles despite the fact that they were only members of staff during the first and last terms of the observation period respectively. Likewise Mr Green was only on the staff for one year.

NAME: Mrs Jordan

AGE: 41

YEARS AT REDLAND: 9

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Deputy Headteacher

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Two year initial teacher training, supplemented by a recent secondment at a local College of Education. Worked in three other schools of varying age-range and location.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Art, English and Games.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mrs Jordan's three children had all attended the school and she had been associated with the establishment as a parent and a teacher for approximately 12 years. She had been Deputy Headteacher for two terms.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MRS JORDAN

Initially Mrs Jordan appeared to be the personification of the school I had inherited. She seemed totally steeped in the traditions and mores of the establishment and had clearly enjoyed a very close working relationship with the previous Headteacher, Mr Lake.

My first impressions suggested she was a very able and imaginative teacher, well respected by pupils, parents and colleagues. She was very enthusiastic and conscientious, generating an aura of bustling efficiency. Her classroom was neat and her displays well presented and the working atmosphere seemed very positive.
Mrs Jordan was not afraid to state her views on any area of school or educational policy and was not intimidated or influenced by the nature of her audience. Nevertheless she seemed open to reasoned argument and quite prepared to modify her views in the light of discussion. She quickly demonstrated herself to be an efficient organiser and a very capable and supportive deputy. She appeared an ambitious person and several comments indicated a desire for further promotion.

I felt rather anxious about my relationship with Mrs Jordan at the outset as she gave the impression of being slightly intolerant, brusque and dismissive. Paradoxically she seemed a little over-sensitive and could become upset in the face of similar behaviour from other people. Furthermore, I felt that she allowed her class to make 'too' much noise at inappropriate times and perhaps unwittingly encouraged an indisciplined approach to some of their work and behaviour.

As indicated earlier I perceived the deputy as the symbolic representative of the school and therefore viewed our relationship as being of crucial importance to my future plans. For this reason I may have been over critical of Mrs Jordan in my private deliberations, perhaps unfairly attempting to make her conform to an imitation of my working relationship with my previous Headteacher. Nevertheless the way I perceived Mrs Jordan appears to have had important consequences for my future behaviour and attempts to manage the person I viewed as my key "human resource".

____________________________

NAME: Mr Williams

AGE: 28

YEARS AT REDLAND: 7

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 for Audio Visual and Library

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three Year Teaching Certificate course, with Religious Education as his main subject. The whole of his teaching career had been spent at Redland and he had worked exclusively with lower junior children. Clearly Mr Lake had been a very important influence during his probation and early years of teaching.
CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Religious Education and the ability to organise resources meticulously.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mr Williams is a bachelor living in digs during the week and returning to his parents home at the weekend. In November 1980 he had fallen on ice and broken his ankle and was still undergoing medical treatment at the conclusion of the observation period.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MR WILLIAMS

Mr Williams was very conscientious and industrious. His classroom seemed to be very carefully managed and organised, with elaborate systems for recording children's progress and the use of resources. His particular forte seemed to be cataloguing and numbering books, choosing the theme and hymns for assembly and playing his guitar.

Mr Williams was popular with the children, particularly his own class, however, he lacked the capacity to effectively control their behaviour. His views on the curriculum seemed inflexible and lacking in creativity, with the emphasis always firmly placed on what he described as 'the basics'.

Clearly his physical condition may have contributed to his behaviour throughout the three years as he was constantly undergoing a variety of treatments, which may have had debilitating side-effects. Nevertheless the fact that he was observed teaching Games and Physical Education from a chair during the first months may have affected my view of Mr Williams. It is noteworthy that at a very early stage he sought to develop a positive relationship with the new Headteacher. It also became rapidly apparent at the first Parents' Evening that Mr Williams was very sensitive about any hint of criticism.

Mr Williams, along with Mrs Jordan, quickly became synonomous with the "Old Redland School" in my mind.

NAME: Mr Andrews

AGE: 26

YEARS AT REDLAND: 1
POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 for Boys' Games

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three year Teaching Certificate Course, with French as his main subject. Mr Andrews had worked in a large junior school for four years before coming to Redland.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: A very able and talented sportsman.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mr Andrews had worked exclusively with upper junior classes before his arrival at Redland. He was now working with a very large class of 39 lower juniors. He had also recently broken his leg and was undergoing physiotherapy.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MR ANDREWS

Mr Andrews was one of the quietest and most reserved teachers I had ever come into contact with. He had difficulty in relating to other members of staff and could be described as an "isolate". Clearly he had had an unhappy start to his career at Redland and on the four occasions when he did express an opinion in a staff meeting or coffee break, it was quickly dismissed by other members of staff.

His relationship with his class was very positive and he was very well liked by the children. This popularity may have been partially a reflection of the vast amount of time he devoted to extra-curricular sporting activities. His future wife, who was in her final year of teacher training, was ambitious on his behalf, a phenomenon which may have been fuelled by the rapid promotion of one of his former colleagues and friends.

From a professional standpoint I noted the very obvious untidiness in his classroom, pupils' books and displays. In fact many of the books also suggested a lack of care in presentation and insufficient attention to marking by Mr Andrews. Furthermore much of the work the children were engaged in lacked any demand for creativity or originality and could be viewed as rather tedious. Indeed Mr Andrews rapidly displayed an unhappy capacity for being at odds with the rest of the staff on many curriculum matters.
NAME: Mrs Jennings

AGE: 35

YEARS AT REDLAND: 2

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 for Music

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: BA Honours Degree in History, followed by a Postgraduate Certificate of Education. She had taught in two Leicestershire high schools and one primary school before joining the staff at Redland.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Music, History and English

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mrs Jennings had already been interviewed for a deputy headship and was very obviously eager to gain promotion and undertake any activities which would enhance her prospects.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MRS JENNINGS

Mrs Jennings quickly revealed herself to be a very bright and intelligent individual and a very professional and conscientious teacher. Her preparation was impeccable and her marking extremely thorough. She was very popular with her class and very highly respected by parents. Indeed a number of parents approached me during the first term to ask if their children could remain in Mrs Jennings' class for another year. One of these parents who was Head of a Mathematics Department in a secondary school, particularly extolled her virtues claiming her to be the best teacher he had known. Clearly these views had a significant effect on my perceptions of Mrs Jennings. Furthermore she always appeared to listen carefully in staff meetings, thus, implicitly enhancing my self-image and thereby my positive view of her. In short, she seemed an "ideal" human resource. In my view her apparent weaknesses were directly attributable to her secondary school teaching background, her displays lacked sparkle and she clearly preferred whole-class teaching to working with groups. The uneven printing on her displays particularly caught my attention on every visit to her classroom.
NAME: Mrs Morgan

AGE: 29

YEARS AT REDLAND: 1

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 for Girls' Games

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three years Teaching Certificate Course, with English and Drama as her main subjects. Mrs Morgan had worked in a primary school for two years and an infant school for a further four years before joining the staff at Redland.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Language development

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Upon Mrs Jordan's recent promotion to Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Morgan had been awarded the vacant Scale 2 post to relieve Mrs Jordan of her responsibility for organising netball.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MRS MORGAN

Mrs Morgan appeared to be a competent teacher who provided the children in her charge with a thorough grounding in the basic skills of language and number. Her relationships with children and colleagues were sound and she revealed herself to be a very firm disciplinarian. She was always very willing to take on additional duties, such as the sale of school uniform.

Her approach to the organisation of her classroom, however, was over formal for an infant group and she was particularly slow and unimaginative in her mounting of displays. She also displayed a tendency to be very abrasive with certain parents and colleagues. I also noted her disconcerting habit of exchanging meaningful glances with Mrs Wood during staff meetings.

NAME: Mrs Wood

AGE: 34

YEARS AT REDLAND: 3
POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 post for Art and Display

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three years Teaching Certificate Course, with Art as her main subject. She had trained as a mature student after the birth of her three boys who all attended Redland. Her whole teaching career had been spent in the infant section of this school.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Art and display

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mrs Wood had commenced her probationary period on a temporary contract, a fact which appeared to increase the influence of the former Headteacher Mr Lake and Miss Russel, the Head of the Infant Department.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MRS WOOD

Mrs Wood was a very enthusiastic teacher, who prepared her work thoroughly and created a stimulating environment for her pupils. She was very artistic and her displays were excellent. Her relationships with colleagues, parents and children were very positive.

I quickly felt that she needed broader experiences of infant classrooms and knowledge of other schools. She also needed to take a more dynamic lead in the organisation of the displays around the whole school, involving colleagues rather than attempting to do all the work herself.

Clearly her dual role as a teacher and parent caused her some cognitive dissonance and internal conflict.

NAME: Mrs Edwards

AGE: 38

YEARS AT REDLAND: 2

POST: A series of Scale 1 temporary contracts

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three year Teaching Certificate Course, with Music as her main subject. She had worked in two infant schools in another Authority before moving to Leicestershire upon her husband
becoming Deputy Head at a large comprehensive school. Her two sons were pupils at Redland.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Music

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mrs Edwards was working in the school when I took up my appointment and applied for the one-year temporary post which became vacant upon Miss Russel's resignation. At that time she was working with a vertically grouped, remedial, upper junior class.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MRS EDWARDS

Mrs Edwards was a very forceful personality, who attempted to emphasise the development of the basic skills of language and number in her charges. Her classroom environment, however, was bereft of interest or imagination and she had some problems in maintaining order.

Subsequent spells of supply work revealed her to be a very able and talented infant teacher.

NAME: Miss Russel

AGE: 28

YEARS AT REDLAND: 7

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 Head of Infant Department

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three year Teaching Certificate Course, with English as her main subject. All of her teaching career had been spent in the infant section of Redland School.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: English and Art

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Miss Russel had spent the formative years of her career at Redland and had a very close relationship with Mr Lake. She was now in charge of what she considered to be a separate department.
THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MISS RUSSEL

Miss Russel was a very able teacher and a very dynamic and forceful leader of the group of three teachers working with infant children. She was also very strongwilled and rather inflexible. Her overriding concern appeared to be to perpetuate the division of the school into separate infant and junior departments. Furthermore it seemed likely that she would resist any organisational or curricular changes despite their relative merits. She also wielded an enormous amount of informal power in staffroom relations.

NAME: Mr Green

AGE: 28

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 1 - One year temporary post

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three year Teaching Certificate Course, with Science as his main subject. Experience in three other primary schools.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Science and Pottery

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mr Green was appointed on a one-year contract to work in the team of three teachers working with upper juniors. He was specifically appointed to develop Science.

THE HEADTEACHER'S IMPRESSION OF MR GREEN

Mr Green was my first teaching appointment and as such I wanted him to be a great success. He interviewed extremely well and his philosophy of education appeared congruent with my own. His particular abilities in Science and Pottery offered obvious possibilities for curriculum development.

At a personal level he was rather shy and quiet, but I felt sure he would quickly adjust to his colleagues and pupils and make an important contribution to the development of the school.
NAME: Mrs Cromwell

AGE: 40

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY: Scale 2 for Display and Pottery

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Three year Teaching Certificate Course, with Art as her main subject. Vast teaching experience in a secondary and primary schools. She had recently undertaken four temporary contracts in a variety of primary and middle schools.

CURRICULAR STRENGTHS: Art, Pottery and English

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Mrs Cromwell was appointed in October 1983 and consequently only worked at Redland during the last term of the observation period.

During the first term the Headteacher keenly observed the behaviour of the teaching staff in a variety of situations - in assembly, in their own classrooms, in the staffroom and during the course of staff meetings. Each teacher was also invited to arrange an after-school appointment to inform the Headteacher of the scope of their post of responsibility and their plans for its future development. These informal interviews proved very illuminating for the Headteacher and provided some of the data for his thought on the future development of the school. In short, his observations began to reveal the locus of informal institutional power and suggest the following sociometric views of the staff in his mind.

Miss Russel

Mrs Wood — Mrs Morgan — Mrs Jennings — Mrs Edwards

Mrs Jordan

Mr Williams — Mr Andrews — Mr Green

Mrs Jordan was the pivot both formally and informally, perhaps reflecting her deputy status and the fact that she was the longest serving Redland teacher. She was on good terms with everyone except Mr Andrews. Miss Russel, Mrs Wood and Mrs Morgan were a closely knit triad, striving to preserve their infant staff separateness and identity. Miss Russel often
spoke on behalf of all three of them and requested they have their interview with the Headteacher as a department rather than individually. They always provided a united front on every matter. Mrs Jennings and Mrs Edwards were a reciprocated pair, both working with older junior children and both regularly interacted with Mrs Jordan. Mr Williams did not seem to have any close relationships but was on good terms with everyone except Mr Andrews. Mr Green fell into a similar category and as a newcomer lacked any particularly close relationship with colleagues. Mr Andrews was a real isolate, rarely coming into the staffroom or interacting with other members of staff. As a matter of choice he preferred the company of the children in his class. In formal staff discussions or decision-making he never had an ally.

Twelve years of varied teaching experience sharpened my awareness of the nuances of teacher interaction and informed my observations. Contrastingly I had no previous experience of being directly responsible for the performance of non-teaching staff. An initial cursory inspection of the school re-inforced the vital contribution the caretaker makes. The previous caretaker had been retired on health grounds and a series of temporary caretakers had allowed the school to become dirty and untidy. Furthermore, during the interregnum little supervision had been exercised with regard to the activities of the female cleaner and the location of her exertions could frequently be identified by a trail of cigarette ash. The floors and carpets particularly testified to the lack of care and the corners of classrooms rarely seemed to be disturbed by a mop or duster. With these considerations in mind, the opportunity to appoint a new caretaker during the first term was of crucial importance to the future plans of the new Headteacher. From a shortlist of six, including a School Governor, Mr Jackson was selected. He was a man of thirty two years of age with no caretaking experience. His previous employment included spells as a farm worker, factory worker and a labourer to a fencing contractor. He was appointed on the basis of his obvious enthusiasm for the post, his excellent physical health and his glowing references. His induction and training was exclusively school-based, a retired caretaker worked with him for the first two weeks (June 1981) and initiated him into the techniques and functions of the job. This brief period involved the communication of a vast amount of acquired recipe knowledge, including technical, clerical and perhaps most importantly, techniques for dealing with the teaching staff and Headteacher. Mr Jackson rapidly displayed great aptitude for the post and the physical appearance of the school began to improve in a matter of weeks.
his six-month probationary period he was under the direct supervision of the Area Technical Services Officer and the Headteacher and monthly reports were completed on his progress. Clearly this improvement in the physical environment reflected positively on the contribution of the Headteacher and may have been an important element in his attempts to manage impressions of the school. Indeed Mr Saville, one of the Primary Advisers, remarked on how much brighter and cleaner the school looked on his first visit, shortly after Mr Jackson had taken up his duties. In addition to becoming competent in the execution of his caretaking functions, Mr Jackson also had to negotiate a working relationship with the other participants in the enterprise, notably the Head, the teachers, the cook and his cleaning assistant. These negotiations are examined in some depth in Chapter 3.

Mrs Livingstone, the cook, also figures prominently in Chapter 3 and as the representative of the five ladies working in the kitchen it is necessary to introduce her. Mrs Livingstone joined the staff at Redland the term before the new Headteacher and was therefore also a relative newcomer. She ruled her kitchen like an enlightened despot, but sought to create a pleasant working atmosphere and maintain good relations with other members of staff, including assistants. Her immediate concern was that she would be allowed to do her job without any external interference. It appears noteworthy that she produced excellent meals and was largely self-sufficient throughout the observation period. The only personal relationship she entered into was with the first school secretary, Mrs Holmes.

Mrs Holmes herself was a critical figure at the outset, for in the Headteacher's eyes she held the key to unlocking the mysteries of many of the day to day tasks of running the school. She understood the idiosyncracies of Mr Lake's filing system and methods of organisation and seemed capable of demystifying the mystique of completing forms for County Hall. She was also the person the new Headteacher spent most time with in the early days and her support was of inestimable importance. Her vivacious, gregarious disposition made her a popular member of staff and her friendly personality was a great asset to the school, as she was often the first person visitors came into contact with. She also gave the appearance of being very efficient and interested in the corporate life of the school. This interest may have been sharpened by the fact that her two sons were pupils at Redland. The new Headteacher identified Mrs Holmes as his first trusted ally and as such an obvious source of
information on the subjective history of Redland and Mr Lake's regime. Indeed she signalled her approval of the new Headteacher through the mechanism of reporting the positive comments her sons had made about his teaching or assemblies. Furthermore during the first term Mrs Holmes was dismayed to find that Mr Lake had recommended she fail her probation and the new Headteacher was invited to make a final decision on her suitability for the post of School Secretary. Clearly the fact that she had already become a trusted ally dictated the 'positive' nature of his response. It is noteworthy that the new Headteacher had very little experience upon which to construct valid criteria for an analysis of this suitability.

Another important character in the new Headteacher's personal adjustment to Redland was Mrs Comfrey, who executed the dual role of ancillary and dining assistant. She had worked at Redland for two years and her two children were both pupils in the school. In a similar way to Mrs Holmes she related back to the Headteacher the positive opinions of her children with regard to his performance. She also provided intelligence about the positive perceptions of parents. These anecdotes assumed great importance in the Headteacher's mind, and had a positively reinforcing effect. Clearly Mrs Holmes and Mrs Comfrey were careful not to communicate any negative responses and as such the validity of their intelligences may have been somewhat dubious, nevertheless the supportive nature of the information had important consequences for the Headteacher's self-image and institutional adjustment.

The pupils constituted the only other group of actors inside the institution to be described. Children attended Redland from the term after their fifth birthday until they moved on to the High School at the conclusion of their seven years in the school. Individual record cards pertaining to pastoral and curriculum matters, existed for each child in the school. In this way a wealth of objective data was immediately available, for example, reading age, spelling age, and performance on a standardised mathematical test. Annual reading and spelling test data had also been recorded for entire cohorts and objective comparisons could be made over a number of years. Exercise books and folders provided another obvious starting point for an assessment of the educational standards of the 215 children in the school. The children were grouped in three infant and four junior classes in terms of age, with an additional class accommodating the second, third and fourth year junior remedial pupils. The number of pupils hovered around the 200 mark throughout the three years.
In the Headteacher's view the pupils constituted the most important group of actors in the school and yet he perceived them as the least problematic human resource. Perhaps this was a function of his teaching experience and particular frame of reference. He felt confident and at ease in his contacts with children and the immediate nature of their feedback seemed to reinforce this confidence. Furthermore he viewed the pupils as the most adaptable group of actors in the enterprise, as his reference to 'Pygmalion in the Classroom' at the first staff meeting testified. Nevertheless his behaviour towards the children and their response to him were of great importance in the formation of other actors' judgements of the Headteacher.

Pupils also represent the first channel of communication between the Headteacher and parents. Initially parents constructed perceptions of the Headteacher vicariously on the basis of views and opinions expressed by their own children. At any one time approximately four hundred adults are involved in the school by virtue of being parents of children attending Redland. Clearly any generalisations about "the parents" are extremely suspect as this heterogeneous group varied enormously in terms of age, social class, attitudes, values and involvement in the school. Nevertheless as indicated earlier the nature of the catchment area and the type of housing available within it may influence the composition of the population. The survey cited earlier, conducted by J4 in 1982, indicated that less than 10% of parents were employed in agriculture or traditional rural occupations, and that over 75% of fathers commuted to Coventry, Hinckley, Leicester, Lutterworth or London.

Interestingly approximately 10% of families contained at least one parent employed as an educationalist, either teacher, headteacher, University or Polytechnic Lecturer or staff H.M.I. In short it would appear that approximately 75% of the families involved in the school could be categorised as belonging to Classes 3a or 3b using the Registrar General's Schemata. Furthermore, a number of parents identified living in a particular village as an indication of social class, an opinion articulated by one mother in stating "we are all very middle class in this village and therefore children from Sherborne should be admitted before they are five. They are ready for school!" Three of the seven villages in the catchment area also included small Council housing developments and the number of children drawn from these houses was around twenty-five. It is beyond the parameters of this study to conduct further investigation into the social composition of the parent body and
the obvious common characteristic of the people identified as "the parents" is the attendance of their child at Redland. Parents were invited to discuss their child's educational progress twice a year at Parent Consultation Evenings and were welcomed for other performances and Church Services. No mechanism existed to represent the shared or consensus views of parents and the later development of a Parent Teacher Association is examined in Chapters 4 and 5.

The composition of the Governing Body of the school reflected its geo-political history. Of the nine governors, six were foundation nominations and of these six, one had to be the Rector of Redland and another the Rural Dean. The interests of the various villages in the catchment area were also represented in the appointment of governors and by 1981 all the governors had served for a minimum of six years. A death, a retirement and a resignation altered a third of the personnel in 1982. The Clerk to the Governors was appointed by County Hall and was a Section Leader from the Teachers' Pensions Department. The Governors met once a term and the agenda was constructed by the Clerk. The Voluntary Aided Status and Articles of Government endowed the Governors with an enormous amount of legitimate power in areas such as the appointment of staff, the recruitment of pupils and the provision of finance. It rapidly became apparent that most of this power was concentrated in the person of the Chairman of Governors, Reverend Rivers, the Rector of Redland. He had the authority to make interim decisions between Governors Meetings and was the only Governor who made regular visits to the school. He obviously took his duties seriously and clearly understood the full extent of his powers. In this way the new Headteacher began to comprehend the crucial nature of his relationship with the Rector of Redland and his visits were approached accordingly. The retiring Headteacher, Mr Lake, had expressed some concern about the quality of his relationship with the Rector and the new Headteacher approached his Chairman with some consequent caution. A significant milestone in the Headteacher-Chairman relationship occurred during the first term when Reverend Rivers took the floor at a meeting for parents to publicly declare his total support for the re-organisation of teaching groups the Headteacher was planning. Thereafter Reverend Rivers became a truly significant other and the trusted confidant of the Headteacher. He also provided the Headteacher with a locus of feedback on his own performance and his positive comments were particularly re-assuring in the light of his institutional status. Reverend Rivers also made it abundantly clear that his first allegiance was to the Headteacher he had
appointed, and that in any dispute with County Hall, parents or any other people, I could expect his total support. This knowledge had important consequences for my future actions. The corporate fiction of 'County Hall' included two distinct groups of individuals - Schools' Branch and the Advisers. People in Schools' Branch were responsible for the administration of the Education Authority and the principal actors involved in Redland were the Director of Education, the Assistant Director for Primary Education and Assistant Education Officer for Primary Education. The Headteacher had regular termly contact with the first two at Headteachers Meetings which provided a mechanism for the dissemination of information by the Administration and a method of gaining feedback from Headteachers. The Assistant Education Officer was the only one of the three to actually visit the school during the observation period and two of his three visits were in connection with the appointment of a new Deputy Headteacher. His first visit was pastoral in nature, designed to officially welcome the new Headteacher. Obviously the majority of the influence of Schools' Branch, therefore, was exerted through written communications. As indicated earlier, a comprehensive, growing list of Administrative Memoranda delineated the Headteacher's freedom of action and the weekly Schools' Post transported further manifestations of a centralised bureaucracy. In addition to their administrative duties, the inspectorial function within the Authority was also entrusted to the officers of Schools' Branch.

The Director of Education believed that by liberating the Advisers from the inspectorial function he was moving them into a closer, more open relationship with Headteachers and schools. Indeed Advisers largely visited schools at the specific request of the Headteacher. The Advisory Team consisted of three Primary Advisers and one or more Advisers responsible for each subject area across the 5-18 age range. Advisory teachers supported the main Advisory Team. Of the three Primary Advisers responsible for the 350 primary schools in the Authority, one was mainly involved with infant education while the junior specialists concentrated respectively on building design and in-service training in addition to their school visiting. The latter, Mr Saville, telephoned Redland at the commencement of the Headteacher's second term and was subsequently invited to visit the school. This marked the start of the development of an important relationship for the Headteacher and the school. From the outset the Headteacher perceived "the Advisers" as a group rather than individuals and saw them as an adjunct to, rather than architects of, his future planning.
Her Majesty's Inspectors were of peripheral interest at the start of the observation period as the new Headteacher believed he could not be held accountable for what was already happening in the school should an inspection be planned. Clearly this view changed as the months passed. Her Majesty's Inspectors' publications obviously contributed to the educational milieu in which the Headteacher operated and the 1978 Report on Primary Education had been digested with some care. A letter announcing the appointment of a new local H.M.I. responsible for Redland, arrived during the first term and presented the opportunity to enlist accredited analytical expertise without the concern of total accountability on the Headteacher's part. The capriciousness of this chance letter proved to be a salient factor in the Headteacher's future planning.

In 1981 it appeared to the Headteacher that the school had very little direct contact with the local community. This view was based on his rather vague definition of "the community" as those people living in the school catchment area who did not have children in the school. The main contact that existed involved the community use of the school premises for Flower Shows, Garden Fetes and Meetings. Individuals within the school made some limited attempts at community involvement by inviting senior citizens to Christmas Concerts and by distributing Harvest Baskets. The Headteacher was excited by the educational possibilities of the local environment but largely overlooked the potential contribution of the human resources in the local community.

Similarly the Headteacher was only dimly aware of the implications of local and national politics for the internal workings of the school. Such concerns are largely beyond the scope of this study, nevertheless it did become apparent during the observation period that the school was not an island and was subject to decisions taken beyond the human parameters elaborated. For example, the County Council decisions to discontinue compulsory school uniform and withdraw corporal punishment could have had momentus ramifications for Redland. Conversely, political pressure could have been enlisted to influence the actions of some of the human resources identified.

The level of provision of external support services during the three years clearly reflected these political decisions. Nevertheless a variety of assistance was engaged from this provision, including support from the Schools' Psychological Department, Remedial Reading Department,
Library, Community Health Service, Educational Welfare and Speech Therapy. The manpower levels in the Technical Services Department also clearly affected the maintenance of school grounds and the frequency of their visits. In this way the visual impact of the school's immediate environment was partially a reflection of external political and financial decision-making.

At this point the stage is now set for a presentation of the ensuing drama, the cast list has been completed and the play is about to unfold. Indeed the characters have had a cursory introduction and their interaction is the substantive focus of the bulk of the following chapters. I have attempted to summarise my perception of their interrelationship in the following diagram. The arrows are intended to suggest the predominant pathways of interaction between the respective groups.

![Figure Three: Diagram of Relationships]

The diagram illustrates that the Headteacher is involved in social relations with all the groups and that many of their interrelationships are mediated through him. Clearly the complexity of these 'interrelationships' cannot be fully represented diagramatically as it must be remembered that each group encompasses an aggregation of diverse individuals, interacting with each other, as well as with members of other groups. Nevertheless Figure 3 does reinforce the pivotal nature of the Headteacher's role and his simultaneous involvement with a myriad of differing groups and individuals.

As indicated above the next five chapters focus on the social interaction involving the human resources of Redland School. As a preamble to the elaboration of this interaction, I propose to devote the remainder of this chapter to describing the Headteacher's attempts at modifying the non-human resources involved in the enterprise. To continue the dramatic
analogy - the ways in which he attempts to redesign the backcloth and reconstruct the set.

Employing the classification system elaborated in Figure 2, Sections 1 and 2 identify the non-human resources which were within the Headteacher's ambit to modify. To recap:

1. **Physical Environment**
   a. Building
   b. Grounds
   c. Furnishings

2. **Equipment and Materials**
   a. Non-book: Machines and materials
   b. Books

The Headteacher's contribution in relation to these resources can be dichotomized into two complementary areas, maintenance and improvement. An analysis of his involvement with 1a, the building, reveals that fifty-three 'Official Orders' were issued by the County Council during the three years. The placement of such an order reflected an initial contact by telephone or letter from the Headteacher to the Building Maintenance Section at County Hall. Further supporting letters or additional telephone calls may also have been involved before the order was actually sanctioned. In this way an inordinate amount of time was required to secure the placement of orders. Typically maintenance items were dealt with more quickly than improvements, particularly if the Health and Safety Act could be invoked. Forty-one of the orders related to leaking roofs, faults in the heating system and other minor matters. The speed with which these minor repairs were organised largely reflected the efficiency of the Headteacher and his ability to implement the appropriate bureaucratic procedures. Maintaining the "status quo" of resource provision is only of secondary interest to this analysis, however, as the main focus is an assessment of the Headteacher's success in improving provision. At this point the objectivity of the researcher begins to recede as the identification of improvement clearly involves his own value system and standpoint. Indeed it rapidly becomes apparent that attempts to divorce non-human elements from the will and purposes of the actors using them are doomed to failure. Nevertheless, bearing in
mind that these 'improvements' involve the Headteacher in their initiation, a multiplicity of individuals in their implementation and the same Headteacher in their identification, they do affect the environment in which the social interaction is conducted. Before cataloguing these improvements, it is noteworthy that on occasions their implementation may have reflected financial considerations beyond the participants' immediate control or simply the capriciousness of chance.

A chronological presentation of the modifications secured during the three years reveals something of the Headteacher's order of priorities and reflects cumulative experience in manipulating the bureaucratic system. His first modification in July 1981 involved moving the Headteacher's Room from its inaccessible location upstairs to the small room just inside the main door. (Please refer to the Plan of the School). At the manifest level the aim of this exercise was to make the Headteacher more accessible to visitors and obviate the hitherto confusing journey up a flight of stairs and through two sets of fire doors. The latent function and the Headteacher's real motivation was to effect a symbolic break with the past by moving out of Mr Lake's room. Man is a geographical animal and establishing his own territoriality, had important consequences for the new Headteacher's identification with Redland School. The mechanics of executing this move also had significance for the development of the Headteacher's self-image and the management style he presented to others. Permission had to be sought from the Governors and Building Maintenance and the necessary finance provided to re-site the telephone, build up a door into the Girls Cloakroom and re-decorate the new Headteacher's Room. At the pragmatic level a new home had to be found for the Library, which had previously been housed in that room. Clearly a direct exchange was impossible as the stairs and inaccessibility of the old Headteacher's Room precluded its use as a Library. For these reasons it was unsuitable for children's use and therefore provided suitable accommodation for the School Secretary, who had previously worked in a very cramped and unpromising circumstances in the Staffroom. The reprographic and audio-visual equipment, in addition to the Secretary's paraphenalia, was centralised in this room. The reduction in the number of pupils in the school freed one teaching space from August 1981 onwards, which enabled Classroom 1 to be converted into a much more spacious Library. In this way the relocation of the Headteacher's Room engendered a chain of events which directly affected the Headteacher and Secretary and indirectly involved all the children and staff. Significantly in the Headteacher's view, he
had begun to re-organise the school. He was also personally involved in the physical acts of transporting artefacts from one place to another during the summer holiday. In conjunction with his wife, he planned the decor and distribution of furniture in his new room to convey the particular impression he desired to create. The room was professionally redecorated during the vacation and a new armchair provided for prospective visitors. Pinboards were attached to one wall and carefully chosen text-books strategically located in sight lines from the visitor's chair. Plants were purchased and pictures hung. With the assistance of the County Supplies Officer a new fitted carpet had been purchased from central funds. In the Headteacher's view the conversion of this small room signified the start of a new era and provided clues about his criteria of relevance. Notably the selection of text-books indicated the value of educational research and academic study, the two easy chairs arranged at either side of the coffee table revealed his view of relationships with parents and other visitors. The wipe-clean board and adhesive display unit bore evidence of his attempts at forward planning and sought to epitomise an efficient management style. The plants, pictures and reading lamp were arranged to soften the atmosphere and provide an aesthetically pleasing introduction to the school for future guests. Furthermore the transformation of this room during the summer holiday was also designed to present the staff with a "fait accompli" on their return.

Clearly re-organising the accommodation in the school involved human resources. All the staff were consulted about the proposed changes during the first term and the caretaker and the Headteacher worked together on the re-arrangement of the furniture. This co-operative exercise provided endless mutual monitoring possibilities and shared tasks contributed to the development of a closer personal relationship. Similarly the re-siting of the Secretary's Room enabled Mrs Holmes to define her own territorial rights and arrange the furniture to suit her own style of operation. At a pragmatic level having her own room obviated the endless "packing-away" every playtime or lunchtime. The new location of the Library also provided the teacher-in-charge with the opportunity to redesign its layout and atmosphere. Indeed the Headteacher was also able to make suggestions at this re-organisational stage which may not have been as well received if the Library had remained unaffected by the relocation. In this way it is self-evident that the modification of non-human resources has important ramifications for the people engaged in the enterprise.
During the summer vacation of 1981 the exterior of the school was painted. As Redland is a Church Aided School, this redecoration had been organised by the Governors before the new Headteacher's arrival. Also during this holiday period, the playground was completely resurfaced. Mr Lake and numerous parents had made representations to County Hall over a number of years in an attempt to secure this resurfacing, as the pot-holed nature of the area had caused several minor accidents. This orchestrated campaign of letters and telephone calls secured the desired re-surfacing the term after I started. During this same period the new caretaker was undertaking a massive internal cleaning operation to rectify the results of years of neglect. The Area Technical Services Officer increased the scope of this operation by detailing three of his staff to assist the Caretaker. In this way the school was a hive of activity during this period with a variety of people involved in external and internal redecoration and improvements. This activity did not go unnoticed and its inception was attributed to the new Headteacher. This judgement was revealed by the cleaner at the school sherry party the following Christmas when in conversation with the Headteacher she asserted "I expect you will get this place sorted out and then you will go to a bigger school". Thus the chance aggregation of a number of separately organised occurrences, largely beyond his influence, contributed to the formation of impressions about the new Headteacher. It would seem that staff and parents interpreted these modifications as an indication that the new Headteacher had the will and the wherewithal to implement change. Further illustrations from this period of time reinforce the chance element in the provision of resources. During the first term the Headteacher was unclear about the dichotomy of responsibility between the Governors and the Authority and consequently drew the Governors' attention to the decorative order of Class 4. It subsequently became clear that internal redecoration is the province of the Authority. However, during the holiday one of the Governors took it upon himself to instruct the decorator they had employed for the exterior painting to also redecorate this classroom. The same Governor purchased signs for all the internal doors and affixed them himself. Once more these changes contributed to the Headteacher's image building process, yet were beyond his compass and contravened the Authority's policy.

This initial success in modifying the environment had the effect of encouraging the Headteacher to compete for further improvements. The fact that he did not have permanent class-teaching responsibilities facilitated this process, a consideration often highlighted by colleagues.
who were full-time teaching heads. Indeed, as indicated above, securing financial provision can be a time-consuming task, involving telephone calls, letters and visits by the various departmental representatives from County Hall. The priorities rapidly became clear, with the exception of Classroom 4 and the Headteacher's Room, the entire interior of the old block needed re-decorating. The Headteacher rationalised this priority on the basis of providing a brighter environment for the children; however, it also related to his personal and professional impression management strategy. The Library in particular presented a rather austere, uninviting setting and merited particular attention. The Headteacher appealed to all the appropriate Departments at County Hall, invited the building inspector into the school and systematically exhausted the full gambit of approaches. The educational financial climate of 1981-82 precluded any such expenditure. The Headteacher then highlighted his concern about the decorative order of the building at the Spring 1982 Governors' Meeting and they minuted their official support for his representations and instructed the Clerk to write to the Director of Education. They also undertook to investigate alternative sources of financing the proposed internal redecoration, mindful of the fact that they had been corporately reprimanded for their transgressions involving Classroom 4. Meanwhile the Headteacher employed his third financial avenue and began to use money from the School Fund to initiate changes in the appearance of the building. The entrance hall was identified at a staff meeting as the location in which visitors construct their first impressions of the school. Hessian-covered pinboard was erected and the remainder of the walls repainted, plants were purchased and a trophy cabinet moved upstairs.

The summer of 1982 was marked by the internal redecoration of the kitchen and by December of the same year £1000 had also been allocated for the long-awaited repainting of the school's interior. This grant had more to do with a projected surplus in the 1982-83 educational maintenance budget than the aforementioned representations. The Headteacher, however, did not publicise this knowledge. The Chairman of Governors had also uncovered a Community Service Scheme through which young offenders undertook decorating projects under the direction of a trained supervisor. He had organised such a project for the school and the Governors had undertaken to provide the materials. By adding £300 from Delegated Spending to the Authority's allocation of £1000, the Headteacher was able to finance the total repainting of Classrooms 1, 2 and 3, the hall and the inner entrance hall. The Community Service Team
agreed to repaint or wallpaper the staff room, pottery room, upstairs corridor and the secretary's office. Individual teachers selected their own colour schemes and the professional decorators completed the four rooms in the first fortnight of January 1983. After a number of catastrophes, the Community Service Team made their final contribution in September of the same year. The old block looked quite different, the children exhibited greater care in using their enhanced surroundings and a number of parents remarked on the improvement.

The school grounds were identified by the Headteacher as an important first-hand resource and he sought to improve their aesthetic quality and educational usage. During the three years a dangerous wall was rebuilt, sections of fencing replaced and a general fact-lift organised. A long-overdue inspection of the trees by the Forestry Commission and a programme of surgery and replanting was instituted. The school sign was repainted. Clearly the input of Technical Services and their manning levels were critical in the process. The educational implications of the grounds are studied in Chapter Two. Once again the desire was to present an image of an environment that is efficiently managed and maintained as this suggests a purposeful, caring atmosphere.

Furnishings appear to contribute significantly to the development of a particular atmosphere, a belief illustrated by the Headteacher's care in designing his new room. As indicated above, during the financial stringencies of 1981 and 1982 the only latitude for financial manoeuvre was by sparingly using the School Fund. After its relocation the library looked rather austere and uninviting. Large bean bags were purchased from the market to provide a comfortable reading habitat and touch of luxury was added to the bare floorboards by buying a square of foam backed carpet. Neither of these acquisitions dramatically changed the library, but they did begin to indicate a new direction. Through his purchase of resources, the Headteacher was implicitly making a statement about creating a warm, informal atmosphere which would entice children into the library. He was also thereby revealing something of his overarching educational philosophy.

Chance played a significant role in the arrival of a County Circular from Brooksby Agricultural College offering collections of house plants at significantly reduced price. The purchase of such a collection each year considerably enhanced the Headteacher's Room, the entrance hall and the library. The building had hitherto been devoid of plants and the splash
of colour and life they introduced, in the Headteacher's view considerably enhanced the environment. The children associated these plants with the Headteacher, a phenomenon which is explored in more depth in Chapter Six.

Throughout the three years the Headteacher and the caretaker sought to improve the quality of the furniture in the school through renovation and replacement. Sets of desks and chairs were replaced, new cupboards and bookshelves purchased and furniture rationalised. All of the furniture was of a mature vintage constructed entirely of wood and its age was a testimony to years of careful use. The Headteacher considered it antique but adequate and financial strictures precluded wholesale replacement. The tour of inspection by a prospective new father in March 1983, however, suggested the importance of the visual impact of this furniture may have been underestimated. On looking around one of the mobile classrooms he enquired of the Headteacher, "do you like these decrepit desks? The school where my daughter is now, has bright formica topped tables!"

Clearly financial considerations are of paramount importance in the provision of resources and the latitude to create a particular atmosphere is dictated by the funds available. By the summer of 1983 it was obvious that no finance would be forthcoming to complete the transformation of the library - the bean bags were wearing out and the square of carpet looking rather forlorn. Comfortable easy chairs and curtains would have the desired effect in the view of the teaching staff and the Parent Teacher Association Committee agreed to finance the purchases. These were the very first purchases of the newly formed P.T.A. and as such took on symbolic dimensions in their eyes. Subsequent problems involving the chairs falling apart reinforced the relationship between non-human resources and the people who have a vested interest in them. Thus the selection of material artefacts reflects human interaction and subsequently influences future social relationships.

A variety of equipment was secured during the three years. It was either purchased from central funds at the instigation of the Headteacher or financed from the school's capitation allowance at the Headteacher's discretion. The significance of the equipment appears to relate to its capacity to increase the efficiency of human resources or to provide an additional dimension to the life of the school. To illustrate this observation, the arrival of a heat copier in 1981 and subsequently a
photocopier in 1983 obviated a good deal of typing and facilitated the reproduction of an increased amount of resource material. In this way the Secretary and ancillary had more time to devote to a wider range of tasks. The introduction of a BBC micro computer into the school in 1983 readily exemplifies the effect of one piece of equipment in providing another dimension. The educational and professional ramifications of computer assisted learning are discussed in Chapter Two. The purchase of an overhead projector also had greater consequences than was at first imagined. For example, by using the overhead projector in assembly instead of hymn books, much of the confusion and noise in young children finding pages and dropping books was avoided. The visibility of assemblies increased by inviting parents each Friday and organisation of the event may have contributed to their image of the school.

The Headteacher's ability to compete successfully for resources has obvious consequences for the other participants' views of him. During the winters of 1981/1982 and 1982/1983 the infant teachers frequently complained about the inadequacy of the heating system in their areas. The Headteacher made numerous representations to County Hall and individual radiators were replaced without much success in raising the temperatures. During a particularly cold spell in December 1982 additional mobile gas heaters had to be installed. It seemed to the Headteacher that the infant teachers felt that he was not making sufficient effort to improve the situation. The impasse was resolved by the Authority's undertaking to completely replace the heating system in the extension at a cost of approximately £3500. The work was finally completed in January 1984. Once again the provision of resources involved a multiplicity of groups and individuals and had ramifications far beyond their immediate pragmatic function. In a similar way the Headteacher's performance in securing new equipment for the Secretary, Cook and Caretaker had important consequences for his relationship with these actors. Furthermore attention to detail in upgrading the fire alarm system and the electrical circuitry presented a particular image of the Headteacher and the school to the people concerned with these matters. Indeed the Headteacher experienced some anxiety in attempting to ensure the establishment complied with the Health and Safety Regulations and that he was competently discharging his responsibilities in this area.

Upon taking up his appointment in April 1981, the Headteacher entered a social situation manifesting certain objective facts beyond his
immediate control or influence. As has been elaborated at some length, Redland School was a unique aggregation of people, material provision and resources, reflecting particular historical, geographical, educational and social considerations. In this way the new Headteacher did not enter a neutral social arena, but rather he was introduced into an ongoing organisation, whose dynamic it was his function to discover. Along with the other participants in the enterprise the Headteacher was confronted with a situation governed by social possibilism, in that the parameters described in this chapter represented the basic ingredients available.
References


Chapter Two

The positive interactions of intra-institutional participants

My definition of Redland School elucidated earlier reflects its manifest function, to educate children. The school curriculum provides the vehicle for this educative role, in fact, the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales believe that "the school curriculum is at the heart of education". In this chapter I propose to focus upon this deceptively simple contention by illustrating the personal, professional and social consequences of the school curriculum for the inhabitants of Redland School. Furthermore, the Secretaries assert that "the 5-16 curriculum cannot, and should not, remain static, but must respond to the changing demands made by the world outside the school. This sets a challenging task. Many schools are tackling it with success, as HM Inspectors' national surveys have shown. But the evidence from these surveys also reveals some serious weaknesses which require present practice to be substantially modified". This statement embodies a number explicit and implicit imperatives for a headteacher which can be expressed using the following cyclical model:

```
the school curriculum should be organic and responsive

further modifications in the light of these external assessments

external bodies (HMI) assess the efficacy of these modifications

schools should compare their current practice with an externally defined ideal

schools should modify their practice in the light of these comparisons
```

The Secretaries omit to define "curriculum", however, the HMI provide their definition in "A View of the Curriculum": "the curriculum in its full sense comprises all the opportunities for learning provided by a school. It includes the formal programmes of lessons in the timetable". As the title of the document implies, the curriculum can be viewed from a variety of standpoints and some of the alternatives are elaborated at some length in "Primary Practice". Briefly,
the curriculum can be seen as subjects, as a process, as the study of problems, as areas of knowledge and experience, or through a child's eyes. For the Headteacher of Redland, the *Primary Survey* proved to be the critical reality defining document on curriculum analysis and he adopted a classificatory framework based on its schedules, namely:

- language and literacy
- mathematics
- science
- aesthetics, including physical education
- social abilities, including religious education

Her Majesty's Inspectors provide further direction in the design of curriculum review, asserting that "when schools come to plan their detailed programmes of work, they need to be able to measure the adequacy of these programmes by reference to more specific objectives, some essential areas of understanding and experience to which all pupils need access, within their capacities. This directive, however, appears to dehumanise curriculum development, schools do not plan programmes of work, rather it is individuals within them that accomplish this task. This fact is acknowledged by the Secretaries - "what schools teach and achieve is largely a measure of the dedication and competence of the headteacher and the whole staff and the interest and support of the governing body." Indeed, HMI elsewhere acknowledge the unique contribution of particular individuals - "without exception the most important single factor in the success of ....... schools is the quality of leadership of the Head."

This cursory preamble has already introduced a number of theoretical and practical implications in the consideration of the curriculum of Redland School. In the succeeding pages I intend to illuminate some of these theoretical and philosophical concerns as a prelude to an account of what actually took place during the three years.

Upon taking up my appointment in April 1981 there appeared to be a greater lack of consensus with regard to the primary school curriculum than at any time in the past. Notwithstanding the pervasive influence of the seminal documents already referred to in this chapter, this lack of consensus may have reflected fundamental changes in the nature of primary education. It was also attributable "to the remarkable independence and autonomy enjoyed by schools in the United Kingdom, and partly due to the different circumstances and resources of individual schools." In this
way the curriculum of Redland was largely determined by the headteacher in the light of the human and material resources at his disposal. In theory the School Governors and Local Authority Advisers should have been involved in oversight of the curriculum, but in practice the headteacher enjoyed total autonomy.

Thus my curricular inheritance reflected my predecessor's educational philosophy, ideology and criteria of relevance and was summarized in a thirty page Schemes of Work booklet. Indeed, Mr Lake had been headmaster of the school for some thirteen years and the curriculum, resources and teaching styles of the staff reflected his traditional standpoint. It would seem that the essence of his regime is crystallised in this quotation - "I feel that the underlying philosophy is mine and that everything stems from this: the school organisation and the atmosphere generated are determined and controlled by this". His poignant final entry in the Log Book captured the flavour of his headmastership - "I should like to be remembered as a kind but firm Headmaster, who strove for high standards". In this way I did not enter a neutral educational situation, but rather inherited a traditionally organised curriculum arranged in discrete subject areas and based upon a teacher-dominated style of presentation, supported by time-honoured schemes of work. These arrangements represented the starting-point from which the curriculum had to be developed. "When the social situation changes, the system norms to which it had previously given birth ceases to be in harmony with it". The arrival of a new headteacher drastically altered the social situation.

It very rapidly became clear that Mr Lake and myself had dramatically different views of the primary school curriculum, reflecting our contrasting value systems. Thus the curriculum is not independent of people, as the tenor and style of quasi-official documents appear to suggest and curriculum review cannot be implemented without touching something unexpectedly human. For this reason it was imperative for the new headteacher to identify the hidden assumptions embodied in particular curricular objectives and to attempt to delineate the value system to which they were related. As well as seeking to improve the organisational infrastructure, I believed "we must deal with the often conflicting views and values of those acting within these structures". In this way the task of changing the curriculum of Redland School depended first upon uncovering the varieties of reality which individuals saw within the organisation and second, upon their acceptance of new ideas or objectives about what can be achieved through
social action. At the outset I knew little about either, but it was
clear I should understand the first before attempting to direct the
second.

For these reasons I devoted the first six months to a systematic attempt
to uncover the unique realities of the main actors in the curriculum
development exercise - the teachers. Retrospectively it is obvious the
teaching staff were simultaneously involved in uncovering my criteria of
relevance and constructing a composite view of my educational philosophy
and management style. Our first staff meeting provided a sign vehicle in
that I deviated from the time-honoured practice of holding staff meetings
at lunch-time and arranged it after school. This small organisational
change signified a change of expectation and definition of legitimate
professional demands. Furthermore, at this gathering each member of
staff, was invited to arrange an after-school meeting with the
headteacher to outline their curricular arrangements for the term and the
way in which they were discharging their scaled post responsibilities
throughout the school: My field notes for 29 April 1981 underestimate
the importance of this meeting. "Staff meeting was a bit of a
disappointment. My philosophical monologue creates little reaction". I
particularly remember emphasising the importance of the level of
expectations and citing the research of Rosenthal and Jacobson. In an
interview with Mrs Jordan some two years later, after she had left the
school, she identified that initial meeting as a significant event, in
that a pattern of regular after school staff meetings was established and
the notion of professional accountability was highlighted. Both these
considerations had important consequences for the manner in which
curriculum development was subsequently approached. It is also
noteworthy that the headteacher rather naively made these demands without
expecting significant dissent and was fortunate in that none was publicly
noted.

The initial round of individual meetings with the headteacher provided an
adjunct to his daily observations. Mrs Jordan, the Deputy headteacher,
was very enthusiastic about these new organisational arrangements and
provided useful background information about the school and its
inhabitants. The only group of people reluctant to meet me individually
were the three infant teachers and Miss Russell asked me to meet them as
a department. I readily acceded to this request and at the conclusion of
our joint meeting informed them that I would still like to interview them
individually. As Head of the Infant Department, Miss Russel had been
accustomed to running that section of the school as a separate entity
with minimal involvement from the previous headteacher. She obviously resented my prospective interference and quickly decided upon a course of unobtrusive non-cooperation. It would seem her worst fears were confirmed when I informed her at our meeting that I would like to accept "rising-five" children in future years, an arrangement she had successfully resisted for the past five years. She was also upset by my desire to be involved in the New Parents' Afternoon, which she had always organised by herself in the Infant Department. All the other members of staff responded positively to our individual meetings, albeit in a variety of different ways. For example, Mr Williams grasped the opportunity to attempt to persuade me to buy some new hymn books he had been wanting for some time and Mrs Jennings sought to enlist my help in her applications for deputy headships. These early months were a continuous process of bargaining and coalition among individuals. Some coalitions turned out to be viable, conferring upon members the opportunity to redefine their behaviour in relation to each other. The headteacher's claim to legitimate institutional power had important consequences in this context in that he had access to professional and material resources to support his view of reality. The Early Education Adviser was called in to assist him in his deliberations about the Infant Department in general and his plan of campaign on the "rising fives issue". The social situation was simplified immeasurably my Miss Russel's timely marriage announcement and consequent transfer to London. In a matter of weeks it had become apparent that Miss Russel posed an obstacle to the implementation of new organisational and curriculum structures, both at a personal and a professional level. The two other Infant teachers were recent appointments to the staff and after Miss Russel's departure became eminently more co-operative. In this way the capriciousness of chance smiled on the plans of the new headteacher, as a possible disjuncture in any new arrangements had been removed.

The foregoing discussion illustrates that before embarking on a programme of curriculum reform, time had to be devoted to uncovering the human foundations of existing practices. "Organisations incorporate a multiplicity of ends, and uncertain means for achieving them". Thus the curriculum was not a neutral framework called into existence to educate the pupils of Redland School, rather it appeared to me to be the coherence of individual versions of reality, particularly reflecting the philosophy of past, institutionally powerful, participants. My aim was to improve organisational effectiveness by mapping these individual versions of reality and attempting to anticipate possible threats to the construction of more effective objectives. This task obviously involved
developing the commitment of people to these new objectives, incorporating where possible the means they considered effective for achieving them. The mechanics of this process will be discussed later in the chapter.

As a precursor to an account of the development of the curriculum at Redland School, this brief introduction serves to raise a number of significant, related questions. Who decides organisational objectives should be modified? Who decides what these organisational objectives should be? Who believes he knows how to act to achieve them? The short answer is the new headteacher. Thus curriculum development is not the amendment of abstract subject matter, but rather the interaction of diverse human beliefs in the context of unequal legitimate and illegitimate social power.

As indicated above the headteacher sought to use the first months to assess the health of the school curriculum. He endeavoured to involve as many external consultants as possible in this process, both to complement his own assessments and to make the teaching staff aware that systematic observations were being carried out. A University lecturer, a headteacher colleague, the deputy headteacher and the Chairman of Governors were enlisted to help in this way. The process became particularly meaningful in the September (1981), when an HMI and a Leicestershire Primary Adviser both made day-long visits at the headteacher's invitation. From the headteacher's standpoint these visits were invaluable as these two men had keenly analytical minds and operationalised tested observational procedures in analysing the curriculum of Redland School. Furthermore the headteacher was in the enviable position of being able to accord them total access and honesty without having to accept any responsibility for inadequate performance. Indeed their comments and recommendations provided a solid foundation from which to institute organisational reform. In this way the legitimate power of inhabitants of other educational strata was used to influence the behaviour of teachers at the institutional level. This phenomenon once again illustrates the unequal professional weaponry at the disposal of different participants, albeit the headteacher may be reluctant to introduce powerful external actors into the situation at a later stage for obvious reasons! The HMI's visit in particular furnished clear imperatives for action. He likened the existing curriculum document to wallpaper—"it is decorative but will not hold up the structure." He dictated the following list of recommendations:

-69-
1. Review and rewrite the curriculum guidelines.

2. Redesignate the scaled posts, emphasising curriculum leadership rather than clerical responsibilities.

4. Liaise with the High School on curriculum guidelines and transfer procedures.

5. Make more use of the school grounds.

6. Capitalise on experiences derived from residential field-study trips.

He also left a list of recommended reading on the school curriculum.

By the October of 1981 the headteacher felt he had constructed a comprehensive assessment of the curricular arrangements at Redland School. His personal observation, teaching and social interactions provided one strand of this assessment. The performance of pupils sampled by standardised tests and measures furnished another dimension and as recounted above the perceptions of "significant others" afforded the final element of the equation and introduced a measure of objectivity into his deliberations. Interestingly, the field notes refer to the reinforcing nature of these objective assessments, which indicates they were consonant with his own views and consequently were perceived as very sound. Furthermore, implicit imperatives for action were inherent in the observations of HMI Smith and Mr Saville, particularly in the light of their imminent return. Thus external pressure was being focussed on to the headteacher, which he in turn reflected on to the staff and the children. These externally initiated demands could also be used by the headteacher to blur the identification of who was actually bringing pressure to bear and afforded the opportunity to develop a team building response to perceived extra-school pressure.

In this way the actors stood on the threshold of a period of rapid development in curriculum matters. However, the headteacher was faced with a number of fundamental and interrelated decisions before this process could commence. It was his responsibility to stand back from the day-to-day minutiae and take a long term view of where the school was going, or at the very least where he wanted it to go, and to construct an appropriate hierarchy of objectives. "Because it is impossible to advance on all fronts at once, it is he who must decide which are most vulnerable, or most productive. He must orchestrate progress so that the
school develops an entity"13. It was readily apparent, however, that in a small organisation like Redland School, it would be difficult to achieve sound institutional objectives without developing the harmonious interrelationship of individual teacher's objectives. Lack of harmony, as Miss Russell's example illustrated, rapidly became obvious as the feedback loop was fairly short. Thus the headteacher's management style and theory of organisation dictated the manner and modus operandi of curriculum development and it seemed had to be partially established before serious curriculum deliberations commenced. It may be that this belief reflected the headteacher's own academic background and experience as a deputy headteacher. "Behaviour is a function of experience"14.

In short, objectives had to be identified and a strategy developed to realise them.

In retrospect I would see my management style as an ongoing negotiation with the people around me and one which elaborated over time. Clearly it reflected my personal theory of organisation which was much simpler to identify. I viewed myself as a disciple of the "human relations approach" and an advocate of Douglas McGregor's Theory Y. "The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest. Man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed. The average human being learns under proper conditions not only to accept, but to seek responsibility"15. Without over-endulging in self-analysis, I feel my desire to involve my colleagues by democratising some decision-making and encouraging participation, may have been inspired by Geoffrey Holroyde's strategy at Sidney Stringer School16. Notably he appeared to implement participation as a method of gaining commitment to pre-arranged objectives. The key question re-appears - who sets the objectives? Thus my attachment to the human relations school may have had pragmatic as well as philosophical origins. Nevertheless, the desire to involve teachers in objective setting and curriculum review necessitated the construction of a particular organisational structure and management style.

A retrospective description of the development of this management style may not fully reflect its "ad hoc" elements and the influence of chance circumstances. For example, at the commencement of the 1981 Autumn Term a letter arrived from the Director of Education charging the staff with the responsibility of producing a School Prospectus in accordance with the 1980 Education Act. This request necessitated an immediate response
and provided a perfect vehicle for initiating staff discussion on the internal organisation and curriculum of Redland School. The teachers were split into three sub-groups, according to the age-group of their class, and I asked them to prepare a written response for inclusion in the proposed prospectus. I met the groups separately and we all came together to prepare the final document. This exercise was necessarily cursory and somewhat superficial, nevertheless it provided a rough template for future co-operative planning and created a precedent for teacher consultation. This document also provided a negotiated starting point from which to undertake curriculum development.

A participatory management style clearly requires the commitment of the people involved in the enterprise. Obviously as the principal designer, the headteacher's commitment to his own schemes was axiomatic and the next most important participant was the Deputy, Mrs Jordan. The Headteacher and Mrs Jordan had many formal and informal meetings during the first six months and Mrs Jordan had been fully involved in almost every area of decision making and policy design. By October 1981 the School Prospectus had been completed and the advice of H.M.I. Smith and Mr Saville had been digested. I had completed my initial assessments and the time had arrived to construct and operationalise a coherent programme of curriculum development. Mathematics appeared to be the area of the curriculum most urgently requiring review and overhaul. Interestingly, no member of staff had a post of responsibility for Mathematics and the management style I was seeking to develop required a curriculum leader in this area. Thus as a precursor to curriculum review it appeared necessary to redesignate staff responsibilities.

Upon taking up my appointment the designation of scale posts was as follows:-

Mrs Jordan - Deputy Headteacher - Language
Miss Russel - Scale 2 - 1/C Infant Department
Mrs Morgan - Scale 2 - Girls' Games
Mrs Wood - Scale 2 - Art and Display
Mr Williams - Scale 2 - Library
Mr Andrews - Scale 2 - Boys' Games
Mrs Jennings - Scale 2 - Music
Mrs Edwards - Scale 1
Miss Russell had left Redland at the end of the Summer Term and had been replaced by Mr Green on a one year temporary contract, as pupil numbers were falling. The talents and interests of the staff did not provide an obvious curriculum leader in Mathematics and I felt it efficacious to deploy my strongest teacher in this area - Mrs Jordan. This choice also had the advantage of increasing Mrs Jordan's commitment by employing her as the co-ordinator/leader of our first curriculum review exercise. Furthermore, I strongly suspected Mrs Jennings would prove a more effective curriculum leader than Mrs Jordan in the area of language. I conducted delicate private negotiations with Mrs Jordan and asked for her redesignation suggestions. Fortunately being the enthusiastic, professional person she is, she welcomed the challenge of responsibility for a "new" curriculum area and together we constructed a "trade-off strategy" to encourage the assent of other people for the planned changes. In retrospect Mrs Jordan may have perceived the instrumental value of the title "Mathematics Co-Ordinator" on her headship application forms. Similarly Mrs Jennings viewed her scale post redesignation as helpful to her deputy headship aspirations. The "trade-off" for Mrs Wood and Mrs Morgan involved my decision to amend their posts without making one or the other 1/C Infant Department. These considerations illustrate that curriculum concerns are closely related to the exercise of legitimate institutional power in conjunction with the dictates of self interest.

I raised the question of scale post responsibilities in my round of Autumn Term individual staff appraisal interviews. In the appropriate cases I implemented the "trade-off strategy" and each member of staff approved the proposed redesignation or extension of their scale post. Having obtained the approval of the Chairman of Governors, responsibilities were re-apportioned in the following way:-

Mrs Jordan - Deputy Headteacher - Mathematics
Mrs Morgan - Scale 2 - Reading
Mrs Wood - Scale 2 - Art, Display and Infant Induction
Mr Williams - Scale 2 - Library and Religious Education
Mr Andrews - Scale 2 - Physical Education and Science
Mrs Jennings - Scale 2 - Music, Language and Social Studies
Mr Green - Scale 1 - Assisting with Science

My curriculum development strategy involved devoting a school term to each area and systematically working through all these designated areas of experience over a five year period. The curriculum leader and I would
lead school-based in-service training and outside agents would be involved where appropriate. Curriculum leaders would be encouraged to attend short, or even long, courses and observe good practice in other schools. I determined to attempt to keep abreast of developments in primary education through reading and attending courses and seminars in order to encourage curriculum leaders to review their thinking. I was also very aware of my own inadequacies in certain curriculum areas and realised the professional necessity and instrumental value of personal development. Furthermore, the curriculum review exercise would produce written guidelines, documenting the process and identifying directions for future development. I was also dimly aware at this point that I could manipulate curriculum development by retaining control of capitation expenditure, in other words by selectively purchasing materials and resources which were in keeping with the experiences I sought to promote. Retention of tight control of the capitation allowance appears to contradict a participatory management style!

As an introduction I have summarised the chronology of curriculum development at Redland in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>AREA OF INTEREST</th>
<th>CURRICULUM LEADER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer '81</td>
<td>Assessing my curricular inheritance</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn '81</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mrs Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring '82</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Mrs Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer '82</td>
<td>Topic Work – Redland Study</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn '82</td>
<td>Pupil record folder</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art and Display</td>
<td>Mrs Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring '83</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Mr Andrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer '83</td>
<td>Dance and Drama – Kaleidoscope</td>
<td>Mrs Jordan/Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn '83</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Mrs Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing a language policy</td>
<td>Mr Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring '84</td>
<td>Curriculum In Action</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An account of the mathematics review, led by Mrs Jordan, illustrates the complexity of curriculum development and exemplifies the evolving approach at Redland. Mrs Jordan and I planned a strategy based on the following model:

Stage 1 - Evaluate present arrangements
Stage 2 - Identify overarching aims
Stage 3 - Construct operational objectives
Stage 4 - Purchase appropriate materials and resources  
Stage 5 - Implement and monitor agreed procedures  
Stage 6 - Evaluate the performance of children and teachers  
Stage 7 - Modify arrangements accordingly  

Following an introductory staff meeting, teachers were divided into three groups, according to the age of their classes, and asked to make a written response to stages 2 and 3. Mrs Jordan attended sub-meetings and negotiated a consensus statement at a full staff meeting. In practice most of the objectives closely resembled those circulated by the County Mathematics Adviser. The six best selling mathematics schemes were acquired on a trial basis for a term and teachers were asked to cover certain topics with their class, using a variety of the materials. In this way the schemes were compared on specific areas of mathematical experience and in relation to our agreed aims and objectives. The Mathematics Adviser was invited to illuminate our deliberations and a number of full staff meetings were held. I arranged to visit our High School in order to develop a dialogue with their Mathematics Department. After careful consideration a decision was made and a new scheme ordered.  

At the theoretical level this model of curriculum review can be characterised as scientific and could be advertised as an attempt at coherent educational management. In practice a number of pragmatic considerations tarnish its coherence and neatness. In fact, the exercise had to be undertaken without the leadership of a mathematician at Redland. The Mathematics Adviser consistently avoided making any evaluative judgements on the relative merits of the competing schemes or indeed on the construction of a mathematics programme. Indeed his experience had been exclusively in secondary and higher education. The High School Head of Mathematics was using a scheme of work which was decades out of date and responded somewhat negatively to the offer of consultation and co-operation. The joint decision making process with regard to the purchase of a new scheme was dominated by those people wielding the greatest amount of informal institutional power in the staffroom, notably Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings. The "trade-off" strategy dictated that the headteacher in general allowed democracy to take its course and in particular provided Mrs Jordan with the latitude he believed she ought to enjoy. Furthermore, financial and educational considerations dictated that stages 4 and 5 were deferred till September 1982, almost nine months after the curriculum review. The most important question appears to be, did this curriculum review actually affect the mathematical experiences of the children of Redland School?
Implementation and evaluation were the problematic stages in this curriculum innovation, a common finding as the work of Gross et al clearly illustrates. The short term effects were difficult to assess as there was general agreement that the current scheme should be used until the end of the academic year. Nevertheless teachers had been challenged to re-appraise their practice. Mrs Jordan quickly enrolled for a whole series of mathematical courses and avidly read any books purchased for the expanding staff library. Her attendance on courses dealing with the use of calculators, real problem-solving and the introduction of the computer had developmental ramifications for the school. Firstly, she reported back to the staff, secondly calculators and a computer were purchased and thirdly she encouraged other staff to attend the same courses. Furthermore, it could be argued her dynamic personal example inspired other teachers to review their practice and attend courses. Indeed both Mr Andrews and Mrs Jennings enrolled on a two-year, part-time Mathematics Diploma Course in September of 1982. The introduction of the new mathematics scheme also necessitated changes in tried and tested practices. Its systematic content and in-built record keeping component made it more 'teacher-proof' than the old scheme and ensured a more even mathematical diet throughout the school. The publication of the Cockcroft Report added impetus to our policy of using structural apparatus and initiated another burst of spending on appropriate equipment for each classroom. Mrs Jordan also involved her class in a radio programme devoted to a problem solving approach to mathematics and by winning the related competition the children earned a treasure chest full of equipment and a radio interview. This success had a reinforcing effect on the new direction mathematics in the school was taking. Therefore, for all these reasons, the mathematical experiences of children at Redland did indeed change over a period of two years, whether these changes were for the better very much depends on the standpoint and value system of the perceiver.

Evaluation depended predominantly on the subjective feelings of the class teacher and the headteacher. N.F.E.R. tests were used annually and the setting of our pupils upon arrival at High School provided a further crude measure of effectiveness. At a curriculum appraisal meeting (24.1.83) Mrs Jordan expressed her frustration at not really being able to observe what was going on in classrooms, although she felt mathematics in the school had improved. She also made the point that exciting, creative mathematics might not involve written recording and these experiences could not be on show at Parents' Evenings or Authority Inspections.
The mathematics curriculum review has been described at some lengths as it was the first in a series and also because it generates some pertinent questions and suggests some interesting answers. A question and answer dialogue might run along these lines.

Why was a curriculum review in mathematics undertaken?

The headteacher and a number of significant others deemed it necessary.

Who was the prime change agent in the process?

The headteacher initiated the review and designated Mrs Jordan as the curriculum leader. Her drive and enthusiasm carried the project through and involved other people.

What were the ramifications for the pupils of Redland?

The curriculum became broader and more interesting and involved much more practical work.

What were the implications of this pilot review for future curriculum development at Redland?

1. The quality of the change-agent is critical. Impetus can be generated and maintained by the change-agent's dynamic personal example.

2. The translation of the review into classroom practice depends heavily on the quality of the teacher.

3. All staff should be consulted in the planning stage and should be encouraged to make curriculum review an ongoing process.

4. Classroom practice can be influenced by the selective purchase of resources and materials. Curriculum development is financially expensive.

5. Evaluation is highly complex and becomes predominantly subjective. For these reasons every attempt should be made to involve external agencies.
6. Curriculum development is an organic and dynamic process and as such is a long-term exercise. The fruits of curriculum growth may take some time to appear and may reflect elements of chance.

My abiding conclusion, derived from this small case study in curriculum development, is that able teachers like Mr Jordan can quite readily be made even more effective, while other less talented or less motivated individuals tend to be largely untouched by the process. This rather depressing conclusion poses an interesting challenge to the management style and leadership qualities of the headteacher.

The above conclusions were reinforced and elaborated by the language review conducted by Mrs Jennings during the Spring Term of 1982. The model outlined earlier for the mathematics review was broadly adopted with the following modifications.

Stage 1 - The evaluation of present arrangements was conducted privately by the headteacher and Mrs Jennings.

Stages 2 & 3 - Full staff meetings and sub-group meetings contributed to these stages, however, the finished document almost entirely reflected the criteria of relevance of the headteacher and Mrs Jennings.

Stage 4 - The major problem was to liberate the language curriculum by actually withdrawing the materials the headteacher and Mrs Jennings considered inappropriate. Following clear statements of intent and staff in-service, expediency dictated that the headteacher destroy some of these inappropriate materials during the summer vacation of that year, in the hope that agreed policies would be utilised in their stead. New materials were also purchased.

Stages 5, 6 & 7 - Implementation of these stages represented an ongoing dialogue and negotiation over succeeding years. English Guidelines were produced and very clear directives were included, nevertheless a long term programme of re-education was necessary to wean some teachers away from certain incongruous spelling and comprehension programmes. Both Mrs Jennings and the headteacher developed a wide range of strategies to reinforce the changes they desired.

In retrospect the language review was much more prescriptive than its mathematical predecessor. This consideration may reflect Mrs Jennings' strength of character and the headteacher's growing confidence. The
reaction of the staff was less unanimous, superficial acceptance masked a
deep commitment to established language priorities and some teachers had
to be convinced at the theoretical and practical level. My strategy to
effect the re-education I deemed necessary was to manipulate resources,
positively reinforce Mr Jennings' good practice and systematically
involve external change agents. Indeed over the two succeeding years Mr
Saville and two advisory teachers for language were employed in this
way. One of these advisory teachers, Mr Smith, devoted a large
proportion of his time to Redland, working extensively with children,
teachers and parents. The involvement of these external change agents
had a number of consequences.

1. Their unqualified approval of the language guidelines document had a
   reinforcing effect on the headteacher and Mrs Jennings.

2. As language specialists they were able to monitor standards in the
   school.

3. They provided books, resources and materials.

4. They introduced an element of objectivity into our deliberations.

5. They were able to work alongside teachers in the classroom.

At a personal level I found the contribution of these three men both
stimulating and educative as they challenged me to refine my own thinking
about language and provided appropriate literature to illuminate these
deliberations. Their continued presence in the school also elaborated
the opportunities for mutual monitoring and thus generally had a
galvanising effect upon myself and other staff. Their contribution in
the area of curriculum and staff evaluation was particularly helpful to
the headteacher.

In an attempt to accelerate staff re-education I invited Mr Smith to
conduct a series of afterschool staff seminars during the Autumn Term of
1983. He preceded these seminars with a confidential questionnaire,
aimed at highlighting current practice and uncovering perceived needs.
In reviewing the contribution of these seminars to the development of
language teaching at Redland, the following equation is helpful:
Once more the effect on pupil experience is the critical factor in any evaluation of the three year language review project. I was very rapidly impressed by the quality of Mrs Jennings' contribution, a salient consideration in her promotion to Deputy Headteacher in September 1983. Mr Saville and Mr Smith were also very impressed by Mrs Jennings, further reinforcement for the headteacher's perception. Mr Smith also highlighted the excellent practice he had observed in Mrs Morgan's classroom, a fact the head teacher had only been dimly aware of.

At the end of the first term during which the language review was conducted there appeared to be three levels of response from the teaching staff.

Level 1 - Unqualified enthusiasm, reflecting an open-minded commitment to the new policy document.

Level 2 - Passive acceptance - if this is what we have been asked to do we had better get on with it.

Level 3 - Active non-cooperation - "these children need regular spelling tests and comprehension exercises".

To summarise, the able teachers became more able, the average teachers improved marginally and the least able teachers remained largely unchanged. As the months passed and the variety of strategies was increased some improvements were observed. A key factor in the quality of curriculum development is the quality of the class teacher and this consideration severely complicates the uniform application of agreed policies.

It is noteworthy that during the language review process Mrs Jennings actively sought to lead staff debate, initiate private discussion and offer help and advice to individual teachers. She also attended courses.
and attempted to monitor language standards in the school. In short, she created a very active role for herself. At the same time I invited Mrs Morgan to re-organise the reading and she developed a very clerical approach, devoting most of her time to colour-coding the reading scheme and visiting the reading centre. She efficiently executed everything asked of her in an organisational sense but singularly failed to influence other members of staff. This comparison of leadership styles is the more surprising by virtue of the fact that at the social level I had identified Mrs Morgan as the strongest personality in the school.

During the Summer Term of 1982 I attempted to foster the concept of co-operative planning by organising a whole school topic based on the village of Redlands. The aim was to develop a thematic approach with individual teachers pursuing different aspects of the topic. I sought to give impetus and direction by drawing up a topic web of suggestions and by inviting the Environmental Studies and Drama Advisers to our planning meetings. A display of work for parents and governors represented a focal point to work towards. People were obliged to work together and in the main individual responses were of the order I anticipated. Either I was beginning to know the staff or unwittingly operationalising a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The chronological table presented earlier summarises the extent of the curriculum development undertaken during the three years and a number of factors require amplification. Mathematics, language, topic work and the construction of a pupil record folder were the headteacher's initial priorities and the inclusion of Art and Display in the Autumn Term of 1982 reflects a particular set of circumstances. In the headteacher's view the standards of art were not of the highest order and the decorative condition of the building, described at some length in Chapter One, did not improve the aesthetic quality of the work on display. Nevertheless, the greatest motivating force for curriculum review in these areas arrived in the shape of a complaining mother at the June '82 Parents Evening. She came into my room clutching some of her daughter's pictures and informed me her husband was a Staff HMI with responsibility for Art and that they were far from impressed with this area of the curriculum at Redland. The spectre of accountability loomed large and efforts were made the next term to improve the situation. Notwithstanding, the most significant strides in art education and display were taken by appointing Mrs Cromwell, who transformed the school in a matter of weeks during the Spring Term of 1984.
Mr Andrews was charged with the responsibility of initiating a programme of scientific work, very little Science was actually being done. His response was to develop a clerical approach, he commenced by building up boxes of materials for particular topics. Staff meetings were held and I found myself working desperately hard to initiate discussion and draw conclusions. At my suggestion the Science Adviser was involved and her contribution proved to be of little value. Eventually an inadequate scheme of work was produced which provided little direction or excitement. Despite numerous promptings, Mr Andrews failed to improve the content and ultimately after token consultation with him, I purchased a commercially produced scheme of work and the associated equipment. The main criterion for the purchase of this scheme was that it was 'teacher-proof', as it provided the basis for at least rudimentary scientific experiences. In theoretical terms my strategy could be heavily criticised but at the practical level children were now actually having scientific experiences. I introduced the scheme in the infant classes and encouraged Mr Andrews to set a positive example with his class.

A county circular invited schools to participate in the Festival of Drama and Dance at the Haymarket Theatre in June 1983. I was very eager to take part and I persuaded Mrs Jordan that it would be an exciting experience for the children and staff involved. I was also aware that the Director of Education was very committed to these areas of the curriculum. The Drama Adviser co-ordinated the production and Mrs Jordan and myself prepared our contribution. The unexpected outcome of the success of our participation was the level of interest generated amongst pupils, parents and other staff. Dance lessons began to appear and the staff asked for direction from the Drama Adviser. This direction took the physical form of a peripatetic dance teacher working with all the teachers for two terms. In this way dance insinuated itself into the curriculum without premeditated design or planning. Similarly Olympic Gymnastics exerted an influence through the children attending my extra-curricular club rehearsing certain skills in class P.E. lessons. Staff asked to be shown how to develop these skills and my final four staff meetings were devoted to this area.

The complexity of isolating causation in the assessment of curriculum development encouraged the purchase of the Open University "Curriculum in Action" Pack. The course is designed to help teachers focus upon exactly what is happening in their classroom. The materials were introduced
during Spring '84 and teachers were encouraged to closely monitor the experiences of two children in their class. The insights derived from these observations were very illuminating and more extensive use of the pack had been envisaged during the Summer Term. Clearly evaluation and re-appraisal is an ongoing task in the wake of curriculum innovation, however, the time scale of the observation period precluded any comprehensive post-implementation evaluation.

In providing this brief account of three years of curriculum development at Redland a number of conclusions emerge. The pace and direction of this development is very much in the headteacher's control, albeit in consultation with others. All the stages in the procedure involve the headteacher - he designates the curriculum leader, creates the management structure, approves the setting of objectives, purchases materials and resources, decides on the involvement of external agents, approves in-service attendance and implements evaluation. He personally or vicariously directs the operation and has the power of veto at any stage. Subsequently he promotes and defends the arrangements at appropriate times. This headteacher prided himself on his participatory, consultative management style, however, recourse to the earlier summary instantly reveals his domination of the exercise. Further study of this summary indicates that Mrs Jordan, Deputy Headteacher, and Mrs Jennings, Deputy Headteacher elect, were both called upon to lead two areas of curriculum review while a number of teachers did not lead any. The subsequent section on staff development should provide some background data to this phenomenon, nevertheless, inequalities in status and commitment are indicated. In the headteacher's view a constantly recurring theme was that at a simplistic level, excellent teachers can readily be made even more effective, average teachers can be steadily improved and underachieving teachers consistently misunderstand or ignore curriculum initiatives. Indeed even when total school-based programmes are aimed at underachieving teachers they remain largely unaffected and quickly revert to their trusted, ineffective practices. These considerations sharpen the importance of developing infallible interviewing and appointment techniques. They also dictate that fail-safe strategies have to be designed to minimise the damage inflicted by underachieving teachers, resources have to be manipulated and "fool-proof" schemes of work introduced. The most taxing, frustrating aspect of the teacher-underachievement phenomenon is that the headteacher is obliged to remain unfailingly positive and should constantly be seeking to improve teacher performance. Indeed the
The greatest danger is that the headteacher can unwittingly construct self-fulfilling prophecies for the staff.

The foregoing account also indicates that curriculum development may be initiated by a variety of participants and at a number of levels, namely:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATOR</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>individual teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colleague</td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>headteacher</td>
<td>L.E.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adviser</td>
<td>national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This consideration highlights the link between curriculum development and personal career development. It is noteworthy that the three principal functionaries at Redland, identified earlier, have all been promoted during the past twelve months. In this way the concept of the professional "trade-off" gathers credence - teachers develop curricula because it is an intrinsically motivating exercise, but may also have an eye on its utility in terms of promotion. The underachieving teacher may not find either the curriculum or professional advancement a motivating force. Furthermore, curriculum development depends on unique individuals with specific talents and abilities, in a defined location at a particular time: chance plays its part!

"The dilemma between individual needs and organisation demands is a basic continual problem posing an eternal challenge to the leader. How is it possible to create an organisation in which individuals may obtain optimum expression and, simultaneously, in which the organisation itself may obtain optimum satisfaction of its demands?"¹⁹ I commenced my headship as an advocate of the human relations approach to management and rather naively assumed that everybody would respond to McGregor's Theory Y.¹⁵ I believed that improving the quality of pupil experience was my highest priority and the aforementioned programme of curriculum review and development was designed to this end. A positive, stimulating, exciting educational environment had to be created in which the personal potential of each participant could be developed. Thus the raison d'être for institutional development was personal growth. Paradoxically the children were the easiest participants to develop while the adults involved in the exercise proved more problematic.
Staff development can be self-induced or thrust upon people by the headteacher and outside agents. Following the individual meetings I had with the teaching staff during the first term, I sought to make these interviews a termly occurrence and viewed them as the basis of my staff development. I also endeavoured to advance an "open door policy" encouraging both teaching and non-teaching staff to initiate dialogue on matters of mutual interest. Another element of this strategy involved making time to visit teachers in their classrooms after school, as well as when the children were there. In this way I sought to make a personal relationship with all the adults in the school. At the outset it proved easiest to become acquainted with the Secretary, Mrs Holmes, as we were working closely and she introduced me to some of the mysteries of form-filing. In return, I attempted to simplify her role, not least by finding her an office, and in this way the web of mutual obligation developed. It is possible that unlike the teachers she did not feel professionally threatened and could afford to be open and friendly. Mrs Comfrey, the ancillary assistant, presented herself similarly and her warm, gregarious nature eased my entree into the staffroom. Indeed upon reflection, I made more effort to get to know the non-teaching staff than the teachers. I believe this phenomenon revealed an uncertainty in how to deal with this group of participants in the school, as this was an area for which my past experience had not prepared me. As time passed it became obvious that meaningful staff development relies upon the treatment of people as individuals, nevertheless the development of non-professional and professional participants embraces essential differences.

Non-professional staff development in a small institution is complicated by the variety of roles and tasks the target population undertake. The Caretaker's concerns may not be the same as those of the School Secretary, however, all these people share the desire to enjoy their work, feel valued and operate in the best conditions the situation can provide. The absence of regular non-professional staff meetings can reduce the headteacher's contact with these actors to a series of "ad hoc" encounters, which are often prompted by the existence of specific problems. Furthermore, improving the Cook's culinary talents, the Secretary's typing or the Caretaker's cleaning methods is beyond the scope of the headteacher's range of competence and for this reason his effect upon them is largely at the periphery of their role. The head-'teacher' can make legitimate demands with regard to the quality of their performance but may have little experience or understanding of the
factors involved. In this way the headteacher's main contribution to non-teaching staff is through regulating their working environment and interrelationships.

The Caretaker felt on some occasions that teachers made his work more difficult and in such instances the headteacher was required to negotiate an amicable compromise in order to perpetuate good staff relationships. The whole area of the resolution of conflicts is examined in some detail in Chapter Three. It is noteworthy that none of the non-teaching staff sought promotion during the observation period, nor did they intend to in the future and this consideration appears to have important ramifications for the school. Notably development cannot occur by virtue of changes in personnel and social relationships are likely to have very long-term consequences. For these reasons the headteacher deemed it important to seek to encourage every participant to operate at their full potential and contribute to an atmosphere of mutual understanding. I attempted to clarify working interrelationships by constructing role-definitions for all the participants and by mediating in demarcation disputes. Every attempt was made to develop commitment to the school by fully involving all participants in all its activities. Everybody was invited to participate in staff social events or to have lunch with the governors as part of the general team-building exercise.

Professional staff development is closely related to curriculum and institutional development. As outlined earlier the headteacher's strategy involved arranging individual, termly interviews with every teacher. In the early stages I viewed this mechanism as an opportunity to explore the background and professional preferences of each member of staff and analyse their personal strengths and weaknesses. The first meeting was essentially exploratory and the Autumn Term round was devoted to a discussion of their class list. The manner in which each teacher talked about the children in his or her class proved particularly revealing and their underlying personal constructs became manifestly obvious. During the Autumn Term of 1981 we were heavily involved in scale post redesignation meetings and these interviews provided another strand in the analysis of strengths and weaknesses. The following term I devoted these personal interviews to a discussion about career development and at the conclusion of this round of meetings I believed I had a clear personal profile of each member of staff. Succeeding termly interviews took a variety of forms but steadily progressed to more evaluative events. On a number of occasions the publication "Starting
Points in Self-Evaluation provided the basis for meeting and my emerging management tactic can best be described as a "compliment sandwich". That is to say, commence and conclude the interview with a compliment and use to middle section to highlight areas of concern. The "filling" was intended to include an explicit directive for action.

The evolving staff development strategy can be summarised in the following way.

1. Analyse individual strengths and weaknesses.

2. Maximise the impact of these strengths throughout the whole school.

3. Minimise weaknesses and seek to convert them to strengths through:

   (a) school-based in-service training

   (b) L.E.A.-based in-service training

   (c) award-bearing courses

   (d) observation of good practice

   (e) reading

   (f) six-week sabbaticals

4. Review progress on a termly basis.

By the summer of 1982 a more coherent staff developing policy was emerging and I finally realised that 3b was a crucial element in the strategy which could not be allowed to rely on a teacher happening to read the staff notice board. At this stage I adopted an interventionist approach and reviewed all the course circulars myself and distributed them to appropriate member of staff. "Appropriateness" was defined in terms of the curriculum development needs of the school and the professional development of the individual teacher. I usually asked for a reply within twenty-four hours in order to guarantee gaining a place on popular courses. During the Autumn Term of 1982, for example, fourteen L.E.A. courses, involving some thirty-four sessions, were attended by the teachers of Redland. This level of attendance indicated a high level of
staff commitment and included every member of the teaching staff. Subsequently the level of course attendance diminished slightly as quality and appropriateness were emphasised at the expense of quantity.

Staff development may be initiated by the variety of people and at the number of levels indicated in the table on curriculum development, nevertheless its efficacy ultimately resides in the individual's personal response. I believe it would be unethical and unprofessional to be too specific about the negative aspects of staff development at Redland and I intend to focus predominantly on the positive elements in an attempt to draw general conclusions.

Mrs Jordan approached the whole exercise with great energy and enthusiasm. She readily acceded to my request to become the mathematics curriculum leader and immediately sought out appropriate courses, sources of help and useful literature. She returned from courses with a desire to spread the gospel and share her expertise. She was involved in charting the direction of Redland School and was privy to the headteacher's private thoughts. In short, she was totally involved in the management of the school. By leading the mathematics review Mrs Jordan increased her professional and personal confidence and began to develop a range of management skills. This confidence encouraged her to undertake the production of the school's contribution to Kaleidoscope and the overwhelming success of this event further strengthened her positive self-image. Mrs Jordan was subsequently appointed to a headship after the minimum three year period as a deputy.

Mrs Jennings actively sought responsibility and viewed the arrival of a new headteacher as an opportunity to increase her range of competence. Mrs Jennings was applying for deputy headships during the first two years of the observation period. Her talents in Music, Language and Social Studies are obvious, but her classroom lacked aesthetic appeal. This fact was brought to her attention by the headteacher and she responded in the most positive manner. In 1982 she enrolled for a Mathematics Diploma Course in order to further increase her professional competence. I was particularly impressed by the manner in which she conducted the Language and Social Studies curriculum reviews, her clarity of purpose and sensitive direction were of the highest order. Furthermore, Mrs Jennings enlisted the headteacher's assistance in her quest after promotion, avidly reading all the books he provided and discussing at great length the role of deputy headship. Her greatest attribute was her outstanding
class teaching ability and upon Mrs Jordan's promotion, Mrs Jennings was appointed as her successor. This appointment is discussed in Chapter Four.

Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings both represent obvious examples of successful staff development, however, a number of implicit considerations require amplification. They were both very able, enthusiastic and committed teachers at the outset and the aim of the exercise was to firstly improve their professional range and secondly to disseminate their expertise for the overall benefit of the whole school. In both cases management skills were developed as an adjunct to class-teaching excellence. Furthermore, it must be noted that by increasing their professional competence they were enhancing their promotion prospects. It could be argued that they both identified the rules of the headteacher's "staff development game" and entered into an implicit "trade-off strategy". My personal belief is that they found their work intrinsically motivating, but at the same time were not unaware of its promotional utility. They also made good relationships with the headteacher at the personal level and the reciprocity involved in providing each other with a positive self-image further strengthened these relationships. Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings often worked together in a co-operative planning situation and this professional interaction also had a stimulating effect on each of them. In short, they were both ultimately the architects of their own professional development, they were highly motivated and very talented and they received the promotions they deserved. Ipso facto, excellent teachers can readily be made more effective!

Personal confidence may also be an important consideration in staff development. Mr Andrews commenced his career at Redland in 1980 and at the commencement of the observation period appeared to be a social isolate, painfully shy and extremely diffident. The headteacher attempted to make a relationship with him based on their common interest in sport and he also asked Mrs Jordan to make a concerted effort to integrate Mr Andrews into the staff. The most significant event in Mr Andrews' development was his marriage in the summer of 1982. Subsequently, his personal confidence increased dramatically and he enrolled for the Mathematics Diploma Course. His school teams also began to experience unprecedented success, a fact which made him very popular with the parents of the children involved and this enhanced his self-image. Mrs Andrews also began to apply extrinsic motivation, encouraging him to apply for promotion and he gained two deputy headship
Interviews in the autumn of 1983. His improving professional performance was congruent with his increasing confidence and new desire to gain promotion. Clearly in this case the most significant factor in his development, his marriage, was beyond the scope of the headteacher.

It is axiomatic that the basis of staff development is the individual teacher's desire to be an active agent in the process. Hoyle's "restricted and extended models of professionality" encapsulate the essential dichotomy between the polar extremes of the teaching force at Redland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restricted Professionality</th>
<th>Extended Professionality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Perspective limited to the immediate</td>
<td>2. Perspective embracing the broader social context of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 'Classroom events' perceived in isolation</td>
<td>3. Classroom events perceived in relation to school policies and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Introspective with regard to methods</td>
<td>4. Methods compared with those of colleagues and with reports of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Value placed on autonomy</td>
<td>5. Value placed on professional collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Infrequent reading of professional literature</td>
<td>7. Regular reading of professional literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Involvement in in-service work limited and confined to practical courses</td>
<td>8. Involvement in in-service work considerable and includes courses of a theoretical nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teaching seen as an intuitive activity</td>
<td>9. Teaching seen as a rational activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The headteacher viewed the task of staff development as one involving the transformation of "restricted professionals" into "extended..."
professionals". Clearly these models are heuristic and individual teachers manifest attributes of both restricted and extended professionalism, however, in his view successful primary school management involved the headteacher in nurturing extended professionalism. This value judgement in itself may lay the foundations of ultimate frustration. As elaborated earlier the headteacher's initial task was to assess each teacher's degree of restriction and then to encourage them to move on from that point. Two teachers were constrained by varying degrees of inertia and a variety of strategies to induce movement were introduced during the observation period. The chronology of the headteacher's strategy progressed in the following way.

1. A clear statement of greater expectations to the whole staff.

2. Staff led curriculum development, harnessing the powerful motivating force of peer group pressure.

3. Headteacher interviews including elements of exhortation and evaluation.

4. The introduction of external evaluators and an increasing emphasis on accountability, particularly to parents and governors.

By the end of the three years the headteacher had very precise expectations for each member of staff. These expectations reflected elements based on rational evaluation of the teacher's background, professional performance and domestic circumstances, but increasingly also included subjective judgements and personal feelings. The first three years represented the honeymoon period and it appeared that meaningful staff development would become increasingly more difficult thereafter. I believe this conclusion reinforces the importance of radical action during the early years of a headship - a new headteacher having carefully assessed the school must capitalise on the expectation for change before social sedimentation occurs. Furthermore, if it will ultimately benefit the children in the school, he should operationalise the "trade-off phenomenon" at every opportunity.

The headteacher viewed himself as the catalyst for staff development, he organised school-based in-service training, invited in external change agents and sought to persuade teachers to attend appropriate L.E.A. - organised and award-bearing courses. Additionally staff development was
instigated collegially and at times accidentally, as the incremental inclusion of Dance teaching in the staff's professional repertoire exemplifies. Thus the headteacher was directly or indirectly involved in the majority of teaching and non-teaching staff development, indeed he viewed this involvement as an increasingly important part of his role and professional responsibility. He found these tasks at times very exciting and rewarding and at other times very demanding and frustrating. The pertinent question, however, is "who was responsible for the development of the major staff developer - the headteacher?" The County Advisers pursued a non-interventionist style and only visited a school by invitation and participation in Headteacher Seminar Groups was left to individual discretion. Therefore, the headteacher's own development was very much his own responsibility.

I believe that my professional and personal development during the three years was a function of the coherence of a number of planned and chance factors. The planned element involved registration for a PhD Degree at Loughborough University. I was obliged to attempt to keep abreast of current educational literature, motivated by self interest as well as professional necessity. The "trade-off phenomenon" was operating in a powerful manner. Collegial relationships and friendships provided invitations to Headteacher Seminar Groups and also furnished a source of tested recipe knowledge. My former headteacher and friend represented an important reference point and a trusted ally in my professional and personal deliberations. The depth of his experience and insight and the quality of his educational thinking supplied a very positive model and he proved to be a great reinforcement in the development of my own philosophy and management style. My relationship with Loughborough University resulted in an invitation to give a lecture to the Primary Management Course during the 1981 Summer School. The course tutor by chance mentioned this event to Mr Saville, the Primary Adviser, at a subsequent meeting. As a consequence Mr Saville visited Redland and invited me to give the same talk at the New Headteachers' Conference. This was my first meeting with Mr Saville and proved to be the start of a very fruitful relationship. It is noteworthy that Mr Saville and his two colleagues are responsible for approximately three hundred and sixty primary schools, spread over a large shire county. This fact led a jaundiced colleague to assert "you only see the advisers if you are very good or very bad!" Thus it was a rare occurrence, particularly in our geographical location, to have an adviser invite himself. My talk at the New Headteachers' Conference led to an annual invitation and was
instrumental in moving me into a close working relationship with Mr Saville. As I described earlier, Mr Saville made a significant contribution to the curriculum development process in the school and provided important moral support for the headteacher. Furthermore, he offered additional financial and human resources to expedite the procedure. In Spring 1983 Mr Saville invited the headteacher to be a member of the small group of headteachers the County was sending to study primary practice in French schools. The headteacher thoroughly enjoyed this experience, but more importantly perceived the invitation as a recognition of his professional competence. A subsequent invitation to be a founder member of a small group organised by Mrs Saville and Dr Pat Ashton, focussing on school-based in-service initiatives, further enhanced his self image and reinforced his professional resolve.

At the commencement of my headship I felt very isolated and almost alone. My educational philosophy had been constructed in relation to my training and experience, but my management style was largely untried. This account of curriculum and staff development, by virtue of its retrospective nature, could represent the process as being neater and more coherent than it actually was. My personal contribution depended on a mixture of theoretical knowledge, pragmatic realism and the capriciousness of chance. The headteacher's development was partially a function of the institutional and staff development he was seeking to instigate. Staff development appears to rely heavily on positive reinforcement being supplied at the opportune moment and in the case of the headteacher the identity of the reinforcer can be problematic. In the early stages the headteacher's personal development was largely self-motivated and self-directed, but increasingly Mr Saville became a truly significant other. Indeed Mr Saville suggested the ultimate change of direction in the headteacher's career and was instrumental in his promotion. Similarly the nature of the headteacher's PhD necessitated an analytical approach to his professional performance and sharpened his awareness of the implications of institutional interaction. Furthermore, the discussion of his field-study data had obvious pragmatic and instrumental ramifications and his supervisor provided a detached source of advice and positive reinforcement. To summarise, I feel I undertook my headship with a hazy outline of the particular management style I hoped to pursue and my personal development emanated from my attempts to harden the reality of these desires. Most importantly the majority of the positive reinforcement I received was from outside Redland School and in part outside the L.E.A. structure. I wanted to be an *extended
professional headteacher" and the large element of chance in the process indicates the importance of maximising the support of available services!

The headteacher's criteria of relevance and educational philosophy permeate the foregoing discussions and in consequence only the briefest explicit statement is required to encapsulate his management style. As the headteacher of a small primary school he increasingly resolved to minimise the dichotomy between the infant and junior sections of the school. The redesignation of scale posts provided the opportunity to emphasise curriculum responsibility for the whole school. It was self-evident that individual curriculum leaders would have more experience of, or a greater preference for, a particular age group, nevertheless the headteacher believed it was important that teachers developed a global awareness. Curriculum leaders were to be seen as co-ordinators, utilising the experience and talents of all the staff for the benefit of all the children. The identification of extended and restricted professional attitudes sharpened the importance of sharing expertise in the interests of the totality of the pupil body. A theoretical amalgamation of the "human relations approach" and T Barr Greenfield's "radical alternative" in the mind of the head teacher at the outset, was tempered with a measure of pragmatism during the three years. The Articles of Management locate responsibility very firmly in the headteachers's hands and desires to foster participation are influenced by the ever increasing shadow of accountability. Indeed, as contended earlier, expediency dictates that the headteacher employs all the available weaponry at his disposal to negate inadequate teaching. The manipulation of materials and resources to effect curriculum change may contradict the nurturing of a participatory management style, but may be necessary to enhance pupils' learning experiences. In fact, the headteacher's guiding principle in his consideration of management style, curriculum reform and staff development was "will these arrangements improve the quality of pupil learning experience?" A complimentary concern may also have been "will these arrangements improve my own professional reputation and increase my prospects of promotion?" Participation in "Kaleidoscope" may be more attributable to the latter category, but could be justified on the basis of the former.

A combined response to the two questions above, dictated the involvement of the external agencies already identified. Chapter Four is devoted to a consideration of the institution's response to external influences, nevertheless at this stage the headteacher's view of their utility in his
management style merits elaboration. He viewed himself as the public relations representative of the school and deemed it part of his role to attract external expertise into the situation. At the crudest level he was able to legitimately trade talks for Mr Saville's courses, in exchange for the adviser's contribution to school-based in-service. The general philosophy of inviting and involving the maximum number of advisers, advisory teachers and other educationalists had the added value of decreasing the school's isolation and increasing teacher visibility. Teachers were also encouraged to introduce external consultants into the school for the same reasons. External involvement was a growing phenomenon during the three years and a field note for 21 January 1983 captures the dilemma inherent in this strategy.

"After thirteen days of this term we have had six people into the school with a view to assisting in curriculum development.

1. Am I trying to advance on too many fronts at the same time?

2. Are we adequately consolidating the work we have covered?

3. How are we assessing progress?"

These questions prompted a curriculum review paper which was distributed to the staff and followed up with individual meetings. A number of responses were particularly interesting. Mrs Wood asserted "I don't want to tell people what they should be doing. I am happier when they come to me and ask". Mrs Jordan also verbalised a major flaw in the curriculum leader strategy. "The problem is seeing what they are doing. It is very difficult when people are in individual classrooms". These observations identified the weaknesses in a collegial, curriculum leader structure - firstly, only the headteacher has the legitimate authority to observe, evaluate and direct and secondly, at a more pragmatic level, he is the only person who has the opportunity to visit classrooms on a regular basis during the school day. Thus the responsibility for evaluation and modification are very firmly his province. An encouraging response which emerged from these meetings was expressed Mrs Jennings - "we are all more willing to talk about our shortcomings and difficulties than we were before". The headteacher believed this to be the case and determined to grasp the nettle of teacher evaluation in a more systematic way, expressing concern as well as thanks and praise.
The test of the efficacy of curriculum reform and staff development is the impact they have on the lives of the children in the school. The headteacher's aim was to create an institutional ethos which sustained high expectations and personal happiness. In his relationships with children he sought to emphasise mutual respect and concern and attempted to foster the realisation of each child's full potential. In practice ethos building was largely done through assemblies - good behaviour, outstanding achievements and school successes were heavily emphasised and positively reinforced. A colleague's questionnaire obliquely revealed the importance attaching to this policy in the eyes of the children. Seventy-nine upper junior respondents all awarded the full five marks, on a one to five scale, in answer to this question "Do you like being mentioned in Assembly for doing well (with your work or sport)?" The headteacher was surprised by the strength of this response, but included its imperative for future action in his management style. Parents were invited to assemblies led by their children and the opportunities this arrangement provided for the headteacher's impression management strategy will be explored in Chapter Five. Notwithstanding, assemblies provided an important microcosm of the broader school environment. The headteacher had the opportunity to regularly exhibit good practice to capture the interest of all involved, to show care and concern and most importantly to commentate on the progress of the school.

In concluding this chapter, I propose to enunciate the theoretical perspectives identifiable in this account of the development of curriculum, staff and management style. Dr Roy maintains that it is unlikely that any one set of arrangements would suit every circumstance and that much will depend on the individual institution. "We allow different schools to be run in different ways and with different objectives." Clearly the headteacher enjoyed almost total autonomy during the observation period and any external involvement in the school was at his behest and direction. His initial action in redesignating the scale posts could be viewed as an attempt to employ Reddin's notion of "key effectiveness areas". These curriculum responsibilities were apportioned in order "to avoid unnecessary duplication and permit functional specialisation by those who have the skills and experience in a given direction." The inherent problem in this division of labour resided in maximising the contribution of those teachers incapable of functional specialisation. The developing management structure was designed to adapt to a rapid state of change and the headteacher's desire...
was to foster a situation where "relationships are lateral rather than vertical and form and reform according to the demands of a particular problem." A manifestation of the coalitions Greenfield identifies. The headteacher sought to evolve a leadership style appropriate to this organic structure, basing it on total accessibility and delegation to expertise rather than level of institutional order. The small scale of the operation appeared to facilitate this approach, allowing ample opportunity for interpersonal contact and the clarification of aims and objectives. In practice, however, the developmental procedure was largely dominated by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the prospective deputy headteacher. This situation may have been caused by pragmatic considerations, as well as reflecting institutional power, in so far as the headteacher was the only professional in the situation without a full-time teaching load and as such his role in the objective-setting exercise was especially crucial. He was the only person with the opportunity to stand back from the day to day teaching minutiae and take a long term view of where the school was going, the ultimate responsibility for constructing a hierarchy of objectives rested with him. "Because it is impossible to advance on all fronts at once, it is he who must decide which are most vulnerable, or most productive. He must orchestrate progress so that the school develops an entity." 

In a small organisation, such as Redland School, it is immediately apparent that without the harmonious interrelationship of individual teacher's objectives, the development of sound institutional objectives is problematic. This becomes very obvious because the feedback loop is short. Thus, despite the headteacher's strong desire not to suffocate initiative and exploration and to leave room for individual teachers to define their own role within broad parameters, his management style became increasingly interventionist. When curriculum priorities and institutional objectives had been negotiated, the headteacher believed he had to ensure individuals adhere to agreed policies. Indeed the importance of the whole staff accepting the overall aims and objectives of the school is crucial and this general agreement is a key motivational factor. Staff "should not only accept the total objectives of the school but also incorporate these within their more specific subject objectives when making decisions about subject and content." It seems a valid conclusion that the maintenance of an organic structure and a high level of commitment require an extended professional's approach. This consideration emphasises a key aspect of the headteacher's role - the
recruitment of able staff who are sympathetic to the overall aims and objectives of the school and can contribute to their achievement. Mrs Cromwell's appointment illustrated that the impact of a model for good practice can far outweigh the efficacy of removed theoretical debate. The Utopian management situation would furnish the headteacher with the opportunity to appoint all his own staff, however, reality demanded that he worked vicariously, largely through the people his predecessor had chosen.

The redesignation of scale post responsibilities had wider implications than the headteacher envisaged at the outset. His intention was to create a collegial, horizontal structure with each member of staff responsible for the whole-school development of a particular curriculum area or areas. In effect, each curriculum leader was responsible to the headteacher and the rest of the staff. This could be seen as an attempt to employ Theory Y, or a more jaundiced view could identify a machiavellian strategy for overcoming Theory X\(^{15}\), through the application of peer group pressure. The key factor involves the entire staff accepting agreed overall aims and objectives and wholeheartedly attempting to operationalise these consensus views. Staff "should not only accept the total objectives of the school but also incorporate these within their more specific subject objectives when making decisions about content and method"\(^{25}\). The procedure worked very efficiently at the theoretical level and there were no acrimonious debates or heated exchanges at the staff objective-setting meetings. The disjunctures manifested themselves at the classroom implementation level - nominal agreement at the staff meeting on occasions obscured uncertainty or unwillingness to pursue agreed policies. Furthermore, meaningful curriculum leadership was largely concentrated in the hands of three people and the personalisation of curriculum areas, in the shape of the leader, may have had a deleterious effect on certain of these areas. Indeed, at an implicit level, the headteacher was stating his curriculum priorities, through the identity of a subject's leader and its location in the chronological scheme. Some curriculum areas may have suffered because of the lack of prestige and power of the leader. In this way it could be argued that in personalising subject areas, the headteacher unwittingly perpetuated inequalities in curriculum provision.

The curriculum of Redland School, to a certain extent at least, represented a unique combination of chance circumstances, namely, the management style of the headteacher, the commitment and abilities of the
staff, opportunities to appoint new personnel, the resources and facilities available and the contribution of external agents. Hence there can be no standard curriculum uniformly applicable to all schools, "for by their very nature and purpose objectives must always be determined by resources, opportunities, circumstances and priorities". Indeed there cannot be ultimate or definitive staff and curriculum development as there is a constant need for re-appraisal and adjustment in the light of experience. This organic dynamic also applies to the evolution of the headteacher's management style, in that it must include a reactive component to accommodate the feedback loop.

The evaluation of the efficacy of the "developments" documented represents the most complex aspect of the undertaking. From the headteacher's standpoint it could be asserted that the analysis of long-term objectives within a primary school can only be fully operationalised after six or seven years, during which period a pupil would progress through the whole institution. Notwithstanding, interim indications of progress can be derived from High School settings, advisers' comments, parental feedback, community reputation, comparisons with similar schools and subjective evaluations. This methodology could be attacked as unscientific, however, "informal and subjective evaluation is a normal and essential part of one's daily life". In fact this research could be reviewed as an example of the rigorous approach, Eraut proposes, comprising intrinsic and performance evaluation. Intrinsic evaluation seeks to uncover both explicit and implicit objectives and then to decide whether these are consistent with the organisation's overall aims. The curriculum review document described earlier represented an attempt to formally execute this methodology, however, the workings of the three simultaneous social systems Burns identifies complicated the process. Performance evaluation is "concerned with assessing the extent to which objectives have actually been achieved in practice". Thus performance evaluation requires a system of formal assessment, which the headteacher was progressively moving towards as time elapsed. An analysis of his implicit objective in the construction of formal assessment procedures may have revealed a growing awareness of the work of the Assessment of Performance Unit and the trend towards greater accountability. Standardised mathematical tests were introduced in Autumn 1982 and regular spelling and reading tests were incorporated in the pupil record folders. An N.F.E.R. general intelligence test was completed by fourth year juniors and batteries of mathematical tests for all age-groups were provided by a Leicester University researcher.
Nevertheless he placed most emphasis on his own subjective judgements, based on his own and other teachers' past experience and intuitive feelings. The seminars led by Mr Smith entitled "Developing a Language Policy" sought to formalise English assessment procedures, however the outcome was an inevitable quantitative - qualitative compromise. Thus it is apparent that some of the evaluative criteria employed at Redland were necessarily crude, however, "it should be remembered that commitment to a rough and ready analysis will produce better results than lip-service paid to a technically perfect analysis." Many of the themes elaborated in this chapter cohere in the spirit of this quotation.

The headteacher's implicit assumption in instigating curriculum review and staff development as elements of a coherent management style is that he will achieve better results "than if he proceeds on the usual mix of folk-lore and common sense." He may also have desired to generate an element of mystique in so doing. It is axiomatic that every school should undertake staff and curriculum development, but it is unlikely that any standard procedure can be designed which will be uniformly applicable in one school, let alone all of them. The management structure of Redland School aimed to facilitate a participative system, predicated on the notion that "it is a challenge to those in subordinate roles to identify their goals for themselves and their co-workers and to evaluate their performance." In practice the headteacher dominated the proceedings in a much more powerful manner than he realised. Even in this organic structure, his legitimate claim to institutional power, his influence over staff appointments and in-service training, and his role in establishing the aims of the school emphasise that even if objectives are not directly prescribed by him, they must at least have his support.

"What people seem to want from schools is that schools reflect the values that are central and meaningful in their lives." The behaviour of the headteacher of Redland School exemplified this contention. He was not alone, however, in struggling to form the institution in his own image. When the question is posed "What curriculum designs will achieve specified educational goals?" the more significant underlying concerns are "Who believes in these goals?" and "Who believes he knows how to act in order to achieve them?" These questions focus attention on the process by which people come to believe in particular goals and how they work to achieve them. People shape the curriculum and while the headteacher may advertise his goals as institutional priorities, individual teachers may be more concerned with pursuing the goals they
personally hold dear. "Shifting the external trappings of organization, which we may call organisation structure if we wish, turns out to be easier than altering the deeper meaning and purposes which people express through organisation."

In this way the headteacher became aware of these meanings and purposes when he actually sought to amend behaviour at the classroom practitioner level, rather than within the removed, theoretical debate of a staff meeting. Thus it became obvious that developing the curriculum was a complex undertaking involving more than amending organisational structures. Indeed the organisational structure had no uniform effect on people, as the wide variety of their responses demonstrated, but depended on the definition of social reality of the person perceiving it. Observations throughout the three years indicated that individuals bring varying meanings and objectives to the institutional setting and act and re-act in accordance with these beliefs. The developments described can be understood in terms of a continuous process of bargaining and coalition among individuals. Some coalitions turn out to be viable, at least on a short-term basis and give the members of these coalitions the power to dominate the development process. In fact, the established aims and objectives of Redland School could be viewed as a reflection of the identity of the dominant institutional coalition. "People strive to impose their interpretation of social reality upon others and to gain command of the organisational resources which will permit them to do so." This chapter illustrates that the headteacher and to a lesser extent two other people, were able to impose their definitions of social reality by virtue of their institutional power. The implicit assumption was that other participants should act in accordance with these definitions and the next chapter is devoted to an account of the headteacher's attempts to manage the resultant conflicts within the institution.
References


27. Smith R (1983), School-based seminars - "Developing a Language Policy".


-103-
Conflict underlies or accompanies much human interaction; some degree of it is typical. Conflicts may be minor, manifested only by a slight feeling of uneasiness in one or more participants. Or conflict may be serious; in some cases it is the major component of interaction. In severe cases it destroys interaction.\(^1\) As Hicks indicates, some degree of conflict is typically a concomitant of social interaction, particularly in a setting like Redland School, which is inhabited by diverse groups of actors, operating with differing objectives and contrasting constructions of reality. A multiplicity of minor conflicts and feelings of uneasiness resolved themselves largely unnoticed by the researcher during the observation period and having acknowledged their existence I do not propose to focus further attention upon them, concentrating instead upon their more major counterparts. Clearly the identification of conflicts as minor or major reflects to some extent the standpoint and involvement of the perceiver and it is axiomatic that the following discussion is a function of the researcher's particular location in the social order and his personal response to chance circumstances. Indeed, as I rehearsed in Chapter Two, "we should look more carefully for differences in objectives between different kinds of people in organisations and begin to relate these to differences in power or access to resources."\(^2\) These very differences in power and access to resources provide the background context for both the generation and the resolution of conflict.

There were numerous manifestations of conflict during the observation period, varying in degree, incidence, nature and the personnel involved. In the interests of simplification I propose to delineate these conflicts in the following model.
The model systemises the five main areas of conflict which were observed. However, the categories cannot be considered mutually exclusive, as for example, conflicts between individuals or groups may have generated conflict within an individual. For this reason the arrows are intended to represent the interactive and interrelated nature of the conflict. Notwithstanding in the interests of conceptual clarity, I propose to separate the five categories and deal with each one separately in the order indicated by the model.

The head teacher believed that a sixth category should be located in the very centre of the model, mediating the interactive and interrelated arrows in: this category was conflict management. Hicks obviously considers that conflict has an explosive and destructive potential and in order to maintain social and institutional equilibrium, it must be handled circumspectly. This view was shared by the head teacher who deemed the maintenance of a positive climate to be a vital prerequisite to his plans for the school. In terms of this social climate, the ramifications of attempts to manage conflict may have had more importance than their occurrence, a view which will be further developed later in the chapter. Indeed all the participants in this social situation were to varying degrees involved in the management of conflict. As indicated above, the head teacher viewed conflict management, or perhaps more accurately on occasions, conflict containment, as a critical element of his role and the Cook Supervisor, Caretaker and pupils were also involved in identical social processes, albeit addressing themselves to the task from a different perspective. Typically they were involved in the commonalities of seeking to identify potential conflict situations in order to contain, defuse, prevent development, or, indeed, manage them constructively. In this way some conflict may be advantageous to the
development of the school and conflict management sheds its perjorative overtones and assumes a more positive quality. "Whether conflict is desirable or not must be judged in terms of its results for the particular organisation, situation and persons concerned." Once more, the attribution of desirability will reflect the stand-point and value-system of the perceiver and his location in the social order.

I propose to identify the participants included in the conflict schema and locate them in the following model in terms of their involvement in conflict observed by the headteacher during the three year period. In this way the nature of the conflict elucidated will necessarily fall into three broad categories, reflecting the degree of the headteacher's personal involvement. **Conflict Categories**

a) Conflict involving the headteacher as a primary participant.

b) Conflict involving the headteacher as a secondary participant, where he is required to arbitrate or conciliate and typically behave as "the man in the middle".

c) Conflict observed by the headteacher, or reported to him, which does not involve his personal participation or reaction. He is purely a detached observer and recorder of such conflict.
Clearly the model reflects the headteacher's centrality, both in terms of his position in the formal structure of the school and the ego-centric nature of his research methodology, in using himself as the research instrument. The bulls-eye of the target is designed to illustrate this centrality. The succeeding concentric rings summarise the degree of conflict involvement of their inhabitants, employing an amalgamation of the three types of conflict elaborated above. In this way the target model reflects more of the headteacher's perception of conflict than its global occurrence. Indeed the second inner ring of the model includes all the actors involved inside the school on a daily basis - the intra-institutional participants. This intra-institutional membership is summarised by the thickness of the line drawn between the second and third rings. The next growth ring has been devoted entirely to "parents", reflecting their importance both in terms of their numerical size as a group and the headteacher's perception of their conflict potential. Clearly "parents" were seen as the most powerful source of extra-institutional conflict. The outer ring contains other potential conflict groups, however, the incidence of negative interaction involving these people was minimal during the observation period. I propose to devote the remainder of this chapter to an examination of the two inner rings - conflict involving the intra-institutional participants. The conceptual scheme pursued will reflect Model One.
1. **Conflict within individuals**

"Conflict often springs from within a person; frequently, it spills over into his relationship with others, causing conflict between him and them."

At the point where it spills over it may be observed by an ethnographer, nevertheless, uncovering and elaborating conflict within individuals by employing an observational, ethnographic research methodology is somewhat problematical. Such an area of investigation could justifiably be considered the province of the psychologist. Notwithstanding, behaviour which has institutional consequences and is occasioned by internal conflict merits further elucidation. Clearly a wide variety of internal conflicts are either unobservable or their behavioural manifestations pass unobserved, and therefore any attempt to provide an exhaustive catalogue of their occurrence is rendered scientifically suspect. For this reason the observation detailed below cannot be viewed as objective data, but rather as a crude attempt to develop a method of illustrating some personal conflicts and identifying their possible social ramifications for Redland School. Some extra-institutional actors have been included for illustrative purposes.

---

**CONFLICT WITHIN THE INDIVIDUAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>NAME OF CONFLICT</th>
<th>INSTITUTIONAL RAMIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Personal educational philosophy</td>
<td>Uncertainty, leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>perceived institutional philosophy</td>
<td>difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil A</td>
<td>cultural values of the home v institutional expectations of the classroom.</td>
<td>Confusion, disruptive behaviour, under-achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil B</td>
<td>Peer group pressure v parental expectations</td>
<td>Anti-social behaviour, antagonism, confusion, lack of friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

-108-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil C</td>
<td>Teacher expectations v peer group pressure</td>
<td>Misbehaviour, exhibitionism Misbehaviour, punishment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil D</td>
<td>Personality conflict needs v dispositions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>Parent role v professional</td>
<td>Confused behaviour towards Head and teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td>Parent role v participant</td>
<td>Tensions with other parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary</td>
<td>Social v professional</td>
<td>Tension between social equality and professional sub-ordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher A</td>
<td>Redland parent v professional</td>
<td>Anxiety about needs of own child. Stress, confusion, bad-temper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher B</td>
<td>Personal medical welfare v professional demands</td>
<td>Guilt feelings, difficult relationships at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher C</td>
<td>Family life v professional role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adviser A</td>
<td>Positive support v critical appraisal</td>
<td>Honesty and openness of interaction affected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor A</td>
<td>Parent role v governing function</td>
<td>Confusion, tension in relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor B</td>
<td>Personal educational philosophy v support for the professionals</td>
<td>Cognitive dissonance, potential negative interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent A</td>
<td>Supportive parent v dissatisfied consumer</td>
<td>Confusion, difficult relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent B</td>
<td>School phobia v concern for own child</td>
<td>Agitation, aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent C</td>
<td>Own philosophy v school philosophy</td>
<td>Confrontation, dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This speculative attempt to elaborate conflict within individuals is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. Furthermore, conflict is an organic and dynamic phenomenon and its transient nature masks its contribution to the background of future social interaction. Indeed at first glance the effects of the internal conflicts documented do not appear to have serious institutional consequences, despite the fact that they may have been experienced as momentous in the existence of the individuals involved. Nevertheless, internal conflicts and their resolution add another background variable to the consideration of the social equation and may exert a powerful influence on personal behaviour at any given moment. Notwithstanding, as indicated earlier, close inspection of individual cerebral processes is largely beyond the scope of this study, however, a particular strength of the methodology employed resides in its facility to elucidate the consciousness of the headteacher - "to walk in his shoes." In this way a brief account of the headteacher's internal conflicts will be presented in order to exemplify some of the mechanisms which may have been at work in other actors. Furthermore, the contention that the head teacher is the single most influential participant in the social life of the school sharpens the utility of attempting "to tell it like it really is" from his viewpoint.

In common with other actors, the strongest internal conflicts the headteacher experienced related to the apparent mismatch between the constituent elements of his social existence, a phenomenon traditionally labelled as "role-conflict".

"Role conflict occurs when there are inconsistencies between the roles expected of a person in a particular position, or alternatively there may be incompatibility within a single role, or between two positions held by a single person. Roles conceived as sets of norms have, of course, an essentially prescriptive character; they relate to expectations about the rights and obligations comprising a particular set of relationships."  

Thus a whole range of conflicts occur when an individual is required to conform simultaneously to a number of expectations which "are mutually exclusive, contradictory, or inconsistent so that adjustment to one set of requirements makes adjustment to the other set of requirements impossible or at least difficult."  

The totality of a person's roles includes latent elements such as husband
and father and multiple roles are associated with appropriate "role-sets". When confronted by different expectations from members of his role-set, or "relevant others", the role-occupant may experience role-conflict. These terms were coined by Merton. The concept of roles, however, has found less favour recently and is regarded by some sociologists as a redundant concept. "Actors on the stage play roles, but people in other real-life situations, whilst acting in the sense of pursuing purposeful behaviour, do not have roles." Role is a metaphor which can be widened so that the social world is a stage and Goffman's "dramaturgical sociology" focusses upon actors giving "performances". Mennell concludes that "the concept of role is certainly one which virtually all sociologists find useful, as far as it goes. But it does not go very far" This contention broadly summarises my own view.

Alternatively the concept of "career", as it has been used by sociologists of the "Chicago School", provides an excellent bridge between the individual and institutional levels of analysis. Everett C Hughes provides an appropriate working definition. He defines career as "subjectively, the moving perspective in which a person sees his life as a whole, and interprets his attributes, actions and things which happen to him... objectively sequences of position, responsibility, even of adventure" Thus, from one side, a career is very much a personal, subjective phenomenon, which influences the development of personal identity. From the other side, a study of the series of statuses and so on through which the individual progresses, which illuminates the organisational and other paths he follows. I have identified "other paths" in order to illustrate that the concept subsumes any strand of a person's course through life. It is the progress through a series of stages and the impact of this progress on the individual which constitutes a "career". Hence, at any one moment an individual is concurrently pursuing a variety of careers, which are woven together to form the unique fabric of his total existence. The headteacher identified the following "careers" as the most significant elements of his social existence.

Father and husband

At the commencement of the study the headteacher was the father of two daughters aged four and six. A third child was born in October of 1982. The responsibilities associated with marriage and parenthood clearly
exert powerful temporal and mental demands, particularly when a new baby is involved. Chance comments, such as "you don't seem to have the same amount of time to play with the baby as you did when the other two were small" occasioned internal conflict and caused the headteacher to re-appraise his system of priorities. Clearly the demands of attempting to fulfil the "ideal husband/father" role has important ramifications for the individuals capacity to successfully pursue his other "careers".

Leisure, recreation and sport

This area of the headteacher's life constituted the other major and interlocking component of the configuration of his non-professional careers. Headteachers are constantly bombarded with warnings about the adverse effects of stress and tension, indeed upon his arrival at Redland the Headteacher received a circular from the Leicester clinic offering advice and courses on stress reduction. This emphasis on stress reduction was in itself stress inducing and generated a priority for devoting an appropriate allocation of time to the development of leisure activities. Furthermore, professional interviews explore at some depth the "whole man" and focus in on leisure pursuits. Recreational activities, however, exert powerful demands of their own, as a function of the disposition, personality and need for achievement of the particular individual. For example, during the duration of the observation period the headteacher undertook to raise money for new reading books by running in a sponsored marathon. In order to complete the distance, a time-consuming and arduous training programme had to be undertaken and as a result the pressures on his time and energy were increased.

In focusing very cursorily upon these domestic and recreational careers a number of conclusions instantly emerge. Firstly it is difficult to differentiate and completely disentangle individual careers, even professional and non-professional, as the marathon running example readily illustrated. More importantly, internal conflicts over the allocation of time and mental energy to competing careers appear almost inevitable.

Academic

In registering to pursue a higher degree by research, the headteacher demonstrated a desire to develop an academic career, which involved a
high level of physical, mental, financial and temporal commitment. Despite receiving some financial support from his Local Education Authority, he perceived that certain critical reality defining figures did not view academic study as a valid activity for a busy educational practitioner. Indeed it was suggested to him that it was possible to be over-qualified when applying for further primary school headships. He was operating in an educational milieu which dichotomised theorists and practitioners, a conclusion which was exacerbated by the apparent suspicion of educational research manifested by some of his headteacher colleagues. Furthermore, his whole research methodology was predicated on deception, approaching his prey unobtrusively without their knowledge or approval. This ethical conflict will be explored at some length in Chapter Seven.

To summarise, both his participation in, and approach to, his research project were conflict inducing. The allocation of time to his academic career had obvious consequences for his opportunities to pursue his other careers.

Professional

Upon taking up the post of headteacher in 1981, I instantly experienced conflict between my idealised view of the role of the person in that position and the actuality of the duties involved. I greatly resented the petty administrative duties upon which much time had to be spent, particularly as I believed many of them could have been adequately dealt with by a competent secretary or caretaker. Recent research indicates this is a common experience for new headteachers. Furthermore, there was a growing awareness that these low order aspects of the job required an inverse proportion of my time, so that the time remaining for more important activities was greatly restricted. This inability to use time in accordance with my own priorities was a substantial source of frustration and conflict. In essence, because of these associated and often trivial duties, I did not feel I was having the full opportunity to discharge my headmastership in the way that I would have chosen. This conflict suggested an initial naivete and a passive view of time management.

One of the reasons time management was so important in relation to the administrative duties of the headteacher was that he continued to undertake a teaching commitment. The load varied during the observation
period from just under a quarter, up to half a full timetable, when the headteacher and deputy shared a fourth year junior class for a term. The headteacher viewed class teaching as his particular strength and an activity from which a great deal of job satisfaction and occupational therapy could be derived. To some extent, however, a regular teaching commitment often came into conflict with other elements of the headteacher's role. For example, area meetings with the Director of Education, Headteachers' Seminars, visits to other schools and most significantly, emergency supply teaching, disrupted the headteacher's planned teaching. In particular there was a tension in that the headteacher could not spend as long in the classroom as he wished without adversely affecting his administrative efficiency. Furthermore, the headteacher perceived the quality of his own teaching and his relationship with the children in his charge were not as consistent as they had been in his previous schools. Thus the enjoyment derived from teaching was diminished by the responsibilities of headship - the constant distractions during actual teaching and the inability to concentrate totally on teaching duties while struggling with organisational problems. The opportunities for adequate preparation of personal teaching materials were greatly reduced while the importance of visibly exemplifying good teaching method and practice was significantly increased.

Further time management conflicts derived from the headteacher's dealings with visitors, particularly unexpected visitors. Should he always be available to colleagues, parents and governors and how much disruption was he prepared to tolerate? New parents visiting the school for the first time placed heavy demands upon his time and increasingly frequent visits from the Chairman of Governors involved up to two hours each. The Chairman of Governors was perceived as a very significant other by the head teacher and any differences in educational philosophy or staff appointments had to be negotiated delicately - a time consuming activity.

Conflict in the headteacher's mind was also generated by his dealings with the teaching staff. In view of his own personal conflicts with regard to apportioning time to a variety of competing careers, he had to balance the personal welfare of the staff with the demands of developing the institution, and in moments of self-realisation, his own career! How legitimate was it for him to expect Mr Andrews to be involved in extra-curricular activities on four evenings a week and Saturday mornings? Could Mrs Jordan be expected to drive to Beaumanor Hall on a regular basis to represent Red1and at Kaleidoscope planning meetings?
Conflicts of this nature could often be resolved by concluding that personal and institutional development were complimentary, a view reinforced by Mrs Jordan's promotion to a headship. The conflict between the needs of individual teachers and the development of the organisation were felt particularly keenly when Mrs Jennings applied for deputy headships. The woman deserved total, unqualified support, but the institution would be impoverished by her leaving.

Personal ambition versus loyalty to the institution was a recurring problem, ultimately involving the headteacher himself. His solution of this personal conflict required the counsel of a significant other, in the form of Mr Saville and it is at this point that the efficacy of external conflict management is illustrated.

This brief elaboration of the four main careers the headmaster was pursuing during the three years simplifies and artificially disentangles the forces at work within his mind. The major recurrent theme is the variety of competing demands upon his time. Resolution of these conflicts is transitory and specific to a given moment in time, always being open to re-negotiation in the light of changing circumstances. If the headteacher's experience can be deemed to illustrate the forces at work within other actors, it becomes obvious that individuals approach social interactions with a unique configuration of pre-dispositions and deeply submerged personal conflicts which could exert a powerful influence on the nature of their relationships. In this way an analysis of internal conflicts is largely beyond the scope of this study, nevertheless personal conflict is another independent variable in the consideration of interpersonal conflict. "Surprisingly internal conflict is to blame for many problems of interaction." 1

2. Conflict between individuals

"Conflict can be between persons if they have different objectives or ways of achieving them. Where there are no vested interests, conflict of this type often can be fairly easily resolved, particularly if it is discussed openly with mutual goodwill." 1 There were many occasions during the three years when conflicts of this magnitude were easily resolved and the case studies I propose to elaborate represent more serious inter-personal conflicts involving "vested interests" and diminishing amounts of goodwill. In effect, potentially hazardous episodes for the social well-being of the institution.

-115-
My conceptual scheme for the middle section of this chapter involves exemplifying the conflict categories elaborated earlier for each of the sub-sections identified in Model One.

a) In the headteacher's view the most serious conflict he was involved in as a primary participant was with Mrs Holmes, the school secretary. The relationship had commenced promisingly and Mrs Holmes was a great source of help and encouragement during the first four terms. In the summer of 1981 it became apparent that Mr Lake, the previous headteacher, had recommended to County Hall that Mrs Holmes should fail her probationary period of six months. Mrs Holmes had not been informed. Her extended probationary period had now been completed and the new headteacher was required to make a professional assessment of her competence upon four weeks acquaintance. In truth, he mistook social warmth and good interpersonal skills for secretarial expertise and filed a positive report. An increasing awareness dawned over the succeeding months, Mrs Holmes was very careless in her typing and her accounting was of a very low order - balancing the dinner registers each Friday was a monumental task for her. Nevertheless, she was enthusiastic, committed and acted as a very talented front person in her reception of visitors.

In October 1981, Mr Holmes launched his own business venture, which involved Mrs Holmes operating as his secretary in her spare time. As this business became more successful the effects upon her in-school performance became increasingly obvious and the headteacher concluded that her mind was almost entirely elsewhere. The situation began to deteriorate significantly during the early part of 1983. In mid-January a letter was delivered to the headteacher by Simon Holmes, a fourth year junior, from his mother, explaining that she was unable to come to school as her husband was unwell and she would have to take responsibility for the business. She would return to school when her husband had recovered. The headteacher automatically became supply school secretary, generating the internal conflicts described in the last section.

Upon the return of Mrs Holmes, the headteacher expressed his concern as their professional and social relationship became infinitely cooler. The headteacher took up the matter with the Non-Teaching Staffing Section at County Hall and he was advised to carefully log
her professional inadequacies with a view to an ultimate disciplinary hearing. Beneath a thinly veiled veneer of goodwill the relationship continued to deteriorate as the headteacher became more aware of her inadequacies and lack of effort and she viewed him as increasingly demanding and unhelpful. The last day of the Easter Term provided another watershed in the deteriorating relationship. Once more Mrs Holmes was having difficulty in balancing the dinner registers and a conference with Mrs Livingstone, the Cook, had not resolved the situation. Mrs Holmes worked till 1 pm on Fridays and at 11.45 am she telephoned the headteacher and outlined her predicament. In the past the headteacher had often quickly found the mistake and balanced the books, however, upon this occasion he chose not to! At 2 pm Mrs Holmes was becoming rather agitated because she had a business appointment in connection with her husband's firm. The headteacher eventually relented and located the mistake.

In consequence the Summer Term 1983, represented a difficult period in the headteacher-secretary relationship. The professional performance of Mrs Holmes continued to deteriorate and the headteacher became increasingly critical. At the beginning of June Mrs Holmes came to the headteacher and enquired "Are you looking forward to the last day of term?" Without waiting for a response she continued "I am, because I will be in Tenerife". The family holiday had been booked and she would be missing the busiest day of the school secretary's year. The headteacher would be reluctantly providing supply cover!

To summarise the remainder of the story, the headteacher received Mrs Holmes resignation during the summer vacation and her final month was a period of reconciliation and calm. Mrs Smith was appointed in September and proved the "ideal" school secretary.

In reflecting upon this particular inter-personal conflict as a researcher rather than a participant and at some social and temporal distance, a number of considerations emerge. Clearly any interpersonal conflict can be viewed from a minimum of two standpoints. Very briefly they may run along the following lines.
The headteacher's view

Mrs Holmes was very committed and helpful at the outset. He responded by helping with her problems, for example, with the dinner registers. She became progressively less efficient, involving more of his time to neutralise her mistakes. His internal conflict was heightened. She lost the record of swimming payments, an embarrassing and costly mistake in terms of the parents. Indeed in his view, her mistakes reflected badly on the image of the school. As her commitment and efficiency diminished she increasingly recounted the success of the family business - in short her school work was by comparison unimportant. Her actions graphically illustrated her deteriorating attitude and the headteacher wanted her to leave.

Mrs Holmes' view

The new headteacher needed a lot of assistance with administrative procedures and she willingly provided it. Helping her was a simple act of reciprocity. Her husband and family were her first priority and the least important of her careers was the one at Redland. The headteacher was becoming more critical and she had less motivation and desire to please. As the school relationship became more distant she derived less job satisfaction and believed the headteacher was not fulfilling his responsibilities. Finally he was unsympathetic to the much needed family holiday for which one date only was available. Her son had completed his time at Redland, she would resign.

The researcher's view

The headteacher badly mishandled the initial negotiation of the working relationship. He had little understanding of the secretary's role and the division of labour between headteacher and secretary. He allowed, and contributed towards, the erosion of an appropriate role-distance. Upon realising errors of judgement had been made it was almost impossible to re-negotiate the terms of the working relationship. A biography of conflict began to develop and mutual unease increased proportionately. Inequality in institutional power concentrated weaponry in the hands of the headteacher and he sought to resolve the situation by ultimate
recourse to external authority. The formal resolution of conflict was resolved by the secretary's timely resignation.

The organic quality of human relations is reflected in the conclusion that the headteacher and secretary were very different institutional animals in the summer of 1983 to those who first met in 1980. Furthermore, an elaborating biography of conflict becomes increasingly hazardous to manage. Early intervention may have short-circuited the development of conflict, however, circumstances beyond the school setting may have made the conflict unmanageable.

b) Conflict between the caretaker and the cook eventually involved the headteacher as a secondary participant. As indicated above a biography of conflict may be developed over a period of months or years and a specific incident pre-supposes this history and represents a trigger mechanism. Clearly the caretaker and cook both have cleaning responsibilities and the arena for their conflict was the school hall. The caretaker was responsible for its cleanliness, however, it was used as a dining hall and therefore the cook was charged with the responsibility of ensuring it was restored to its original state at the end of lunch. This deceptively simple division of labour ignores the contribution of unique personalities.

Mr Jackson was one of the new headteacher's first appointments in the summer of 1981. Mr Jackson was enormously conscientious and eagerly sought accumulated wisdom on caretaking techniques. His in-post training was provided by a respected retired caretaker, who initiated Mr Jackson in the ways of the caretaking world. This venerable gentleman also included some informal training on how caretakers should manage the headteacher and among others, the cook. Mr Jackson viewed the hall floor as his calling card for the world's scrutiny - parents, night classes and other groups used the hall - and he took a terrific pride in the presentation of "his floor". Mr Jackson grudgingly accepted that the children had to use the hall for assembly and Physical Education, but he did stand by the outside door on wet or snowy mornings to ensure they changed their footwear before entering the hall. He found it harder to accept, however, that children should drop food on the floor at lunch time, but hardest of all that it was not cleaned up to his satisfaction by the kitchen staff.
Mrs Livingstone presided over the kitchen in the mould of an enlightened depot. She developed positive interpersonal relationships with her subordinates but maintained a social distance and unilateral decision making style. She was polite and helpful in her relationships with the headteacher and the implicit understanding prevailed that she would be eminently co-operative so long as she was allowed to manage her own sphere of responsibility without interference. Her abiding contention was that her staff were badly overworked and the period immediately after lunch had been eaten was particularly fraught as various teachers were eager to get into the hall for lunch time clubs. Two ladies were designated to stack and clear away the tables and clean the floor. Cleaning the floor involved sweeping up crumbs and spillages with a mop-sweep provided by the caretaker. The area under the tables inhabited by the sandwich-eaters was usually particularly untidy.

Mr Jackson and Mrs Livingstone developed an uneasy working relationship over the years and the hall floor was always a potential source of conflict. Each at various intervals reported examples of their dialogue about the floor to the headteacher, who sought to refrain from passing comment or taking sides. Minor disagreements over the placement of the mop sweep and the use of a wet cloth appeared to resolve themselves. The caretaker’s attendance of an in-service course and his selection as the subject of an instructional film-strip illustrating good caretaking practice changed the situation. His confidence increased and he also learnt that some of his colleagues were paid extra to clean the hall immediately after lunch. At approximately the same time the School Meals Supervisor reviewed the hours of the kitchen staff in the light of a reduced take-up of cooked lunches and reduced the hours of two ladies - the ones who cleaned up after lunch. Thus the pressures increased from both sides.

Mr Jackson took the situation into his own hands and informed Mrs Livingstone in no uncertain terms that he was not satisfied with the way the hall was cleaned and that in future he would leave a mop and bucket so that greasy areas could be correctly cleaned by the ladies. At this point Mrs Livingstone involved the headteacher and said she wanted to maintain good relationships with Mr Jackson, but her ladies did not have time to wash the floor. The caretaker had already explored the possibility with the headteacher of extra
hours, but preliminary investigations quickly indicated that was a non-starter.

The headteacher was cast in the classical man-in-the-middle role. Recourse to the School Meals Supervisor and the Technical Services Supervisor revealed that hall floors were a "grey area" and each supervisor was eager to support the case of their sub ordinate. They both concluded that it was the headteacher's duty to resolve the situation in favour of their interest group. After discussions with Mr Jackson and Mrs Livingstone, the headteacher decided that the dinner ladies would use a wet cloth for greasy substances and the mop and bucket would no longer be provided. This compromise was well received by Mrs Livingstone but less warmly accepted by Mr Jackson. These events took place during the Autumn Term of 1983 and shortly before leaving the headteacher was informed by Mrs Jennings that Mr Jackson intended "to get to the new headteacher early and get some things sorted out properly."

Apparently the conflict had been resolved by the headteacher's enforced intervention, however, this simplistic conclusion fails to reflect the social forces influencing the intervention or its ramifications for future interaction. Clearly the headteacher did not arbitrate in a vacuum, he came to the situation with preconceptions about the actors involved as well as the relative merits of their cases. Subsequently the protagonists had different views of how successfully the conflict had been resolved, as the caretaker's comment to Mrs Jennings revealed. Another chapter in the biography of specific interpersonal conflicts had been enacted and future interactions would be influenced accordingly.

c) Though an enlightened pedagogy may ameliorate the conflict of teacher and child, it can never remove it altogether. Inevitably tensions appeared between particular teachers and children throughout the three years, emanating principally from the role the situation imposes upon the teacher in relation to the child. There are two aspects of the teacher's duty which make it likely that he will have to bring pressure to bear upon individual children: he must ensure that there is no retrogression from the complexity of the social world worked out for his pupils at a certain age level, and he must strive gradually to increase that complexity as the child grows in age and approximates adult understanding and experience.
Children have a culture of their own. Its most observable locus is the playground, for the pupil culture of the classroom is partly produced by adults, is sifted and selected by adults, and is always subject to a certain amount of control by the teacher. "The culture of the school is a curious melange of the work of young artisans making culture for themselves and old artisans making culture for the young; it is also mingled with such bits of the greater culture as children have been able to appropriate." Such is the background of teacher-pupil interaction, a topic which is excellently examined at length elsewhere.

I attempted to observe one particular example of pupil-teacher conflict during the academic year 1982-1983. Self-selection by circumstance during the first weeks of that year dictated the identity of the personnel. Certain incidents came to my notice and I resolved to monitor this particular interpersonal conflict throughout the year, identifying it as a "category C conflict observed by the headteacher, but which does not involve his personal participation or reaction." My observation strategy involved focusing on the two protagonists in any situation where they were together, such as the classroom, assembly hall or the playground. I also noted mentions of the child's name in the staffroom or in casual conversation. As well as teaching the class on an irregular basis, I came into contact with the girl twice a week within my gymnastics club.

A number of insights emerged quite quickly. Firstly the teacher was having some difficulty in controlling and containing the child. He adopted a strategy of singling her out for punishment or criticism, even when other children were behaving in exactly the same way. In leading a junior school hymn practice, he more than once attempted to engender the "ripple effect" by naming her. At the same time he often recounted anecdotes in the staffroom about how he had "put her down" or "sorted her out". The child responded by becoming increasing disruptive, deriving her reinforcement from tacit peer group support. In his attempts to negatively reinforce her behaviour the teacher actually provided the positive reinforcement the child sought. Her self-image and standing with her peers seemed to increase accordingly.

Despite my desire to be a detached observer, I became increasingly
alarmed by the development of this conflict. My careful recording of the teacher's remarks in the staffroom began to cohere to reveal an alien construct system, which would be difficult to totally ignore in the long term future. I found myself identifying with the child rather than the teacher and implicitly applauding her minor victories. Mid way through this first term the teacher became ill and was away from school for some months, thus relieving the necessity of headteacher intervention.

This episode engendered a number of conclusions, which were largely unsuspected at the outset. Quite obviously the teacher's pedagogy was far from enlightened and his attempts to impose a submissive role upon the child revealed problems in his control strategy. The negotiations the teacher and child entered into appeared to be at best only dimly understood by the participants, they operated at a reflexive level. As the teacher strove to impose his version of reality and the manifest culture of the school, the child mediated its impact upon her through her perceived interactional successes. Clearly these interactions were not without significance for the other children in the class and it appeared that their view of the teacher was adversely affected. Certainly it was impossible for me to be a neutral, detached observer and the insights derived from this minor investigation influenced my perception of the teacher for the remainder of my time at the school. Indeed it was something of a relief when he was ill as I was beginning to find the staffroom anecdotes increasingly difficult to ignore. In this instance my research negatively influenced future professional interaction. However, it did reveal intimate insights into this teacher's version of educational reality. To summarise, in that teacher-child relationship, pupil culture and the hidden curriculum largely carried the day.

The three examples of interpersonal conflict I have cited in this section raise questions about conflict management which will be dealt with later in the chapter. The examples all share a destructive potential which becomes more obvious in hindsight. A common factor in the three situations is that each protagonist, except in the most primitive and biological sense, never responds directly to another; he responds rather to a more or less veracious imagined construct of the other. "The ideal fitting together of human personalities depends upon a correspondence
between the roles which a person considers himself to be playing and the roles which another fancies him to be playing. Complete contact is attained when the individual's conception of his role corresponds exactly to the constructs others have of him. R D Laing illuminates this process more fully. A further common strand in these examples is the inequality of the participants in terms of institutional power and the consequences of these inequalities for conflict resolution. Interestingly the next section provides accounts of intra-group conflict involving participants of similar status.

3. Conflict within groups

"From disparity between roles and group standards arise the phenomena of conflict between the individual and the group. From a failure of the role assigned in group life to conform to the individual's conception of his role arise mental conflict and neurotic behaviour." For few of us do the roles we ideally play actually conform to reality and even more rarely does our conception of our own behaviour coincide with the conception of others. The extent to which it does not coincide provides a rich potential for conflict.

The size of Redland School dictates the magnitude of the groups involved. In a larger institution school secretaries could constitute a discrete group as opposed to a single actor. For this reason a group will be defined as a section of school inhabitants consisting of two or more people. Indeed the first example basically involves only two people

a) The caretaking group

Waller's definition of intra-group conflict presented above neatly summarises the situation pertaining to Mr Jackson, the caretaker, and the cleaner, Mrs Eaves. Firstly there were major differences in standards and secondly the role assigned to Mrs Eaves was not congruent with her conception of the role. This bald statement, however, fails to represent adequately the background to the conflict biography.

Mr Jackson was appointed as a thirty-two year old with no previous caretaking experience. He was a life-long resident of the village and his personal history and domestic circumstances were therefore public property. He received most of his training as a caretaker "in situ" and had an overwhelming pride in his work.
Mrs Eaves was also a long-standing village resident. She was a grandmother, approaching retirement age, and had worked for a series of caretakers. She had developed her own style and work methods over a number of years and was dismayed by the appointment of a person "who is still only a kid." A more promising conflict scenario is difficult to envisage.

The ramifications of the inevitable conflicts are very interesting to document.

a) The caretaker sought to involve authority figures, such as Technical Services Personnel and the headteacher, to support and impose his definition of reality.

b) Mrs Eaves largely demurred to his demands but sought a safety valve by recounting her lot to any teacher who would listen.

c) In practical terms Mrs Eaves became much more efficient.

d) Mr Jackson denied himself his principal ally in the interests of efficiency, and the most uneven relationship in the school developed.

e) Mrs Eaves continued to test the boundaries of their relationship throughout the period. She refused to internalise Mr Jackson's standards but implicitly agreed to adhere to them so long as he rigorously enforced them.

f) Mrs Eaves became increasingly disloyal and sought to keep the teachers abreast of Mr Jackson's intentions.

g) Mr Jackson appeared to enjoy the conflict and rationalised it as the most appropriate method of achieving his aims.

To summarise, Mr Jackson's management style was the antithesis of the headteacher's perceived style, nevertheless in practical terms the efficiency of the operation was now increased. Warm personal relationships had been sacrificed, or perhaps never considered, in return for increased output. The working relationship was predicated on uneven status, mutual mistrust, disloyalty and acrimony.
b) **The pupil group**

Pupils constitute the largest group in any school and to elaborate even a fraction of the inter-pupil conflicts observed at Redland would be a mammoth task. Instead I intend to very briefly describe the relationship of two new infant starters over a two term period from September of 1981 to March 1982.

Once more it is difficult to fully understand the complexities of their interaction without some biographical details. Both boys lived in the same village, had attended the same play-school and were transported to Redland on the same special bus. There had been a history of disagreements between the children, which had at various stages included the respective mothers in the conflict. The boys joined Mrs Wood's reception class on the same day. Clearly both children came to the situation with a pre-conceived negative orientation to the other which manifested itself in "blaming behaviour". Whenever anything went wrong in the classroom each child typically blamed the other, similar behaviour manifested itself in the playground. Each child was extensively de-briefed by his mother upon his arrival from school. Conflict biographies were elaborated in this way and at the Autumn Term Parents' Evening each mother asked Mrs Wood to keep her son away from the other boy. Mrs Wood endeavoured to concur with these wishes. However, as the term progressed the children were apparently magnetically attracted to one another. The first round of parent visits to the headteacher occurred in early December - Mrs Rowell came to complain that Paul Stephen had wilfully torn her son's body-warmer. Mr and Mrs Stephen arrived unannounced the following week to pursue the matter with the headteacher. This incident was satisfactorily resolved, however, a similar event took place in January 1982 involving phone calls and letters from parents. At this point the headteacher invited both sets of parents to arrange an interview with himself and Mrs Wood. At these interviews Mrs Wood and the headteacher offered the view that the boys could co-exist quite happily and purposefully without parental interference. This message was accepted by both sets of parents and the boys became firm friends and no further examples of familial conflict occurred as far as the researcher is aware.

This example serves to illustrate that conflict can be a constructive process, it unifies as well as it divides. As the boys became familiar with the whole network of social processes at work in the school they
were drawn together by initial conflict and an arena was provided for its resolution. The situation dictated that the headteacher and Mrs Wood perform the man-in-the-middle function and the eventual familial harmony reflected the efficacy of their performance. Indeed enhanced peer rivalry replaced social conflict and provided a positive motivational force for academic achievement.

d) The teaching-staff group

Conflict can be generated from the most unlikely circumstances. The curriculum development and re-designation of scaled posts examined at some length in the last chapter were characterised by a lack of manifest conflict within the teaching-staff group. Indeed the most serious disruption of social equanimity was caused by a seemingly unimportant event in terms of the total institution. Mr Andrews decided to marry and the wedding was arranged for August 1982. The first clue of these impending nuptials the headteacher received, arrived in the shape of a wedding invitation in early June of that year. Upon discussion with Mrs Jordan it rapidly became apparent that no other member of the teaching group had been invited, however, the school secretary and ancillary had both received invitations. Mrs Comfrey and Mrs Holmes innocently informed everybody in the staffroom in Mr Andrews' absence. The headteacher was largely unaware of the social developments which enfolded, but was kept abreast of necessary insights by Mrs Jordan. The purchase and presentation of an appropriate wedding gift for Mr Andrews was a contentious issue in which the headteacher was largely uninvolved. Mrs Jordan tactfully and diplomatically resolved the dilemma by arranging an end of term party at her home, at which a gift was presented to Mr Andrews and his future bride.

Once more these events are difficult to fully understand in isolation, however, if some background colour is etched in the picture becomes immeasurably clearer. As I stated in Chapter One, Mr Andrews could be characterised as an isolate and his unhappy start at Redland had complicated his relationships with other teachers. His rarely expressed opinions were usually dismissed quickly by his professional colleagues. Within this context it is unsurprising that he did not wish to issue a plethora of wedding invitations. The staff perspective interpreted the invitation to the headteacher, the nominal leader of the enterprise, as understandable, however, the invitation of two members of the
non-teaching staff was viewed as a calculated snub. Mr Andrews' shyness and reticence about his plans compounded the felony in their view. My conclusion was that Mr Andrews had been offered a limited number of invitations by his in-laws and had resolved the dilemma as satisfactorily as he could in the circumstances. Indeed he invited the people with whom he had the closest interaction within the school. Nevertheless this eminently social episode may have had professional repercussions in the long term as Mr Andrews never overcame his isolated location in the institutional order. It is also noteworthy that the social disjuncture was resolved by the intervention of Mrs Jordan, acting in a semi-official deputy headteacher role. Notwithstanding the headteacher's observer status he had a vested interest in ensuring the conflict was resolved.

4 Conflict between groups

The management of inter-group conflict is complicated by the number of participants involved, the larger the group the greater the number of potential negative interactions. The case-study I will present exemplifies all three conflict categories, commencing with the headteacher as observer, then moving into the man -in-the-middle mode and ultimately becoming a primary participant.

The dining supervisory group consisted of five mature ladies, all of whom were mothers of past or present pupils. Their responsibilities included assisting in the dining hall from noon till 12.40 pm and thereafter supervising the children in the playground. They had all been appointed by Mr Lake, however, they looked to Mrs Livingstone, the cook, as their representative and direct leader. Three of the five had serious problems in controlling the children in their charge and sought to conceal this shortcoming with aggression and bad temper. A small proportion of the children enjoyed the cut and thrust of "playing-up the dinner ladies" and developed an imaginative range of strategies for this purpose. Two questionnaires constructed by Mrs Jordan and later by Mrs Jennings in connection with real problem-solving in-service courses and completed by junior pupils, however, revealed an unsuspected depth of antipathy to the dining supervisory personnel. They were characterised as petty tyrants who disrupted legitimate activities, but conveniently ignored bullying and other forms of serious misbehaviour. Their lack of real institutional power and appropriate sanctions was very clearly perceived, even by the younger children.
The commencement of the second term marked the headteacher's move into the man-in-the-middle role. On the one hand lecturettes in assembly about politeness and respect for the 'dinner ladies' and on the other early afternoon meetings with the supervisors in an attempt to improve their performance. It rapidly became evident, however, that these women resented these sessions for a number of reasons. Firstly meetings commencing at 2 pm were in their own time, but more importantly they viewed the cook as the person to whom they were responsible. The headteacher's attempts to summarise his educational philosophy and control strategies resulted in their desire to send any 'trouble-maker' to stand outside his door. The headteacher's reluctance to support this policy and cast himself in the role of surrogate dinner lady, albeit with greater powers, was seen as a further example of lack of support. Indeed the headteacher had been faced with a number of situations where the behaviour of the pupil malefactor was very understandable in the light of the manner in which the dining supervisor had treated him. Parental complaints in relation to one particular lady were extremely difficult to deflect.

The headteacher's response to what appeared to be a worsening situation, whereas in reality he had just become more fully aware of it, was to become increasingly authoritarian in his dealings with these ladies. Careful rotas, pairing the more able with the least able, and exhaustive guidelines were issued and the headteacher made a great show of checking their operation. Indeed he made the dining supervisors directly responsible to staff and enlisted Mrs Livingstone's support in this matter. Furthermore, at his behest, the teaching staff organised more lunch-time activities and seats, logs and games were provided for the playground. The headteacher believed the conflict had been managed effectively given the parameters of the situation.

Events during the headteacher's final term at Redland, however, proved that such conflicts may be cyclical and truce situations may be reached but the war has not entirely been forgotten. Indeed news of the headteacher's imminent departure proved to be the catalyst for the rekindling of several old conflicts, as Mr Jackson's previously reported comment illustrated. In February 1984 Mrs Livingstone came to the headteacher and made the following statement "the ladies are getting fed up with the behaviour of the children and the way some of the teachers do dinner duty. I know you are leaving soon and it's not your concern anymore, but can you have a word with the teachers?" The headteacher
struggled to retain his composure and having discussed the details more fully with Mrs Livingstone, he promised to look into the matter. His subsequent recounting of the conversation to Mrs Jennings produced a similar, although more explicit, response to his own. She also was very angry.

A retrospective analysis of the group deployments in this conflict situation reveals the following considerations

a) The manifest substantive focus of the conflict is the behaviour of the children.

b) The "ladies", including kitchen and supervisory staff, constituting the group presided over by Mrs Livingstone and who eat together in the kitchen each day from 1.30 to 2.00 pm, believe the deterioration in the behaviour of the children is attributable to the inadequacy of the duty teachers.

c) Latent considerations could include the redress of old grievances - the ladies are signalling to the headteacher that they disapprove of his previous conflict resolutions arrangements. They have also chosen Mrs Livingstone as their leader, a role she has eagerly accepted.

d) The headteacher initially responded as a member of the 'teacher' group - how dare these people criticise the way we discharge voluntary duties!

e) The headteacher concluded that there was an implicit criticism of his educational philosophy, that is to say the ladies believed he was not sufficiently authoritarian.

The headteacher's initial inclination was to be very authoritarian in relation to the ladies, however, further investigation of the period in the dining hall after the children had finished eating and most of the staff had left revealed that there was some need for improved arrangements. Predictably discussion of the problem at a staff meeting identified the inadequacy of the supervisors as the primary causation. A meeting with the supervisors similarly located responsibility with the duty teacher. Indeed a number of deep seated prejudices and misunderstandings surfaced at this gathering and it became increasingly
obvious that a new contract of inter-group interaction was being negotiated.

At the end of the day the headteacher constructed his own solution in the light of his institutional power and careful scrutiny of the contractual obligations. Indeed he seized the opportunity to redress some long-standing grievances, for example, the kitchen staff had traditionally used some older boys to stack and pack away chairs, a practice of which he disapproved. In the new arrangements this practice was discontinued. The supervisors were issued with a written job description, carefully itemising their times and responsibilities. The final paragraph of this document encapsulated all the headteacher wanted to say to the 'ladies', kitchen and supervisory.

"May I remind you that dining supervisors are employed to supervise the children rather than serve or clear away meals and at all times are directly answerable to the Headteacher (or in his absence the Deputy). 13.2.84"

It is debatable whether this conflict would have been dealt with in the same way if the headteacher's departure had not been imminent. Indeed his solution thrust him into a much more authoritarian stance than he had previously desired to take. The obvious question occurs to the reader "was this expediency, or paying off old scores?" In either event it is interesting to reflect upon the interactive nature of group conflict. The original protagonists were the 'children' and the 'supervisors'. 'Parents' became involved and the headteacher was necessarily included. The further inclusion of the 'kitchen ladies' and the 'teachers' broadened the conflict and 'County Hall' and the 'governors' were obliquely involved in the resolution phase.

5. Conflict between an individual and another group

a) Despite the headteacher's polarisation towards the teacher group in the above case-study, his institutional position dictated his separation from this group. The following example demonstrates how the headteacher became a primary participant in conflict by virtue of his particular location in the institutional order.

Eggleston identifies various interaction systems in the school and the example relates to conflict between the 'teaching system'
and the 'administrative system'. As outlined earlier the headteacher was sometimes asked by the secretary to solve dinner register conundrums, which were often the result of careless completion of the registers. The headteacher came to resent wasting time in this way because he felt firstly the secretary should be able to find the mistakes and secondly the teachers should not have made the errors in the first place. The problem was exacerbated by a rise in the cost of a dinner to a particularly unmanageable multiple. Mistakes and frustration increased. Discussion of the problem at a staff meeting produced the inevitable dilemma, are teachers to devote time to teaching or to completing dinner registers? The headteacher found himself representing the administrative system at the possible expense of the teaching system, a particularly ironic circumstance as he viewed the teaching system of prime importance and the administrative system as a necessary encumbrance.

The conflict was resolved in the short-term by the teachers exercising more care in the completion of the registers and in the long term by the appointment of a different secretary. The conflict resulted in increased efficiency.

b) The caretaker has already featured in two previous conflict case-studies, however, his on-going conflict with the teaching staff merits some elaboration within the category of conflicts the headteacher was required to attempt to resolve.

Upon the arrival of the new headteacher and the new caretaker, the school was extremely untidy. The two men spent many happy hours during the first summer holiday cleaning out old furniture, out-dated books and accumulated rubbish. Some of these items were seen as valuable resources by certain members of the teaching staff, nevertheless the school rapidly appeared much tidier. Indeed Mr Jackson invested much mental and physical energy in re-organising various storerooms and resources and improving the performance of his cleaner. Inevitably his fierce pride in the appearance of his school brought him into conflict with the group of people he viewed as causing its untidiness. He reluctantly accepted the disruptions caused by the presence of the children but increasingly concluded that the teaching staff were making his job more difficult than it should be. Pottery, cooking and games had particularly unpleasant
consequences in his view. Furthermore some teachers set out the furniture in their rooms in such a way as to make the cleaning process difficult. Indeed the hoover would only fit comfortably under certain configurations of desks. Initially the headteacher listened sympathetically to his suggestions and made comment when appropriate. Mr Jackson completed his probationary period with distinction and his relationships with the teaching staff were generally very positive.

A field-note for Friday 4 February 1983 signalled the beginning of serious conflict. "The caretaker reported to me that he was very upset because Mr Williams had stapled papers to his tables. Worse still, Mrs Jordan has had children sitting on a chair on the circular table he had recently re-surfaced." The caretaker's exact words were "I wouldn't mind but they were climbing up with their outdoor shoes on. So what is the point of sanding the tops of the tables in the library. I felt like saying something to Mrs Jordan, but I just bit my tongue." The headteacher expressed his pleasure that Mr Jackson had bitten his tongue and as painlessly as possible sought to explain that schools were designed for the education of children and that both teachers were engaged in activities of which he approved.

It would seem Mr Jackson reflected on these events and the following week decided to take action. Firstly he approached Mrs Jordan on the subject in front of three other teachers. An initially good natured exchange degenerated into Mrs Jordan saying "You can't speak to me like that I am a member of staff." To which Mr Jackson retorted "What do you think I am? I am a member of staff as well." The normally forceful and strong-willed Mrs Jordan came to my room the following day and amidst floods of tears recounted the tale and concluded "you will have to do something about him." A subsequent interview with Mr Jackson revealed the inevitable biography to the conflict and an uneasy truce was negotiated between Mr Jackson and Mrs Jordan.

The second strand of Mr Jackson’s strategy, however, involved teaching Mr Williams a lesson. Instead of replacing fallen library books on the unsatisfactory bookshelves on the walls of Mr Williams's classroom, Mr Jackson decided to place them in the waste-paper bin. Any rulers or pens left on the desks also found
their way into the same place. Mr Williams came to the headteacher, about a week after the Mrs Jordan incident, in a very agitated state to find out "what he intended to do about it." The headteacher summoned Mr Jackson to his room to discuss the situation, but rapidly lost his temper. He uncharacteristically banged his desk and forcefully expressed his feelings to Mr Jackson. Some very clear directives were issued and superficially the situation was resolved.

The teaching staff obviously discussed these events and negotiated a satisfactory working relationship with Mr Jackson thereafter. The final manifestation of underlying uneasiness came in February 1984. Mrs Jennings sent some of her children outside to complete some practical mathematics. Mr Jackson sent them back in because he felt it was too wet for them to be in the playground. Mrs Jennings went outside and decided that the conditions were reasonable and directed the children out once more. Shortly afterwards Mr Jackson marched the children upstairs to the classroom and a rather unseemly scene ensued. At this point Mrs Jennings arrived in the headteacher's room in tears. The headteacher was especially concerned because Mrs Jennings was to be acting headteacher the following term. His inevitable interview with Mr Jackson again illustrated the inefficiency of reasoned argument. Recourse to institutional weaponry was the only viable alternative - the Technical Services Director was informed and the Area Supervisor delivered an appropriate reprimand. The incident was logged and the Chairman of Governors informed. These actions would probably not have been taken had not the headteacher been leaving. Was he solving problems or vindictively repaying old scores?

A number of tentative conclusions can be drawn from the process of this on-going teacher-caretaker conflict.

a) The views of Mr Jackson held by the teachers polarised after the Mrs Jordan episode. They developed a group strategy for dealing with him.

b) Mr Jackson felt he was being treated as an inferior and he could not understand the teacher-view of the school.
c) The headteacher may have invoked an inappropriate management style with Mr Jackson at the outset by not behaving in the authoritarian way he expected. The headteacher's attempts to involve Mr Jackson in the social events of the teaching staff and governors may also have been ill advised.

d) Mr Jackson appeared to respond better to aggression and threats than reasoned debate.

e) Mr Jackson constantly retested the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and viewed the tears of two deputy headteachers as minor victories.

c) An eight year old girl provided the basis for this final conflict case study. During eight school days of the Spring Term 1983 the staff - teachers, supervisors and ultimately headteacher - were involved in negative intervention with the junior girls. On three successive lunch times articles of clothing or footwear were discovered floating in the girls toilet. This initially amusing scenario became conflict inducing when it proved virtually impossible to uncover the culprit. Serious talks by Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings bore no fruit, undercover operations by the dinner ladies provided no leads and interviews of the owners and discoverers of the items by the headteacher provided no progress. Three school days passed without further incident but the phantom struck again on the fourth day, again no clues.

In desperation a T-shirt was planted the next lunch-time and Mrs Jennings observed the girls toilet door from the hall. Success! The girl emerged holding the dripping T-shirt, she had been the only entrant since the T-shirt had been planted.

This rather amusing episode illustrated how one innocuous little girl could frustrate and confuse a large number of adults. The staff's inability to identify the culprit could have had serious implications for the internal discipline of the school. Furthermore, and more importantly in the headteacher's view, an increasing number of children reporting these events to their parents could have severely damaged the reputation of the school. This relationship between the internal workings of the school and its external, supporting social network provide the substantive focus of the next two chapters.
Conflict resolution

"One of man's most persistent interests has been to find ways of reducing conflict - or increasing co-operation - in organisations." The case studies elaborated exemplify the headteacher's desire to manage conflict. The assumption was that the reduction of conflict would make the organisation more productive, or at least more pleasant. The headteacher clearly had a vested interest as he is "one of the people who has the most to lose from conflict among the staff, for it then becomes difficult for him to get co-operation in the carrying out of school policies and in particular to achieve a general acceptance of any proposed changes." Thus the headteacher may assume a conflict manager mode or in other cases have it thrust upon him, by virtue of his location in the institutional order. For example, both the caretaker and the cook accepted the legitimacy of his function as line manager, in bringing their conflict to him for arbitration. Indeed, when the headteacher became aware of any conflict which had potential ramifications for the welfare of the institution he found it extremely difficult not to become involved. Furthermore, it could be argued that in example 2C, involving the teacher and child, he should have involved himself at an early stage.

The interaction of political and cultural processes is apparent in the examples of conflict catalogued in this chapter. Conflict can be seen as an element of the political process, the result of which is accommodation, a living arrangement.

"Accommodation has been described as a process of adjustment, that is, an organisation of social relations and attitudes to prevent or reduce conflict, to control competition, and to maintain a basis of security in the social order for persons and divergent interests and types to carry on together their varied life activities." Thus the cultural process is one of interpenetration of people and groups and its ultimate result is the sharing of experience and history. This transacting of conflict resolution through interpenetration can be described as assimilation. "Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and other attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history are incorporated with them in a common cultural life."
The case-studies presented illustrate the interactive nature of the political and the cultural, of accommodation and assimilation. Elements of both processes are identifiable in each example, however, their relative proportions vary according to the specific nature of the conflict. The political process is particularly significant in the conflict between the teachers and the dinner ladies, whereas the emphasis is cultural in the example involving the two reception infants. Notwithstanding, the obvious conclusion from the efforts to resolve these conflicts is that individuals and groups vary in their access to real institutional power. Indeed, conflicts may not have been resolved, rather powerful actors simply imposed their definition upon less powerful participants. Dahrendorf\textsuperscript{18} believed that the major axis in society, or a microcosm of society like Redland, was authority - the power to impose one's will upon others. \textit{"Solutions ...... were not achieved by consensus. Debate, argument and conflict between the varied interests resulted in the attainment of truce situations which were determined by the power and resources of the contesting groups."}\textsuperscript{19} The headteacher had invested in him the power and authority to impose his will upon others and the fragility of some of the truces was indicated by the response of some actors to the news of his imminent departure.

At the time of his appointment the headteacher believed that conflict could be resolved by open discussion, provided that all the parties involved learnt to tolerate conflict, used it to identify issues, and made compromises in order to reach consensus. The strategy ran thus:-

CONFLICT - COMPROMISE - CONSENSUS - COMMITMENT

The dissipation of his naivete is obvious in the foregoing text - all parties were not disposed, or able, to participate in open discussion, nor were they generally prepared to compromise willingly. Different individuals and groups bring different interests and objectives to the enterprise and their interests vary in their mutual compatibility. Necessarily, therefore, at one level, \textit{"the educational manager is a builder of political coalitions."}\textsuperscript{20} Indeed the headteacher can use conflict to his own advantage if he is dexterous in the manipulation of the component parts. For example, the headteacher saw the conflict between the kitchen ladies and staff as an opportunity to amend existing practices without responsibility attaching directly to him. Thus by openly seeking clarification from County Hall on particular regulations, the resultant arrangements masqueraded as County policy rather than his
personal decisions. Indeed recourse to higher or external authority was used to endue a number of conflict resolutions with an element of objectivity - the locus of power was suggested to be outside the institution. In addition to his legitimate institutional power, the headteacher had ready access to externally significant others and his conflict resolution weaponry was increased accordingly. Nevertheless other actors like the caretaker and cook could also call upon their supervisors to bolster their positions. Apart from minimal involvement in the cook - caretaker conflict, this did not happen.

The focus of this chapter has been an examination of the negative interaction within the school. This 'negative interaction' has been characterised as 'conflict', however, the two phenomena are not entirely interchangeable as conflict can have a positive dimension. "Whether conflict is desirable or not must be judged in terms of its results for the particular organisation, situation and persons concerned."¹ For example, competition and conflict between pupils, within a broader context for co-operation, can be of benefit to all those involved. Competition between teachers also had very positive consequences for Redland. Indeed negative interaction with an external group, such as the parents, increased the internal unity of the teaching staff and thus had a positive dimension. Other conflicts with external groups or agencies increased the 'we-feeling' amongst participants, through the closing of ranks against outside threats. From this viewpoint "conflict is a constructive process, and creates as much as it destroys. And conflict unifies as well as it divides; it is one of the greatest group-making factors."¹²

An unbalanced picture of Redland School may have been presented in this chapter, by providing accounts of the most serious conflict situations which arose during the three years. Furthermore, the efficacy of conflict resolution strategies cannot be quantified simply in terms of these case-studies. The headteacher and many other actors were constantly striving towards the Utopian ideal of perfect harmony and co-operation by operationalising programmes to obviate or defuse conflict. Attempts to involve non-teaching staff in the professional and social life of the school illustrate this element of conflict reduction. Indeed it is axiomatic that measures which obviate manifestations of conflict are impossible to quantify, as the conflict does not occur. Nevertheless conflict is an obvious concomitant of social life and an inevitable consequence of the interaction of diverse individuals and
Conflict preserves relations which might otherwise become intolerable. Conflict, further is a means to peace. Conflict is an essential part of the dialectic of personal growth. Indeed the conflicts elaborated did appear to provide a mechanism for participants "to let off steam" and in each case peace was ultimately restored. The headteacher's experience as a manager and personal competence was certainly increased by these episodes and his fear of conflict was gradually eroded.

In writing this chapter, I have arrived at a number of unexpected conclusions. Both as a participant and an observer, I was unaware of the amount and magnitude of conflict inherent in the situation. In the main relationships appeared to be very positive and as the headteacher I prided myself on the positive social atmosphere I had helped to generate and maintain. In retrospect the episodes had broader institutional ramifications than appeared to me at the time and their destructive potential was greater than I recognised. This lack of insight is made the more surprising by my implicit desire to attain the Utopian goal of a conflict free institution. Indeed, particularly at the beginning of the three years, I was afraid of conflict and strove to avoid it at all costs. Furthermore, I may have underestimated the long-term effects of conflict and the ease with which "old wounds" can be reopened. At the end my imminent departure liberated both myself and others to behave in a way that would have been inappropriate if I had not been leaving.

The presentation of these conflict case-studies has proved an enlightening experience for the writer. In concluding the chapter I propose to illuminate this data further by reviewing it from an overtly phenomenological perspective.

Each actor reacts to an organisation in the light of his previous experience and this reaction can be expressed in terms of the "meaning" the organisation has for him. Thus the caretaker responds to Redland within the context of his own school and previous work experiences and enters the situation with a unique configuration of meanings. Furthermore, he comes with a subjective perception of authority and authority figures in the organisation. This is equally true for the other participants. Thus it is unrealistic to expect all members to behave congruently and Redland can be viewed as an institution replete with conflict rather than conflict-free. Participants each bring their perceptions of what the organisation ought to be and on this basis form
permanent or semi-permanent coalitions. Clearly "senior" members of the organisation wish to have a considerable degree of control over "junior" members - teachers over children, cook over kitchen assistants and caretaker over cleaner. The topmost member, the headteacher, desires control over everybody. Organisations, however, do not operate on such a simplistic basis and typically involve compromises resulting from ongoing negotiation between members. Despite espousing open negotiation, senior members of Redland largely sought to confine negotiation to serving their own interests, that is to say within clearly define parameters. Indeed the headteacher increasingly identified with the organisation to the point where it appeared to be an extension of the management self, or ego-concept. This scenario provides a fertile environment for the development of conflict.

A recurrent theme in the consideration of the case-studies presented is the importance of the authority and power of the headteacher. Notwithstanding, the significance of negotiation, and means by which other participants seek to redistribute this power, should not be underestimated. For not only can power be exerted by moving towards people, it can also be exercised by withdrawing from other people. Indeed, the interaction of political and cultural processes in the development and resolution of conflict has been highlighted earlier and in order to understand these mechanisms we need to discover how participants perceive Redland.

Subjective perspectives are not chaotic. However inconsequential they may seem, they are perfectly rational when understood, because they derive from the individual's own interpretation of "real" experience. A "real" experience is simply an experience upon which an individual acts believing it to be true and does not discover it to be untrue. We may call views of Redland School "fantasies" because they are interpretations, but these fantasies are generally confined to the individual who continues to act on these fantasies so that they become his realities. So long as participants' fantasies do not collide, social equilibrium will be maintained. However, when they are at odds, we have manifestations of conflict like those elaborated in the foregoing text.

The notion of an association of diverse individuals and groups is inherent in the concept of Redland School as a formal organisation. It is this associative quality which gives structure and coherence to the
organisation - without association there can be no Redland School. This
association also has a psychological dimension; that is to say, the
reasons for association are significant for their psychological meaning.
Meaning will vary not only for category of member, such as teacher, pupil
or cleaner, but also for an individual personality. Notwithstanding the
reservations expressed earlier in the chapter, it is helpful to view the
behaviour of actors by reference to the concepts of "position" and
"role". Position is the location which an individual holds in an
organisation, it is his relationship to other members. Role is the
complex of behaviours that go with the position and is dependent on the
individual's interpretation of the expectations of others in the
organisation. A neat explanation of "role theory" is supplied by Katz
and Kahn, but they do not explain fully the subjective nature of the
perceptions of the role incumbent. The kind of interpretation an
individual gives to messages about his role behaviour depends on two
variables - personality and career needs, though career needs are
themselves dependant on personality. Thus an individual holds a position
in the school, for example labelled "caretaker", but his role
expectations derive from the way others relate to him. Others relate to
him in response to their understanding of him as a person and their
interpretation of his personality needs, modified by their own personal
response to him. The caretaker conflicts elaborated in the case-studies
illustrate these mechanisms.

The career variable in an institution like Redland derives from the fact
that organisations change and develop and hence the returns available to
participants change. Personality needs for power, for example, may have
altered during the three year period - Mrs Jennings sought institutional
power and at the conclusion of the research was about to become acting
headteacher! Contractingly, Mrs Holmes may not have derived the
psychological returns she desired for her contribution to Redland and the
behavioural ramifications of this perception may have caused the conflict
that exacerbated the situation. In other words psychological contracts
may be made, but are not explicit and may be subsequently modified or
changed non-explicitly and unilaterally. She resigned! An obvious
concomitant of changes in non-explicit psychological contracts is
conflict.

If Redland School is viewed as an association of people who make and
continually remake contracts by generally unverbalised negotiation, the
control problems of management are very difficult. To be in control of a
situation, the headteacher, or indeed any other conflict manager, must be able to conceptualise clearly what is actually happening. If, however, the organisation exists by virtue of hidden negotiation, the management task of control is impossible. It then becomes necessary to conceive the management function in an alternative way, one that relates more closely to the negotiation process. Such a view is a facilitative or counselling model whereby the aim of management is to open up the negotiation processes and encourage reconciliation or the acceptance of divergencies. This is the dimly-perceived model the headteacher was striving towards, however, his behaviour may actually have militated against the development of such a style. Whereas he saw his management style as open and democratic, other participants may have viewed his behaviour recorded in the foregoing case studies as authoritarian and autocratic. Indeed his counselling skills may have been insufficiently developed to operationalise the counselling model he favoured.

This account of institutional interaction indicates that the conflict management is not solely the responsibility of the senior members of Redland School, but rather it is a common function of the organisation as a whole; that is, of all members potentially equally. The headteacher's function becomes considerably simpler if he can see himself as one negotiator among many, constrained as much by his own understanding of situations as anyone else. In this view, leadership does not involve going ahead and expecting all to follow, but rather one of facilitating dialogue to discover where each person wishes to go and negotiating the best commonly acceptable solution. This is not consensus or majority decision, but the dynamic creativity of unresolved tensions being kept in play until negotiation helps everyone to change their perception and position.

A phenomenological approach to the consideration of conflict does not lend itself to comprehensive model building, nor is it intended that it should. Indeed the construction of comprehensive models is often at the expense of a proper consideration of individual behaviours. The emphasis of this chapter has been to focus on people as individuals and the particular ways in which their perceptions lead to the generation and resolution of conflict. Indeed newer approaches to curriculum development and institutional evaluation draw increasingly heavily on phenomenological standpoints, emphasising the subjectivity of all our activity in organisations and organisational tasks. Recent research into school evaluation indicates that we must take account of how
individuals responded to the school and that where we take broad groups or categories of people, such as "pupils", "teachers" or "non-teaching staff", and attempt to generalise about them, we miss some of the most significant meanings the school has for them. If, however, we can tease out the multiplicity of meanings of individual actors, in the manner I have sought to develop in this chapter, we stand a chance of generating greater insight into what schools like Redland are about.

In addition to illuminating the social processes at work within the school, the consideration of conflict undertaken in this chapter has some interesting implications for the headteacher. Furthermore the perspectives developed in this account are of obvious interest to the writer in his current role as a trainer of potential and new headteachers. The following list indicates a retrospective identification of my training needs as the new headteacher of Redland School.

1. A clearer view of the organisation and management style I was seeking to develop.

2. A greater and deeper understanding of the social processes at work within the school.

3. The development of the appropriate configuration of skills required to implement and execute my chosen management style, for example, counselling skills.

4. A greater awareness of the needs and potential of non-teaching staff.

Clearly the headteacher's management style is transmitted to the other participants in the enterprise by his behaviour from his first visit onwards. His style is inferred from his overt management behaviour and his personal reaction to chance circumstances and is thus established by the coherence of design and case-law. Interactional biographies commence with the first meeting of actors and are elaborated over time. These considerations reveal the importance of a positive start to the undertaking of a headmastership and indicate the desirability of a clarity of purpose in terms of management behaviour. As I have already indicated I considered myself to be a disciple of the human relations
school and consequently strove towards a dimly perceived Utopia predicated on this affiliation. In considering the contents of this chapter and the previous one in relation to Gray’s Typologies of Organisations²⁴ presented below, however, my behaviour is not entirely congruent with the human relations approach.

### TYPOLOGIES OF ORGANISATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL</th>
<th>CHARISMATIC</th>
<th>MECHANISTIC</th>
<th>HUMAN</th>
<th>RELATIONS</th>
<th>SYSTEMIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining</td>
<td>Pursuing an</td>
<td>Running a</td>
<td>Leading</td>
<td>Adapting a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tradition</td>
<td>intuition</td>
<td>machine</td>
<td>groups</td>
<td>system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Organisation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conception</th>
<th>Historical</th>
<th>Spontaneous</th>
<th>Mechanistic</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>System:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>institution creation</td>
<td>creation</td>
<td>structure</td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td>living organism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of design</th>
<th>Preserving</th>
<th>Giving</th>
<th>Maximising</th>
<th>Maximising</th>
<th>Maximising</th>
<th>Maximising</th>
<th>System:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>status quo</td>
<td>effect to intuition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| effec

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of momentum</th>
<th>Within</th>
<th>Dynamism of leadership</th>
<th>Within</th>
<th>In system:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>heritage</td>
<td>intuition</td>
<td>drive</td>
<td>individuals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation of Parts</th>
<th>All focussed Mechanical</th>
<th>Fluid:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stable</td>
<td>on intuition linkage</td>
<td>informal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Relation to Attuned to, Rejection of Device for Reflection of | Attuned to |
| Status quo: managing cultured | changing |
| Mass, Democratic | and |
| Homogeneous society | environment |

-144-
### Decision making process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main subjects to change</th>
<th>Recurrent items</th>
<th>Critical issues</th>
<th>Efficient Group performance</th>
<th>Adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature and perception of goals</td>
<td>Generally assumed</td>
<td>Highly explicit</td>
<td>Objective quantitatively emergent</td>
<td>Definitive: unifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of consciousness</td>
<td>Non-reflective</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Conscious: Articulation calculated of feelings</td>
<td>Highly conscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrete or continuous</td>
<td>Continuous: Discrete: recurrent unpredictable</td>
<td>Discrete: Continuous: rational emerging</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainspring of decision</td>
<td>Announcement of custom</td>
<td>Proclamation issue of intuition orders</td>
<td>Consensus in Expert initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication of decision of heritage</td>
<td>Magnetic influence</td>
<td>Detailed Shared directives</td>
<td>Interpreted by leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of response on</td>
<td>Implicit Immediate</td>
<td>Intuitive By coercion</td>
<td>Participate adaptation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Leadership:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Elder: Enlightened</th>
<th>Aggressive: domineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expert:</td>
<td>Sensitive: cultured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personality</td>
<td>wise:</td>
<td>domineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technician</td>
<td>sacred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The contrast between philosophy and practice is thrown into stark relief by an analysis of the headteacher's behaviour documented in the foregoing case studies. He believed himself to be developing a "human relations" approach, however, in many cases his behaviour may have been more congruent with a "systemic" orientation and on some occasions even closer to a "mechanistic" style. To be more precise, in considering the organisation he conceived it as a network of relationships, but progressively abandoned the maximisation of individual happiness in favour of maximising relevance and ultimately maximising efficiency. The decision making process also reflects some evidence of a move from the "human relations", through "systemic" to the "mechanistic". The headteacher's management of the dining supervisors graphically represents this process: the mainspring of the decision making process moves from consensus, through expert initiative, to the issue of orders. Examples of the same phenomenon can be uncovered in the consideration of leadership and control processes. Clearly Gray's categories are ideal types and to employ them in this manner may be illegitimate, however, this brief analysis suggests that the headteacher is, at least partially, the manager circumstances and other participants allow him to be. This discussion will be pursued in much greater depth in Chapter Six.
References


11. Kirkman S "A never-ending struggle to keep up appearances". T.E.S. 7.12.84.


Chapter Four  The influence of extra-institutional personnel

The central focus of the first three chapters has been the behaviour of intra-institutional participants within the social confines of Redland School. In this way the perspectives developed reflect a consideration of Redland School as a largely self-contained entity. "Schools of course, are not just responsible to themselves nor are they impervious to outside influences. In the first place they serve local communities that are rich in their own traditions and closely linked with their schools.... Secondly, schools are part of a public system of educational provision governed by politics and procedures agreed on at both national and local level." Hence the following three chapters represent a focal shift, moving from an analysis of Redland School as a self-contained social microcosm to a consideration of its location within the broader, interactive social context.

In this present chapter my intention is to focus upon the social environment external to Redland School and to identify particular features of that environment which influence its internal life and workings. Chapter five involves a reversal of the telescope and views the interaction of "The School" and its supporting social environment from the opposite end of the equation. That is to say the analysis seeks to illustrate the strategies used by intra-institutional actors to influence significant others within the broader social context. Clearly these two chapters are opposite sides of the same coin, on one side the influence of the environment upon the institution while on the obverse, the attempts of intra-institutional participants to manage the impressions of themselves and their school available for external scrutiny. Figure one summarises the interaction and complementary quality of these two chapters and suggests the inherent "chicken and egg" dilemma; which side of the equation should be given primacy, internal influences or attempts to influence the external? My decision to pursue the conceptual scheme outlined above reflects my perception of the Headteacher's view of the network of social interaction, notably that external influences must be identified and taken account of as a precursor to any systematic attempt at impression management and the development of a public relations strategy.
The external influences upon Redland School were many and varied and ranged along a continuum from formal to informal. Figure Two represents the skeletal basis of this continuum and illustrative manifestations of the operation of formal/informal influence have been identified. A number of additional external influences have been subsumed in the groups of people elaborated, for example, Her Majesty's Inspectors and the Department of Education and Science have been viewed as an arm of National Government and the Diocesan Board of Education has been deemed to exert its particular sphere of influence through the School Governors. In this way the above diagrammatic representation is truly skeletal and portrays the principal influences rather than providing an exhaustive catalogue. Furthermore, Figure Two summarises my conceptual approach to this chapter. I propose to begin by considering the impact of National Government on Redland School and subsequently progressing systematically across the continuum to the informal pole. As a necessary preamble to this discussion, however, the nettle of the relationship between influence and power must be firmly grasped and dealt with.

**Figure Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Government</th>
<th>County Council</th>
<th>School Governors</th>
<th>County Hall Schools' Advisory Branch Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**FORMAL**

- 1980 Ed Act Sch. Uniform Appointments
- 1981 Ed Act Corporal Punishment Termly Appointments Visits Interviews

**INFORMAL**

- Termly Courses Evenings
- Meetings Meetings

-150-
"Power and influence make up the fine texture of organisations, and indeed of all interactions. Influence is the process whereby A modifies the attitudes or behaviour of B. Power is that which enables him to do it." Redland School can be looked at as a fine weave of influence patterns, involving individuals or groups seeking to encourage others to think or act in particular ways. In order to understand the interactive arrows of Figure One, the nature of power and influence must be delineated, for they are the means by which the people of the institution are linked to its purpose. The study of influence and power has proved to be "a bottomless swamp" for social scientists, nevertheless misunderstanding and confusion about these two phenomena must be addressed. Within the context of this forthcoming discussion, I propose to distinguish between influence (an active process) and power (the wherewithal to influence - a resource). All interactions, Homans would maintain, involve an exchange of something for a reciprocal return and the consideration of power and influence imply the infringement of individual autonomy. Indeed, the nature of the constraints placed upon the inhabitants of Redland School by external forces and the socially defined parameters within which inhabitants operate, provide the overt agenda for this chapter. A covert question, lurking beneath the surface of this forthcoming text, however, is "Who controls Redland School?" Toffler asserts that "control is what's important" and the Headteacher, initially subconsciously, shared Toffler's desire "to have control over this large animal and to use it in a constructive way, rather than doing silly things that others want me to do."

Parliament is elected by "the people" and elected members are endowed with the constitutional power to generate policy and law. The Secretary of State for Education and his junior Ministers are responsible for the direction of educational policy and appropriate enabling legislation. Macro-policy making ultimately has an impact on individual institutions like Redland School, by both defining the educational milieu and requiring a specific institutional response to national law making. Two examples of national legislation impacted strongly upon the inhabitants of Redland during the observation period - The 1980 Education Act and The 1981 Education Act.

During the Summer Term of 1981, the first term of the observation period, literature relating to the 1980 Education Act began to arrive in school. As indicated earlier this information was perceived to exert a dual influence, firstly it modified the educational milieu in which Redland
was operating and secondly it required a specific response in the shape of a School Brochure. Furthermore, the tripartite interweave of the British educational system was reinforced by virtue of the fact that the legal requirements of the Act were mediated through the Local Education Authority. The content and national implications of the 1980 Education Act are not the prime concern of this research, but rather the particular ramifications for Redland and its inhabitants.

The duality of the influence of this piece of legislation can be dichotomised into direct and indirect influence. The immediate imperative for institutional reaction related to the statutory obligation to produce a School Brochure by the end of November 1981. Apparently this arbitrary date was established by the Local Education Authority in order to complete the massive printing task involved in producing over three hundred primary school brochures. Nevertheless, the influence was direct and underpinned by the legal machinery of the state - the Government's power and influence demanded a specific institutional response. The Headteacher also believed Government was bringing indirect influence to bear upon an individual school's relationship with its governing and parent body. A central theme in the Act involved raising parent awareness of their statutory rights regarding the choice of school for their children. Planned admission levels did not apply directly to Redland School because of its Church Aided status, nevertheless the scenario of schools competing for a dwindling target population sharpened the necessity for developing an effective public relations strategy in order to woo the "floating parent". Enhanced parental choice clearly had ramifications for the school's interaction with parents and the particularly thorny issue of admission for "rising-fives" is considered later in this chapter.

The outline of the Act and its specific legal requirements arrived in the school in early June. The direct implications for the institution involved changes in admission and secondary transfer arrangements, the production of a School Brochure for distribution to parents of prospective pupils and general display in public libraries, and the oversight of the whole process by the newly named School Governors. The Headteacher's initial reaction was one of dismay insofar as the brochure constituted a statement of intent regarding curriculum and internal organisation, neither of which he had had time to influence. Furthermore, his accountability to the School Governors dictated that any statement he constructed required their official approval. Indeed, he
felt that this legislation had arrived much too early in his headmastership and that a myriad of uncontrolled variables would impinge upon the design of the brochure. His personal agenda of action paralleled the official dictates of the Act and demanded the following course of action:

1) Personal research and understanding of the full implications of the Act.

2) The co-ordination of an institutional response to the demand for a School Brochure by the end of November.

3) Sensitive manipulation of the contribution of other intra-institutional professionals to the participative process of constructing a School Brochure.

In fact this would be the exemplar of his participative approach and therefore the dilemma of the conflict between participant contribution and Headteacher control would have to be delicately handled.

4) The Headteacher's relationship with the School Governors and particularly the Chairman would be a crucial factor in the accountability process. This relationship would be the cornerstone to many future developments, particularly in the light of the additional room for manoeuvre conferred by the School's Church Aided status. Thus a positive relationship had to be developed.

The Headteacher determined to act upon items 1, 3 and 4 forthwith and to await the start of a new term to operationalise item 2. Item 1 proved the most straightforward and the formation of a group of local Headteachers to provide self-help in responding to the Act proved fortuitous. Item 3 was a high priority for the first term and as elaborated in Chapters One and Two, the Headteacher sought to take stock of the school and identify the locus of informal, institutional power. Indeed Item 4 also related to the interrelationship of legislative power. The Chairman is a powerful figure on any governing body, but the Chairman of Governors for this Aided School had increased powers concentrated in his hands by virtue of his relationship with the Church and his status as local incumbent. Thus the Headteacher-Chairman relationship was at one level an arena for negotiation relating to the relative exercise of legitimate power. Law defines the Chairman as the
senior partner in the process of accountability, the Headteacher is accountable to the Governors. The Headteacher, however, has legitimate claims to esoteric knowledge and experience, which confer "expert power". "Expert power is the power that is vested in someone because of his acknowledged expertise."\(^2\) The Headteacher's initial problem was that until these claims were recognised by Reverend Rivers, either explicitly or implicitly, the power was not really his. For this reason many hours were devoted to the development of this relationship by the Headteacher. The Chairman was invited to lead assemblies, to visit classrooms and to present the books at the newly constituted Leavers' Evening. This process could not be advertised as coherent and systematic or even premeditated, indeed the relationship grew out of ad hoc meetings and encounters and its course relied heavily on the input of the Chairman. He revealed himself to be a warm and supportive person, who fully understood the extent of his power and was prepared to exercise it in support of the Headteacher and the School. He quickly demonstrated his readiness to protect the Headteacher from perceived pressure from parents or the Education Authority. From the Headteacher's standpoint he was an ideal ally, he recognised the Headteacher's claim to professional expertise and was prepared to exercise his power to protect the Headteacher's position. The implicit bargain involved the Headteacher allowing the Chairman to chart the spiritual direction of the school, in return for having a "carte blanche" to determine the curriculum and internal organisation of the institution. In fact the Headteacher was endowed with additional insulation to the "carte blanche", by virtue of the fact that the Chairman desired to place himself between manifestations of external pressure and the inhabitants of the School – he would execute a protective gate-keeping function. Ultimately the Headteacher-Chairman relationship was predicated upon friendship and mutual respect, and reciprocity was a powerful influence in the construction of parameters to the situation. The influence of Governors will be considered later in this chapter, however, I have focussed on the Headteacher-Chairman relationship at some length here as it was perceived to be a critical factor in complying with the dictates of the 1980 Act. Furthermore, this discussion illustrates Toffler's contention that "control is what's important,"\(^5\) and both participants gained the control they desired.

The writing of the School Brochure commenced at the start of the Autumn Term. The Headteacher summarised the main elements of the Act and asked individual teachers to draft an appropriate response for the age group
with which they were working. The teachers were asked to meet as sub-groups, those teaching infants, lower juniors and upper juniors. A further staff meeting was held to standardise presentation and agree curriculum divisions and thereafter the Headteacher met each sub-group separately. The sub-groups drew heavily on "A View of the Curriculum,"6 "The School Curriculum"7 and "Primary Education in England"8 and in consequence the Headteacher's editorial brief was simplified. In fact the curriculum element of the final document was expeditiously agreed and represented a statement of intent rather than a reflection of current practice. The codification of school policy relating to matters the Headteacher perceived to be important was also completed without disharmony, a disciplinary policy was established for example. The most contentious item was a statement about school uniform and a number of teachers expressed strong views on the subject. The Headteacher was quite delighted to allow the exercise of participative decision making and in the event the Deputy's informal power base carried the day.

The finished document was presented to the Chairman for his perusal and comment. He approved the brochure in its entirety and asked to include a letter from the Governors as a foreword. This letter simply commended the school to parents and invited them to arrange an interview with the Headteacher if they required further information. The final draft of the whole document was presented to the termly Governors' Meeting in mid October and was nodded through with the scantest scrutiny.

In reflecting on the entire process from the passing of legislation to the production of the brochure, it is ironic that direct influence produced a cosmetic response. The Brochure was a pastiche of statements culled piecemeal from other documents, it said little or nothing about the curriculum of the school and was clearly too general to be translateable into educational practice. The Act provided some leverage for the Headteacher in initiating curriculum and policy discussion and furnished the imperative for the speedy development of particular relationships. In short, the process was more interesting than the content and direct Government influence generated a minimal, albeit legally acceptable, institutional response.

The indirect influence of the Act is even more difficult to quantify. Speaking from the Headteacher's standpoint it certainly heightened my personal awareness of parent power. A number of chance circumstances conspired to sensitise me to the increasing awareness of the parent body
as to their statutory rights. At the simplest level the Act appeared to increase the School's accountability to parents and governors. It represented a piece of legislation which could be used to exert pressure upon the Headteacher and the school. Neighbouring schools could compete for scarce clientele with the abolition of catchment areas and parents could "shop around for the best deal" on admission. Schools in the area began to accept children earlier and earlier in order to get their names on the roll and rival institutions became more responsive to parental wishes in this competitive environment. In truth most parents were probably unaware of the implications of the Act, but schools responded to perceived changes dependant upon its indirect influence. In this way falling pupil rolls, and the consequent ramifications for staffing, added to increasing parental awareness exerted a powerful influence on schools. The Headteacher's personal response to this phenomenon is outlined in the next chapter, however, it is noteworthy that the indirect influence of the Act was perceived by him to be more powerful than its direct counterpart.

The difficulty in disentangling the interrelatedness of the component parts of an education system in the attribution of relative power and influence is exemplified in the above account. Central Government passed legislation which was mediated through Local Government and its appropriate officers. The institution's response was designed by professional staff in the light of their accountability to the School Governors. The outcome was an increase in parental choice and influence - Sir Keith Joseph's original desire had been achieved by a circuitous route at Redland, however, this deceptively simple conclusion masks the subtle interplay of disparate groups of actors and implies an oversimplistic cause and effect relationship.

The Warnock Report and the subsequent 1981 Education Act provided a second example of the effect of Government legislation at the institutional level. Consciousness of the necessity to make appropriate arrangements for children with special needs was heightened by the publication of the Warnock Report and the implications of this greater awareness were increasingly exercising the mind of the Headteacher during the three years. The Act itself prompted the Local Education Authority to appoint an Adviser for Special Educational Needs early in 1983 and to make appropriate financial and manpower resources available for her use. The effects of this appointment and resource allocation began to be recognised in Redland in a variety of different ways during the Autumn
Term of 1983. Firstly, the Educational Psychologist was elevated to a county-wide role to co-operate with the new Adviser in co-ordinating a coherent policy for the whole "special needs" spectrum. Secondly, a regionalised peripatetic special educational needs teaching team was hastily constituted and a representative visited the school. Thirdly, an Area Special Needs Co-ordinator was appointed and he rapidly called a Headteachers Meeting to introduce himself and clarify his job description. Fourthly, every Leicestershire Headteacher was summoned to Beaumanor Hall to contribute to the formulation of a County Special Educational Needs Policy. The Headteacher of Redland was invited to co-ordinate and lead a group at this event and was called to a unique briefing meeting at Beaumanor Hall the week before the main gathering.

Redland School, in common with every other Leicestershire School, was deluged with masses of paperwork relating to special educational needs during this period. The task of keeping abreast of this mountainous pile of administrative memoranda, discussion documents, invitations to meetings and revised referral procedures proved to be quite demanding for the Headteacher. Institutional responses were required, outlining specific needs of pupils already within the school and the arrangements that had been implemented to meet these special needs. The Authority also instituted a scheme, whereby individual schools could make a bid for a certain number of days of peripatetic cover, dependant on the size of the school, in order to reappraise and reconstitute their special educational needs policy. Redland School was entitled to eight days of cover and the Headteacher substituted a proposal based on the "Curriculum in Action" pack and this bid was duly approved. In addition to the formal influence brought to bear upon the school by Central and Local Government and their agents, the changing milieu also dictated that autonomous Headteacher Seminar Groups chose special educational needs as their topic during this period. The local Headteacher Groups also invited the Adviser and Area Co-ordinator to address them on the subject of special educational needs and additional visits to newly opened resource centres were quickly arranged.

It is also noteworthy that during the Autumn Term of 1983 two separate pairs of parents approached the Headteacher in connection with the special educational needs of their children. One child was profoundly deaf and the other had very specific reading difficulties, described by his parents as dyslexia. Interestingly both children were already receiving additional support on a weekly basis from specialist
peripatetic teachers, nevertheless the parents were seeking assurances that the frequency and duration of this specialist support would be increased. The 1981 Act was cited by these well-informed parents as the basis of the Authority and the School's legal obligation to their children. The specialist help continued throughout the observation period and therefore potential confrontation was avoided. Although there was little objective evidence of parents' increasing awareness of their legal rights in connection with special educational needs provision, a number of chance comments to the Headteacher suggested that parents were becoming better informed on the subject and more willing to demand that the Authority met its statutory obligations.

The biography of influence of the 1981 Act reflects and reinforces many of the themes identified in the 1980 Act case study. Government legislation is mediated through the Local Education Authority and the institutional response is influenced by the involvement of significant others, such as parents. Notwithstanding the broad similarities in the forces at work, and the influence strategies employed, the Headteacher perceived the major difference to be the urgency and frenetic pace with which The 1981 Act was implemented. This brief account reflects the gathering momentum of the special educational needs phenomenon during 1983 and 1984. Clearly Central Government applied pressure to Local Government to release the resources to meet their legal obligations. The unprecedented action of summoning all the County's Headteachers to Beaumanor Hall indicated the urgency and importance of the exercise. Cynical observers suggested that this strategy owed more to mock consultation and participation than primary policy making, nevertheless the effect of this tactic was to emphasise the importance of special educational needs. The further unprecedented step of offering supply cover to liberate teachers to reshape special needs policy underlined the Authority's desire to initiate rapid change and development. Indeed the informal messages emanating from County Hall substantially reinforced the direct imperative to act, notably the Special Needs Adviser's pre-eminence in the Advisorial hierarchy, based on her amazing record in mobilising resources and power and influence. The Headteacher interpreted the implicit message to be that the Authority and Redland would be vulnerable to well-informed parents demanding their legal rights if a defensible special needs policy was not "in situ" quickly. He noted with some irony that the mock participative process carried through by the Authority paralleled the strategy he had designed for the implementation of the 1980 Act. The common thread running from the macro
to the micro-level was the pace and ad-hococratic nature of the arrangements made. Once more the Headteacher increasingly perceived the parents to be the most persuasive influence in the power equation.

The influence of the Department of Education and Science and Her Majesty's Inspectorate is discernible in the case studies elaborated. While they do not take the direct policy decisions, "it would be idle and wrong to pretend that H.M.I. are without influence on educational decisions of all kinds. From Ministers down no one is obliged to do as they say but all concerned in and with education are likely to pay attention to their reports". Their 1978 Survey was perceived to be a critical reality defining document by the Headteacher and his evaluation of its importance was directly and indirectly transmitted to the other teaching staff. The local HMI's visit in September 1981 reinforced the influence of this group and his legacy was an implicit action plan to remediate the weaknesses he had identified. The Headteacher's desire to respond to his observations was sharpened by the implicit threat of a subsequent full inspection. The Headteacher concluded that the soundest course of action was to underpin his future planning with the theoretical perspective propounded by HMI, thus their indirect influence on Redland was considerable.

Moving across Figure Two, the next level of influence has been identified as local government, in the shape of the County Council and the Education Committee in particular. The relationship between central and local government and its implications for individual institutions has already been illustrated in this chapter. In this section I propose to focus upon the influence of autonomous County Council policy making and its specific ramifications for Redland School. The Headteacher dimly understood the central-local relationship defined by the 1944 Education Act and its significance in so far as the County Council could shape its precise response to central government legislation such as the 1981 Act - notably County arrangements reflected Council policy and resource decisions. Notwithstanding, the Headteacher at the outset of the period did not understand the County Council's influence in terms of primary policy making and its direct effect upon him and the school. The first potent example of the true state of affairs became obvious during the summer vacation of 1982. The local newspaper reported that the County Council had decided that school uniform could no longer be defined as obligatory by schools. Henceforth parents could exercise the option to purchase approved uniform for their children or they could choose not to dress
their offspring in the clothes decided by the school to be appropriate. In the Headteacher's view the content of the decision was of little interest, as he had no strong personal thoughts on the issue of uniform, however, the process by which the decision had been reached and implemented seemed somewhat alarming. The apparent lack of consultation and non-involvement of the teaching profession, followed by the seemingly sensationalist method of disseminating the first news of the decision through the local newspaper was viewed as a double humiliation for headteachers. In essence, parents who had recently received school brochures outlining, among other things, the institution's rules regarding uniform, had been informed before the headteachers that these rules could not be enforced. Within the context of Redland School, the County Council's decision appeared ill-informed as both the majority of parents and the entire Governing Body desired that the children should wear uniform. The Headteacher's abiding concern related to the manner in which the process had been conducted and the uncertainty it generated with regard to future Council policy decisions. School uniform first, what would be next?

The question was answered during 1983 by the Council's decision to discontinue the use of corporal punishment in County schools. The biography of the decision making process had been amended slightly in the light of the above example. A database regarding corporal punishment had been constructed from a response by each school to a Director's letter requiring a summary of corporal punishment administered during the previous two years. Governors were asked to comment on the issue of corporal punishment at their termly meeting and theoretically the clerks relayed their responses back through the appropriate officers to the Council. Nevertheless, the decision was taken by the Council to ban corporal punishment in Leicestershire schools and individual institutions received the appropriate directive, having already first read about it in the local newspaper.

These two examples of County Council influence and power served to cause the Headteacher to reappraise his view of institutional autonomy and professional standing. In fact, philosophically he broadly agreed with the substance of both decisions, but greatly resented the manner in which they were arrived at and implemented. There appeared to have been a lack of meaningful consultation at any stage in the process and the fact that the parents may have known before the professionals involved, was particularly irksome. The projected scenario of a truculent parent
saying "You cannot enforce the rules you laid out in the brochure" was shared by the Headteacher and other colleagues. Clearly the County Council had acted within the legal parameters of the situation and their decisions were eminently defensible, however, the Headteacher in concert with many colleagues from other schools felt his professionalism had been undervalued. Upon reflection he was disgruntled because his power base had been publicly reduced and his accountability relationship with the elected members of the County Council had been widely advertised. In short his formal power had been curtailed. Furthermore, the potential for further reductions in the future had at last become crystal clear to him. As R D Laing points out "behaviour is a function of experience": 12

In moving on to a consideration of the influence exerted on Redland School by the Governors, I propose to commence by reviewing their involvement in the above examples of County Council policy. My observation and evaluation of Governors' Meetings indicated that on both matters the majority of Governors were against the policies adopted. On each occasion they sought the professional perspective of the Headteacher, outlined their own views and then offered the alternative, conferred by the Aided status of the school, of pursuing an alternative to County policy. The Chairman was eager to support whatever course of action the Headteacher identified as appropriate - the Governors would support obligatory school uniform and a system of corporal punishment. Indeed they were providing the Headteacher with the power to circumvent County Council policy and there was a sense in which they would almost like to "take the Authority on." The Headteacher greatly appreciated the implicit vote of confidence and increased area for manoeuvre it provided, but preferred to avoid any hint of confrontation with the Authority. This preference reflected a number of factors, namely personal cowardice, a sympathy with the rectitude of the decisions taken by the Council, a desire for further promotion in the County and the knowledge that he could negate these policies if he so desired. Thus the Governors provided freedom and solid support, by being prepared to deflect the statutory implications of the County Council's influence with the broad shield of their own claim to legitimate power.

In terms of the global influence of the Governors on Redland School during the three years it is useful to elaborate the Headteacher's understanding of their formal power and to consider specific illustrations of how they influenced the behaviour of participants. The Governors, in common with central and local government, constitute an
element of what Kogan calls "the decision-making system of education,"¹³ that is, those parts of the service with statutory, formal responsibilities and decision-making power. Under the terms of the 1944 Education Act, Governors' powers consist of controlling expenditure, appointing staff and exercising general oversight of the conduct and curriculum of the school. In an Aided School like Redland, teaching staff are employed by the Governors and paid by the Authority. The Governors are also responsible for the external fabric of the building and its day-to-day maintenance. It could be argued that the most significant contribution of the Governors is the appointment of staff, particularly the Headteacher. "Ten Good Schools"¹⁴ identifies the quality of the Headteacher as the single most important influence on the development of the institution and it is axiomatic that the Governors and the Headteacher commenced their relationship with a shared desire to prove he was a good appointment. The Headteacher suspected that his appointment very much reflected the personal choice of the Chairman and therefore they both had a vested interest in proving their relationship was fruitful.

The Governing Body consisted of nine members, six Foundation Governors, two LEA Representatives and a Parish Councillor. The Diocesan Board Representative also had a statutory right to be a member of any interviewing panel. The Headteacher's first interaction with any of the Governors, after his interview, came during the first week of his tenure. A freak storm had brought down many large branches of the established trees in the school grounds the night before term started. The Headteacher dutifully telephoned Technical Services on his first day and expected the debris to be removed. The branches were still there on the Friday and Mrs Jordan volunteered her husband to come and saw them up and remove them the following morning, so that the children could use the area under the trees. The Head and Deputy, plus husband and chain-saw, arrived early on the Saturday morning for this purpose. At this point one of the Governors appeared and stated that he would be taking the logs. Fortunately the Headteacher was in his office and Mr Jordan took part in an abortive discussion about the destination of the logs and quickly demurred at taking any further part in the operation. The Chairman, Reverend Rivers, visited on the Monday, apparently to reinforce his brother Governor's action and to gauge the Headteacher's reaction. The Headteacher was grateful that he had narrowly avoided blundering into a potentially destructive confrontation and made it clear he had no desire to "step on the Governors' toes". I suspect this response was
critical to future developments and if the Headteacher had challenged the Governors' right to deal with the wood as they saw fit, the Chairman may have adopted a very different approach. It later became clear that the cause of the previous Headteacher's uneasy relationship with the Chairman was his reluctance to acknowledge the power of the Governors. Thereafter, the Headteacher dealt with the Governors very circumspectly, particularly in matters where they deemed themselves to be expert such as the grounds and the fabric of the building.

At this stage the Headteacher realised the crucial nature of his relationship with the Chairman and a number of minor incidents served to map out the boundaries during the first term. The advertisement of the caretaker's post had attracted a good response, including an application from one of the Foundation Governors, viz a Redland Church Representative. The Headteacher felt that this candidate was unsuitable and approached the shortlisting with the Chairman with some trepidation. Delicate negotiation culminated in the Chairman saying "You have to work with him, I will support whoever you want". The Headteacher's decision to discontinue the provision of an elaborate meal after termly Governors' meetings also caused him some concern, but the Chairman reacted by saying it was a long overdue change. The development of the relationship has been outlined earlier, however, a very significant milestone was reached during the last week of the first term. As a preamble to the Leavers' Evening, the Headteacher had invited all the parents of next year's upper junior children to a meeting to explain his decision to vertically group the Third and Fourth Year. It rapidly became clear that this meeting was a mistake and the Headteacher was under attack from a number of quarters when the Chairman delivered a crushing broadside from the floor of the hall. He made it abundantly clear that the Governors totally supported the arrangement and roundly upbraided the parents for daring to question the judgement of the new Headteacher. The meeting was rapidly closed with the Headteacher inwardly acknowledging an immense debt of gratitude to the Chairman.

From this point onwards the relationship went from strength to strength and the Headteacher made full use of the Chairman's wisdom and local knowledge. In turn the Chairman recognised the Headteacher's claim to esoteric knowledge, not least by asking for professional advice on behalf of his daughter who was training to be a teacher. The Headteacher kept the Chairman informed about every important development in the life of the school and "the Governors" was personified by Rev Rivers. In this
way the Headteacher acknowledged the power of the Governors, but was
invested with the facility to make use of this power by the Chairman. An
illustration of this phenomenon was provided by the shortlisting for the
Deputy Headteacher upon Mrs Jordan's promotion. The Chairman and the
Headteacher had carefully agreed their own list and the Chairman prefaced
their subsequent meeting with the Assistant Education Officer by reading
from the "Green Book", laying down the statutory powers of the Governors
of Aided Schools. The provisional shortlist was approved in its entirety:

It rapidly became obvious that the Governors, with the notable exception
of the Chairman, were reluctant to accept invitations to visit working
classrooms - they appeared to be intimidated by the children. They were
confident in their oversight of the plant but delegated, or in some
instances abdicated, their responsibilities in overseeing the curriculum
and organisation of the school to the Headteacher. In this way they were
a reassurance rather than an influence. The Chairman operated as a free
agent, often acting without recourse to his fellow Governors, and his
influence was indirect insofar as he acted as a patron or sponsor for the
Headteacher. Nevertheless the Headteacher was fully aware of the
unwritten contract concerning their relationship and the extent of the
Chairman's legitimate power. The transference of this power to the
Headteacher significantly increased his potential as an agent of
influence.

In considering the influence exerted by the professional staff at County
Hall rather than the elected members, the Director of Education's Report
to The Performance Review Sub-Committee 15 provides a helpful starting
point. In this document he identifies the three most important functions
of an education department. The first is to provide an administrative
service which ensures that schools have appropriate staffing, resources
and facilities to do their job. The second is to keep a finger on the
pulse of schools, to help ensure everything is working smoothly. The
third is positive support for schools in their work of educating
children. Within Leicestershire the first two functions were discharged
by Schools Branch, the Education Officers, and the third function was
executed by the Advisory Team. This dichotomy reflects the Chief
Education Officer's view of the service. In his own words - "I
personally favour a system which links the inspecting function to the
professional oversight of the administration. This has the advantage of
leaving the advisory service free of inspections and therefore more
effectively at the disposal of Heads and teachers in schools" 15. In
simplistic terms the Headteacher characterised these two arms of the County Hall machine as power and influence, that is to say the real power was located in Schools Branch and the Advisory Service operated through professional influence. This perception of the power of Schools Branch was engendered by the knowledge that Officers discharged the LEA's inspectorial function and most importantly controlled the promotion process.

The importance of the power and influence of the Director of Education and its implications for Redland School have already begun to become abundantly obvious. His philosophy of education pervaded the whole Authority and his ability to convince the elected members of the efficacy of his policies had very clear resource implications, as the special educational needs example illustrated. Furthermore, his criteria of relevance and educational perspective dictate the macro-parameters of the situation within which less powerful participants in the system operate, notably the Headteacher of Redland, "I would like to emphasise the positive aspect and that is the trust and confidence which an LEA and the Governors of a school should show in the professional competence of a Head. This statement implicitly states that the Authority has trust and confidence in its Headteachers, a conclusion which was supported by its low-key monitoring strategy. "The multi-accountability of the Head is in my view the single most effective factor in monitoring a school's progress ... There are tell-tale indicators of a school's performance - the Head's report to his Governors, the satisfaction and concerns of Governors as expressed through their minutes and in other ways; the level of parental complaint both locally and to me - all these can provide a means of taking a school's temperature, and moreover this is a continuing process term by term. This statement reflects the interweave of the disparate groups interacting in the education system and the imperatives for the Headteacher were clear, firstly 'develop good' relationships with the Governors, keep them informed, and secondly mollify dissatisfied parents before they contact County Hall. If these objectives were achieved it was unlikely that any direct inspectorial visit would be forthcoming. Indeed during the three years an Assistant Education Officer made three visits to Redland, the first was a pastoral call to welcome the new Headteacher and the other two visits were for the shortlisting and interview of the Deputy Headteacher. Termly sector meetings for Headteachers with the Director provided a forum for the Headteacher to meet regularly with Officers, however, Redland was never discussed even in casual conversation at any of these events. In short
the power of Schools Branch was very obvious to the Headteacher, but direct influence was negligible. Indirect influence was much greater in that the Director and his Officers contributed substantially to the Headteacher's perception of the current educational milieu. The Director encouraged institutional autonomy and personal initiative and the Headteacher was delighted to operate in this open-ended situation.

The Advisory Service had been liberated from the inspectorial function and consequently could be viewed as friends of the school, a supportive resource with expertise to offer, which would not reappear in a different guise to investigate institutional underperformance. Indeed Advisers were to be invited to visit rather than forcing their attentions on unwilling schools. The Director gave an unequivocal insight into his view of their role in his paper. "I cannot stress too much - if we are to have a healthy and vigorous education service - the vital importance of encouraging and disseminating the good in our schools and giving praise where praise is due ... This process of evaluation, encouragement, dissemination, is indispensable, the efficient and imaginative discharge of this function is the hallmark of a good advisory service". It would have been naive, however, to conclude that Advisers would 'turn a blind eye' to institutional failure or inadequacies and therefore a Headteacher's willingness to involve them may have reflected his personal security and view of his school. The new Headteacher believed he could not be held responsible for his inheritance and therefore pursued a policy of involving as many Advisers as were willing to come to Redland at the outset of the three year period. As time passed relationships between the Headteacher and particular Advisers were strengthened and they were seen as an invaluable resource.

An in-depth analysis of the relationship between Redland School and the professionals located at County Hall represented an opportunity to add an element of semi-structured interviewing to my main research strategy of unobtrusive participant observation. An initial interview with two of the Primary Advisers led to an interview with the Assistant Director of Education (Primary) and ultimately to an interview with the Director of Education. These interviews proved very productive at a number of levels and provide the substantive basis for further consideration of the influence exerted by County Hall on Redland and its inhabitants. It is conceptually efficacious to continue to separate the respective contributions of Schools Branch and the Advisory Service and to consider them separately in that order. In addition, I intend to proceed by first
reviewing the perspectives generated by participant observation and then elaborating this process by recourse to interview data.

Upon taking up my post as Headteacher at Redland my only previous direct experience of Schools Branch was within the interview situation. This reinforced a perception of these Officers' power. Termly Headteachers' meetings with the Director suggested that the influence interaction was predominantly one-sided and that directives were issued rather than debated. As time passed perceptions of Schools Branch elaborated into views of its individual members. Folklore and case-law were important determinants in this process as minimal face-to-face interaction took place. The implicit assumption was that these people had almost limitless power and their relationship with elected members was dimly and largely inaccurately understood. The Director was the personification of the Leicestershire ethos in the Headteacher's view and he became etched into the consciousness as the most significant other in the whole education service. The Director's love of the arts was widely known and his particular interest in music, drama and dance had influential implications for individual institutions under his ambit. The Headteacher's desire to involve Redland in the Haymarket Primary Dance Festival may have been sharpened by this knowledge. Furthermore, the existence of large peripatetic teaching teams in these curricular areas testified to the Director's priorities and provided the means to directly influence the curriculum of individual institutions. The children of Redland experienced the input of all these services over the three years. The quality and texture of the influence system, or even the Headteacher's perception of it, is difficult to capture in the written word. The overriding sense was of the uniqueness of Leicestershire, its trailblazing initiatives, its history of innovation, its magnetism to foreign educationalists and above all its massively positive self-image. The Director appeared to be striving to keep us out at the front, as pace-setters in the race after educational excellence, and the six-week subbatical was the last evidence of our pre-eminence in educational innovation.

I approached the interview with the Assistant Director (Primary) from that perception of the power and influence of Schools Branch. The interview took place at County Hall on 1 June 1983, and the data generated is relevant to this chapter and the following two. I outlined my research strategy and invited the Assistant Director to rehearse his view of how County Hall influences schools. He began by defining "County
Hall*, identifying the sub-sections such as the Education Committee, Administrators, the Treasurer's Section, the Director and his staff and the Advisers. He believed the interplay of these sub-sections made decision-making much more complicated than in a commercial enterprise, for example "the County Treasurer's Department are a hurdle to get past" for Schools Branch. He highlighted "the lack of gearing between the law and the people doing the job, in that education is the formal responsibility of the Education Committee, but in practice the professionals take the blame if anything goes wrong". It is noteworthy that he commenced a discussion of Schools Branch's influence by elaborating the constraints under which officers operate, in short their degree of autonomy was not as great as the interviewer had previously imagined. In addressing himself directly to the question of exerting direct influence on schools he cited the following mechanisms:

1. Meetings. Termly Director's meetings. Governors meetings, etc.
2. Bits of paper - communications and letters.
3. Face-to-face personal contact.

He asserted that a lot of "the power" resides at the school level and his section is principally engaged in the generation of policy. The style of the transmission to schools provides an interesting insight into the nature of the message, "is the style of the letter persuasive or advisory, for example?". The Assistant Director stressed on a number of occasions the importance of seeing the education system as a human enterprise. "Councillors tend to use a machine analogy and assume you can monitor the state of health of the system with a spot check". In essence he was indicating that elected members may have an oversimplified view of the monitoring process, based on an unrealistic industrial model.

The Assistant Director of Education then went on to explain that the Authority quite deliberately has no area system as it would get between the Director and Headteachers, "it would be perceived as a barrier and therefore County Hall would be less in touch". The Director's policy of not involving the Advisers in disciplinary matters and promotions was a strategy for moving the Advisory Service into a closely influential position with schools, as they were then 'in situ' by invitation. In this way the Assistant Director of Education pinpointed the differentiation in the roles of Officers and Advisers. The interviewer was left wondering how much power the Advisers had in the micro-politics of County Hall in the light of their free-floating role. Thus Schools
Branch was represented as a lubricant in the system, between members and schools and between irate parents and individual institutions. The Assistant Director of Education alluded to a matter he was currently dealing with and suggested "it is the function of the Authority to act as a broker between this particular mother and the Headteacher".

The interviewer interposed at this point, having let the interview develop organically, by asking "does the Authority really know what is going on in schools?" The Assistant Director of Education responded honestly by stating that the short answer was "no". A large army of inspectors would be required to visit every school, he did not believe self-evaluation reports justified the labour involved and reputation could be misleading, for "often disorganised schools have a good name because they concentrate on the basics". He also rejected country-wide testing as a mechanism for increasing knowledge of what is going on in schools and frequently returned to his main theme of differentiating between "appearance" and "reality".

This interview proved interesting to the researcher in his professional role as it roundly debunked the widely-held notion that massive files containing detailed information about each school and its inhabitants were being compiled at County Hall. In short, officers would not know what was going on at Redland unless it was something outstandingly good or incredibly bad. At one and the same time this information was reassuring and intimidating, on the one hand direct external interference was unlikely but on the other the implications of almost total autonomy were daunting. Furthermore it was clear that officers were not totally free agents and even the Director himself was constrained by the influence of central government, local politicians and not least the County Treasurer.

An invitation from the Assistant Director of Education to meet with the Director engendered an interview on 15 August 1983. My opening statement rehearsed the Assistant Director of Education's view that the ethos of the Authority comes from the Director and I posed the question "By what mechanisms do you feel this ethos is transmitted to individual schools?" His response in full was as follows.

"What is the ethos? To create a climate. To use every possible outlet with all the groups involved to ensure that the philosophy is understood and backed up with the appropriate resources. Constructive educational
input comes from the Director and there must be plenty of opportunities for these educational ideas to be tossed around. All the resources have to be engaged at the highest level to ensure that people give of their best and are not frightened to have a go.

To eradicate any idea that people are trying to inspect them by placing professional trust in teachers. The Education Committee has to be persuaded to trust its schools and in this way we are more likely to get results and mutual respect. Professionals know the Director's views and the Committee also does!

My second question sought to get to the heart of the process of influence. "How does the Authority influence what goes on inside particular schools?"

The Director: "By discussion at Headteachers' Meetings, through working groups, through the Advisers and by Advisers, Headteachers and teachers working together. There must be no dictation or direction, what goes on has to evolve through a wide understanding and through in-service training".

Interviewer: "In your report on the Inspection Function of the LEA, you identify one of the main tasks of Schools Branch as keeping its finger on the pulse of schools. How is this done?"

The Director: "The finger is pastoral and professional officers. It is done through a network of meetings and TCC. The definition of keeping a finger on the pulse may be critical in deciding what should be done. I don't want to know every time a Headteacher blows his nose".

This section of the interview made the Director's stance on influencing schools abundantly clear - there must be no dictation or direction, progress would be an organically evolving process. Professional autonomy merited a high priority in his view of schools and he was prepared to insulate professionals from the direct influence of the Education Committee. The Headteacher now had a very much more accurate understanding of the power equation built into the education system of which he was a part.

The power and influence of advisers has already been alluded to on a number of occasions in this text. Their particular role in
Leicestershire was largely a function of the Director's sense of how the component parts of the education system should interact. Indeed the Director stated in his interview that "Advisers must be seen by schools as friends and not part of the power game. Advisers are critically important in helping Headteachers create the quality in education." 17 This contention is mirrored in Johnson's research on the role of the LEA adviser - "Advisers deny that they have any executive authority regarding schools; they cannot direct a Headteacher as to how he should conduct or control his school. They can, however, exert considerable influence in their many contacts with classrooms and with senior staff." 18

My participant observations during the early part of the study suggested that Redland's contact with advisers was a very haphazard affair. The contact could be two way in that staff attended adviser-organised central INSET courses and advisers visited Redland. In practice adviser visits were dependant on Headteacher invitation, or more accurately persistent invitation. The Headteacher concluded that advisers could not possibly work with all the schools under their jurisdiction, three Primary Advisers to over 350 schools, and therefore it was part of his function to gain an unrealistically large proportion of their time for Redland. At the outset the Headteacher was slightly in awe of these people and a chance circumstance was critical in the relationship and views of advisers he formed. A lecturer at Loughborough University informed Mr Saville of the Headteacher's contribution to a primary school management course during the summer of 1981. This conversation resulted in a visit by Mr Saville to Redland early the following term and an invitation to the Headteacher to describe his MA Research Study 21 at the New Headteachers Conference. This became an annual invitation and the Headteacher nurtured a personal relationship with all the Primary Advisers as a result. This demystification of "the adviser" encouraged the Headteacher's desire to include subject advisers or advisory teachers wherever possible in the development of Redland. The personnel involved during the period represented the following areas: Early Childhood, English, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Drama, Computer, Dance, Physical Education, Religious Education (County and Diocesan), Special Educational Needs, Music and all the Primary Advisers. In this way over twenty people were, to a greater or lesser extent, involved in school-based curriculum development activities.

During the same period every member of staff attended centrally located INSET courses. The number individual teachers took part in, reflected
the needs of the teacher, the needs of the school and the provision of appropriate courses. Nevertheless, course attendance provided some correlation with enthusiasm, commitment, professionalism and interest and it is noteworthy that the two most frequent attenders, Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings, both obtained promotion during the three years. This fact could reinforce the view that being seen in the right places enhances promotion prospects or alternatively that the most committed and able identify the need for on-going self-development. The crucial consideration for Redland School was, how are those new perspectives translated into improving children's learning experiences? For example, a course Mr Jennings attended on "Real Problem Solving" has a discernible effect in giving independent learning primacy within the curriculum and Mrs Jordan's participation in a Dance Course led to a two term follow-up by a peripatetic Dance Specialist working with every class. The Headteacher tentatively concluded that the effect of INSET is broadly as follows: excellent teachers gain an immense amount, average teachers are slightly improved, poor teachers are totally unaffected. To summarise, the Headteacher viewed the influence of advisers as an invaluable resource at his disposal, which to a large extent he could control. He also found advisers to be, in the main, bright and stimulating people and looked forward to their visits and conceptual challenges. They also brought an element of objectivity into the situation and had a broad understanding of developments in primary education across Leicestershire.

A Headteachers Meeting with Mr Saville entitled "In-Service Training: A strategy for the '80's" provided an opportunity to check my perceptions of the Advisory Service and I have reproduced the pertinent sections below.

"Headteachers bear a great deal of responsibility for INSET. A stable staff provides an opportunity for the development of the curriculum. Each school should have a staff development policy, supporting the professional development of each individual.

Headteachers would like to know how County Hall feels about your school - you won't, because we don't know.

Leicestershire prides itself on its autonomy, which brings with it great responsibility. In one sense it would be much easier for you if you were told what to do".19
These statements touch many of the chords elaborated earlier and the Headteacher's reaction was to conclude:

1) The Authority gives individual Headteachers and schools massive professional autonomy.

2) This autonomy carries a heavy price with it, viz: you are almost totally responsible for the school's performance.

3) This policy provides advisers with a convenient alibi for non-involvement.

A private interview with Mr Saville at County Hall afforded the chance to clarify and elaborate the attribution of influence exerted by advisers.

"N.S. How does the Authority influence schools?

R.S. Influence is more often in the eyes of the Headteacher. In other words, imagined ideas of what they think the Authority wants them to do.

N.S. How do Headteachers build up these ideas?

R.S.a) From the way they read the Leicestershire method. For example, since the '60's a new orthodoxy of how you organise a classroom has developed and this vision in teachers militates against them thinking rationally.

b) Certain things transmitted at Director's Meetings.

c) New school buildings and furniture and fittings.

d) The distribution of resources - advisers for some curriculum areas and not others.

e) Visits to schools.

f) Secondments, sabbaticals and County initiated INSET.

g) The enhancement and preferment of certain people reinforces a particular view.
There isn't a view expressed by the Authority of what should be happening in schools and because a policy is not spelt out, teachers and heads have to construct their own from the elements listed.

Teachers say 'tell us what to do' and when you do, they think of all the reasons why they can't. They want approval for what they are doing.

N.S. How do you influence individual schools?

R.S. Advisers act as catalysts, raising questions and issues by having an overview. We awaken areas that people have felt uneasy about, in curriculum, method and organisation. We are agents for change. We are not saying what the change should be, but allow ourselves to be talked at to allow people the opportunity to discover what is in their own head.

Spearheads are made by people you meet occasionally, perhaps one recollection of a change-agent's course. Eventually you believe you thought of it first yourself and it has a catalytic effect.⁷

This catalytic role advisers claimed for themselves had implications for their location on the power/influence continuum. The Headteacher experienced some frustration in his early dealings with the Mathematics Adviser because the latter stubbornly refused to recommend a commercial scheme of work and insisted upon posing questions rather than providing answers. As the years passed the Headteacher increasingly realised that the function of advisers was to exert indirect influence by providing participants with the support and insight required to come to their own situationally specific conclusions. Thus by seeking the involvement of advisers, the personal cost included a willingness to engage the neural pathways in order to arrive at an institutionally appropriate conclusions. Advisers were truly "significant others" to the Headteacher and as Mr Saville astutely identified above, he wanted approval for what he was doing. Mr Saville in particular provided this and his support and positive feedback greatly enhanced the self-image of the Headteacher. An invitation from Mr Saville to be a member of a small group of Leicestershire Headteachers visiting French Schools was perceived as a token of positive reinforcement. Invitations to speak and membership of working parties all supported the Headteacher's view that people who understood the system believed he was doing a good job. This perception enhanced his personal security and in itself was a very positive influence on the nature of the development of Redland School. The knowledge that advisers who were increasingly beginning to know the
school intimately would be returning in due course also provided an imperative for institutional progress. The Headteacher also had a sneaking suspicion that Mr Saville might have a more influential part to play in the promotion process than had been suggested. Indeed Mr Saville encouraged the Headteacher to apply for his present post and was the main contributor to his "Confidential."

It is not easy to generalise about the influence parents brought to bear on Redland, since a complete cross-section of the community was represented in the parental body at any one time. Given the heterogeneity of the parent body, the School was inescapably faced with varied attitudes. "The best it can hope for is a substantial proportion of sympathetic and supportive parents and a minimal proportion of hostile or alienated parents, and to avoid a denotably large, indifferent middle estate."22 As Ridgeway23 points out, teaching staff can be threatened from either wing. "The pathologically enthusiastic as well as the antagonistic can be a disturbing and disruptive force if they obtain unbridled influence." This assertion is illustrated in the next chapter by a case-study of the Parent Teacher Association. It could be argued that considerable tension characterises the ambivalent relationship between parent and school. In the first place the parent is neither client nor customer. Parents are compelled by law to ensure that their child attends school, however, choice of school seldom exists. These two considerations together provide a basis for anxiety in the relations between parent and school. This may be compounded by unfamiliarity with teaching content and methods, aggravated by the child's own reports of school events. As client, therefore, the parent's status is attenuated. Furthermore, the school is not principally involved in supplying a learning experience for the parent, although positive evangelism may be helpful in developing good relationships, and assumes a professionally detached attitude to parental pressure over the matter of content and method. Inevitably, the influence Redland experienced from parents was unrepresentative of the total parental body, a phenomenon echoed in the Cambridge Accountability Project.24 Nevertheless, the loci of parental influence and the strategies employed merit further elicitation.

Analysis of my field notes uncovers the location of influence being brought to bear by parents in four main areas and arranged in order of their chronological appearance they are: a) admissions policy b) internal organisation c) disciplinary matters d) content of the
The strategies employed to influence these areas included the following: personal visits, telephone calls, letters, face-to-face communication at Parents' Evenings, the P.T.A. and acting as volunteer classroom helpers. I propose to deal with the four influence areas identified above illustrating the strategies employed in the course of this analysis.

A field note for the second Friday of my first term sets the scene for a consideration of parental influence on the school's admission policy.

Friday 8 May 1981, "A mother comes in to add her child's name to the school roll. He is not five until 11 September! I tentatively indicated that he may be a Christmas, rather than September, starter. She immediately bristles and says 'they are taking rising fives in Lutterworth!' I give her a form and ask her to complete and return it. I promise to get back to her later in the term. I begin to worry about a rising fives policy for the rest of the afternoon."

This interview was followed a few weeks later by a visit from another mother, a former teacher, asking for her son to be admitted the term before he was five. Once more the fact that other schools in the area were accepted "rising fives" was employed as a persuasive bargaining point.

These interviews were very unsatisfactory from the Headteacher's viewpoint as his first contact with these parents was to refuse their seemingly legitimate request. The background to the situation was confused, evidently local schools were competing for the diminishing child population by accepting children younger and younger. The Authority, however, would not provide capitation or staffing for the child until the term after he attained his fifth birthday. Staffing at Redland and the composition of the next year's intake did not lend itself to the acceptance of rising fives. Furthermore, the Infant Teachers were totally opposed to any such change and indeed, as elaborated earlier, bitterly resented the Headteacher meddling in an area they considered to be their private preserve. Nevertheless, the Headteacher realised the situation at best was generating disharmony between home and school and at worst could result in children being lost to Redland. He also resented the attitude of the Infant Teachers.

The Headteacher's first response to the situation was to seek the advice...
of the Early Childhood Adviser and her visits to the school instantly generated a negative response in the Infant Staff. The Adviser, Mrs Smith, suggested a number of alternative courses of action and teachers were given time to consider them. The Headteacher's immediate reaction was to bend every sinew in order to accept children as "rising fives", but the complications inherent in this arrangement next Easter made this course of action impossible. Miss Russel was the spokesperson for her colleagues in these negotiations and the next significant milestone was reached by her organisation of a meeting for parents of the September starters. The Headteacher assumed control of the meeting, which in itself appeared to generate resentment in Miss Russel, and outlined the practical arrangements for the next term. This "rising fives debate" was obviously raging outside the school as well as within it and a mother posed the inevitable question, "will the school be accepting children the term before they are five in the future?" The field note for 22 June 1981, captures the spirit of the interchange. "I begin to answer, but Miss Russel interposes and says 'we don't want rising fives, we want this class to stay at twenty!' I am astonished, confused and humiliated." The mothers present expressed their belief that "rising fives" should not be admitted, clearly because they believed this arrangement would adversely affect the progress of their own children. Furthermore, their children had had to wait till the term after they were five. Apart from a lively exchange with Miss Russel the following day, the Headteacher decided to maintain the 'status quo' for the present and review the situation next term when Miss Russel had left.

Further local research indicated that some schools were accepting under fives and others were not. The location of Redland made it unlikely that parents would be prepared to regularly transport their children over four miles in each direction to an alternative school. Nevertheless, the Headteacher was greatly exercised by the fact that a mutually unsatisfactory introduction did not augur well for future parent-school relationships. Clearly some sort of compromise, as an expression of good faith, was required. In consultation with Mrs Morgan and Mrs Wood it was decided to hold a meeting for all the parents of children starting school during the following year. At this meeting new arrangements would be unveiled which involved the Easter and Summer starters coming into school for an afternoon a week the term before they officially start. Mrs Wood, the reception class teacher would be released from her class to work with these children. Mrs Smith was invited to talk to the parents at this meeting and her unofficial agenda was to transmit the Piagetian message
Regarding readiness and appropriateness, in short that the children were not missing out by not being accepted as "rising fives". Parents were invited to look at the Infant classrooms and play with the equipment and informally interact with the staff over a buffet. The meeting was viewed as a great success by the Headteacher and the whole situation was characterised by a greatly increased amount of goodwill. Miss Russell's departure was perceived as a fortuitous event and Mrs Smith's involvement had been a source of reassurance to the Headteacher.

Two parents visited the school during the academic year 1981-1982 to enquire about early admission for their children and the Headteacher explained the parameters of the situation in minute detail. The Authority's stance and the compromise arrangements were rehearsed and both Mrs Blair and Mrs White appeared to accept the situation. Another New Parents' Evening was held in September 1982 and the whole "rising fives issue" seemed to have settled down. On 30 November 1983, Mrs Priestley appeared in school unannounced to enquire about the early admission of her son. The family had recently moved to the district from Belgium, where the boy had attended a full-time school for children of Common Market officials. His birthdate dictated admission in September 1983. This information was not well-received, however, "I spent quite a bit of time explaining to her (Mrs Priestley) why we couldn't admit her son. I showed her around the school and she appeared to go away quite happily." The inaccuracy of the final phrase of this field note was highlighted the following term by a telephone call from a neighbouring Headteacher. Mrs Priestley had been to visit her and would like her son to attend that school for the two terms before he could start at Redland. My colleague was only prepared to accept the boy on a long term basis - was I happy with this arrangement? I most certainly was not and made my feelings clear. This telephone call prompted another meeting with Mrs Priestley and the ultimate agreement of Mrs Wood to supply appropriate school materials for home tuition. I naively thought the crisis had blown over.

On 10 February 1983, an envelope arrived from County Hall enclosing a photocopy of a letter recently addressed to the Director by Mrs Blair, bemoaning the admission arrangements at Redland. The main thrust of the letter was to question why Redland would not accept "rising fives" when every other school in the area was doing so. Although the letter commenced by stating that no criticism of the Headteacher was implied and that he was friendly and helpful in his relations with parents, Mrs Blair
went on to assert that she was not afraid to stand up to "a professional with all the information at his finger-tips." The Headteacher's first reaction was to be livid for a myriad of reasons, principally

a) How dare she write to the Director?
b) What effect would this letter have on County Hall's view of Redland and the Headteacher?
c) All of the points raised in the letter had been explained in full.
d) She wrote as the representative of a body of opinion.
e) The school was bending over backwards to provide compromise arrangements.
f) Re-opening the whole issue necessarily involved the Headteacher in further heart-searching and probable frustration.

An Assistant Education Officer returned a stock letter to Mrs Blair re-stating the Authority's admission policy. In turn Mrs Blair fired off a reply in mid-June sniping at, among other things, the Leicestershire holiday pattern, fuel economies and capitation allowances. The Headteacher arranged to meet Mr Blair and explained the situation to him, having subjected himself to three abortive attempts to clarify the issue with Mrs Blair. No more letters were written, however, Mrs Blair was appointed to the P.T.A. Committee at approximately this time.

Another letter from County Hall, dated 25 February 1983 served to heighten the Headteacher's concern about Redland's admission arrangements. A child from an outlying village had been granted a place, a term early, at another school. Was this the beginning of a trend? In fact further investigation revealed the child's parents both worked in the same village as the alternative school and the arrangements were based on practical rather than educational considerations. Nevertheless, further local research revealed that Redland was now the only school in the area not admitting rising fives and a colleague asserted that he had been advised by County Hall "if you can't beat it, join it!" I brought up the subject at the termly Governors Meeting and gained a very sympathetic response, with the Chairman concluding "I am sorry to say most of the mothers want to get out to squash and coffee mornings and get the children off their hands." A field-note during this period encapsulates the Headteacher's feelings on the "rising fives issue." "I have an overpowering feeling that we are isolated and will eventually have to succumb to the building pressure. I hate to give in to the Mrs Blairs of this world, but in the long term interests of the school I
have no choice! The staff were still against accepting these children on the grounds that it would adversely affect the education of statutory aged pupils, it would also make their job more demanding. To summarise, the Headteacher perceived himself to be in an uneasy man in the middle situation, with neither parents nor teachers totally happy with his policy. Indeed the pressure led to an extension of the induction programme to two afternoons a week and total capitulation appeared to be a long-term possibility.

This case-study involving parental pressure has been reviewed in some detail as it exemplifies all the strategies at parents' disposal to influence the school. The threat to remove the child from the school roll is a powerful bargaining weapon which initially influenced a change in policy. Recourse to higher authority at County Hall involved an implicit threat, particularly in the light of the discussion earlier in this chapter, and the contention that the letter represented a body of opinion was more persuasive. Discontent about admission policy channelled through the P.T.A. Committee was a new phenomenon which coincided with an extension of the induction programme. It would seem that Mrs Blair's letter resulted from a conversation with Mrs Priestley and as parents began to act in concert their influence increased. Indeed, the whole biography of the "rising fives issue" could be viewed as the tension between external and internal influence with the Headteacher occupying an uneasy central position. In total no more than ten parents were involved in this case study over the three years, however, the spokesmen began to progressively represent what Kogan calls "a non-legitimised pressure group."13

The Headteacher unwittingly generated the second area of parental influence by organising the meeting described earlier, to outline the vertical grouping of the Third and Fourth Year. This meeting took place on Wednesday 1 July 1981, and was conceived as a method of keeping parents informed. In retrospect it provided a forum for parents to react in concert in questioning the new arrangements. Four parents, out of a total of approximately one hundred and twenty, dominated the proceedings and three of these were secondary school teachers. The overt agenda was discussion of the implications of next term's arrangement, the covert agenda was to discover how successfully the new Headteacher could withstand parental pressure. This meeting may have been critical in establishing the Headteacher's degree of resolution and capacity to deal with the manifestations of parental pressure. Indeed it is likely that
the opinions of the vociferous minority were not representative of the
total parental body, however, unsteadiness under fire could have had
critical long term ramifications for the Headteacher. One interchange
captures the tone of the gathering:

Parent: "When will you start evaluating the experiment?"

Headteacher: "Evaluation will commence on the first day, but not of this
arrangement as an experiment, because it isn't one. The decision has
been taken in the light of much discussion and advice and will not be
changed!"

Indeed many parents expressed their satisfaction with the
re-organisation, however, the critical response of the minority had the
effect of hardening the resolve of the staff that the arrangement would
be an outstanding success.

One of the most critical parents sought to exert pressure by writing to
Mrs Jennings the week before the Autumn Term Parents' Evening requesting
a copy of the syllabus for fourth year children in anticipation of a poor
verbal report about his son. This letter was difficult to understand as
the boy was producing excellent work, the father had requested his
placement with Mrs Jennings as "she was the best teacher he had ever
seen" and therefore it could only be a thinly veiled attack on the
arrangements. The Headteacher responded within the hour with a letter,
delivered by the Secretary, requesting a meeting with the parent. This
immediate action generated a conciliatory reaction and the ultimate
meeting centred around the contention that his original letter had been
misunderstood. A second member of the "outspoken parent group" also used
this Parents' Evening as an opportunity to re-open the debate on the
efficiency of vertical grouping. Once more the Headteacher responded by
producing evidence of his son's outstanding work. It is noteworthy that
these two boys achieved pre-eminence in the top sets at the High School
the following year.

A third member of this group appeared during the Spring Term to question
the appropriateness of the creative writing tasks her daughter was being
given. The issue of vertical grouping underpinned the discussion about
creative writing. Ultimately the Headteacher responded to this visit by
taking the group himself for creative writing as he acknowledged the
validity of the criticism, albeit it reflected the limitations of
Mr Green, rather than the organisational arrangement.
In essence all these three parents successfully exerted influence on the school, as the Headteacher and the class teachers made every effort to make sure no further criticism could be levelled. Despite an overt desire not to respond to parental pressure the reality of the situation was that special efforts were made with these children. In general all these parents were very supportive of the school and perhaps legitimately in their view had identified a potential influence strategy.

A reduction in pupil numbers dictated a return to a homogeneous year group organisation the following year and whether parents viewed this as an admission of an error of judgement is unclear. The Headteacher had learnt some valuable lessons about dealing with parental influence and thereafter always pursued a policy of divide and rule. Parents were always informed of minor internal re-organisations on an individual basis and any questioning of school policy was always handled by presenting the alternatives in such a way that the parent agreed with the decision taken. On occasion the parents were provided with the alternatives and asked to make their own decision, these matters usually related to the mid-year movement of pupils.

Consideration of the third area of influence, summarised by the portmanteau term "discipline", reflects similarities with Elliott's research. Parents do not hold schools accountable against product criteria like examination results but against process criteria which pick out the capacities for human relations. Rather than adopting a technological perspective on schooling this invisible group of parents adopts a predominantly humanistic one. A key concept is the parents' judgement of Redland was their view of the personal happiness of their child. There were no complaints at all about the formal disciplinary policy of the school or control strategies adopted during lesson time. Expressions of parental concern related to the following areas of school life and are presented in an aggregate order of frequency, commencing with the most prevalent.

1) Misdemeanours or misbehaviour on the school buses. Problems on the journey to and from school.

2) Problems in the playground at lunchtime and the reaction of the dining supervisory assistants.

3) Playground problems at playtimes.
The school bus was a particularly contentious area as some children spent up to twenty minutes on the bus without any direct supervision. Many of the problems encountered on the buses emanated from the fact that they were overcrowded and the custodial role of the driver was unclear. Drivers had very variable expectations of appropriate standards of behaviour and reacted unpredictably. Periodically the Headteacher made a great show of allocating children specific seats as much for the parents' benefit as the childrens'. A telephone conversation on the subject captures the essence of the problem. 16 May 1983, Mother: "Lots of us parents are very annoyed about children getting up and changing seats while the bus is moving. (The Headteacher explained that the children had been expressly forbidden to do this). Well they must be ignoring what you say..... The driver shouts at them and the children don't want that first thing in the morning." The contradiction implicit in the conversation is that on the one hand parents want a controlled situation on the bus, but on the other do not want the driver to enforce control. The bus remained a grey area and in the main the Headteacher was pleasantly surprised that children consistently behaved well in unpromising circumstances.

Parental interventions concerning disciplinary infractions at lunchtime usually related to the way the dining assistants had dealt with children. It was interesting to note the vehemence with which parents protested about the behaviour of a 'dinner lady'. Clearly the fallibility of these ladies was considered to be high and their lack of real institutional power was obvious. The Headteacher followed up each case, no more than five during the whole period, and the same lady was involved in four of the five incidents. He used parental influence to reinforce his own concern about her style of dealing with the children and these incidents provided an ideal entree. Indeed, the Headteacher followed up every example of parental concern expressed by telephone call or in person and made it a priority to respond as quickly as possible. The irate, violent parent etched into the folklore of headship interviews never appeared and there were no examples of belligerence or unreasonableness. Parents generally made a reasonable approach to the school based on their view that Redland was a caring institution and that for one reason or another their child was unhappy. The idea of a happy school concerned about the personal and social development of its pupils underpinned their desire to resolve perceived injustices.
Playground problems at playtimes related to manifestations of bullying, name calling and rough play resulting in torn clothes. These occasional upsets were quickly resolved by firm intervention from the Headteacher or class teacher. The implicit notion of responsive accountability in all these disciplinary matters indicated that parents expected to be able to influence "process criteria". In common with the last section there may also have been an assumption by some parents that by indicating they were keeping a close eye on what was going on in the school they were ensuring a better deal for their own child. Moreover the response of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, suggested that despite the avowed intention to do otherwise, they did respond to the parental "fishbowl strategy". In other words knowing that parents were watching, generated a more cautious approach to the welfare of certain children.

An interesting example of responsive accountability related to a written request from a mother for a special diet for her son. It involved removing any trace of E102, an artificial colouring and preservative, from his school lunch. She maintained that "this particular chemical has been known to increase stress in some children and we feel in John's case it is worth trying.... if it will help with his 'social problem' as Mrs Wood put it." The Headteacher delegated the responsibility to the Cook and everything went smoothly until the distraught mother telephoned to say John had broken a very expensive piece of china because he had been allowed to eat fish fingers at school. The Cook responded by finding Exhibit A from the dustbin, the fish finger box, which revealed no trace of E102 in the list of ingredients. The problem was resolved amicably by the staff's immediate vindicatory response, however, the simplistic assumption of causality is illustrative of a much broader and more serious parental reaction.

Attempts by parents to influence the content of the curriculum were many and varied. At one level the P.T.A. sought to exert some influence through the curriculum evenings they organised and the particular equipment they bought. The Parents Evenings described in the earlier section involving parental influence on internal organisation illustrated a concerted effort to ensure "the provision of intellectually challenging tasks (stretch), and setting expectations which encouraged students to face rather than avoid such tasks (push)". The concepts of "stretching" and "pushing" were at the heart of many of the Headteacher's discussions with individual parents. Indeed, in common with respondents to a recent MORI poll, a sizeable minority of discussions related to the provision of adequate time for the "basics". Notwithstanding,
Ridgeway's contention\textsuperscript{23} that staff can be threatened from opposite ends of the parental influence spectrum was illustrated by the receipt of a letter on 27 October 1983, quoted below in full.

"Dear Mr Suggett,

I noticed at the last consultation that the mathematics teaching in the School has reverted to more traditional concepts. I would guess that this is partly in response to pressure from parents to cover basic skills; I also know how controversial the new mathematics has proved.

However, I believe this is one area where the subject is advancing so quickly in concept and in technique that parents should not control it – we always want out children to be good at the things we learnt.

May I urge a move towards new mathematics and computing, now advanced even in Primary Schools, coupled with some parental education."

The Headteacher responded instantly by telephone and repudiated these explicit criticisms. In his view the parent had misinterpreted the evidence and his comments were unfounded – Redland had recently been commended by the Mathematics Adviser for its child-centred, problem-solving approach. Notwithstanding, the correspondence may have accurately gauged the temperature of parental opinion and was presenting an alternative, minority view. He was seeking to bring pressure to bear upon the staff not to respond "to pressure from parents". The letter resulted in some successful parental education the following term and in the fullness of time was perceived as supporting the school's new direction. Thus parental influence did not generate or suppress change, it endorsed it.

A visit from a parent in June 1982 quite definitely did change the content of the curriculum. The interview, considered in Chapter Two, involved the Headteacher responding to a mother's complaint about inadequate art education. The examples of her daughter's work that she produced as evidence were impossible to justify and the performance of the class teacher was difficult to defend. Her final revelation that her husband was a Staff HMI for Art added further to the Headteacher's confusion. His response was to dedicate the following term to school based INSET in art. The curriculum guidelines for the subject were re-written and staff awareness in this area was raised. The
Headteacher's prompt reaction to this example of parental influence reflects the coalition of an acknowledgement that art was an area of institutional under-performance and the degree of 'significance' accorded to the educational status and power of the complainant's spouse. To react to the under-performance element suggests "responsive accountability", to react to the implied threat of the weaponry at the disposal of HMI indicates cowardice and a strong sense of self-interest.

My intention in this chapter has been to locate Redland School within a broader social context and to elaborate the external influences which impinge upon its internal operation. Clearly the supporting influence structure has dynamic and organic qualities and the degree of influence exerted by particular groups of people varies over time. Nevertheless, the major influences as the Headteacher perceived them have been identified and his reaction to them documented. Indeed this text illustrates Handy's contention that "any particular influence will involve implications about the individuals involved, the situation and the response mechanism." One implication for the Headteacher was to seek to manage the impressions of the institution available to external influence agents - the substance of the next chapter.
References


16. Interview with The Assistant Director of Education, County Hall 1 June '83.

17. Interview with The Director of Education, County Hall 15 August '83.


20. Interview with the Primary Advisers. County Hall, 9 June '83.


25. Governors Meeting held at Redland School Spring Term 1983.

"The presentation of self is the key feature of all interaction. It discloses who we wish to be and how we wish to be treated, it also discloses who we wish others to be and how we wish to treat them. The Headteacher's self-presentation was implicit in the substance of Chapters One, Two and Three, and Chapter Four identified some of the external influences upon his performance. In this Chapter I propose to adopt a dramaturgical perspective in reviewing the Headteacher's attempts at personal and institutional impression management for the consumption of this external audience. In fact, it is extremely difficult to disentangle the duality of the Headteacher's impression management, in order to differentiate between the construction of an individual persona and a corporate institutional image, as one is necessarily implicit in the other. "When an individual appears before others he will have many motives for trying to control the impression they receive of the situation." Indeed identification of motive is a minor consideration in this text as the substantive focus is a review of the mechanisms and techniques employed by the Headteacher to present a personal and institutional image to external, "significant others". Neither is the specific content of these activities of prime concern, but rather the participant's dramaturgical problems in presenting the activity before others and the implications for future social interaction.

For the purposes of this chapter, interaction may be defined as the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions. A "performance" involves "all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants." Other intra- or extra-institutional actors may either operate as co-participants or an audience, depending upon the nature of the drama. In any given interaction social actors will take steps not only to present their own intentions and purposes, but also to determine the identity and purposes of the other social actors involved. Each social actor makes the other aware and, in turn, is made aware of the other's identity and purposes by the taking of necessary steps to publicize identities and intentions. "Whatever the actor publicizes, either by dress, posture, gesture or speech becomes the data that the other actor can 'take account of' and thereby can orient their own behaviour accordingly." Self-presentation casts not only our own part in the situational script, it also casts others into parts and the roles made by participants in a particular situation are reciprocal. The
notion of the Headteacher's presentation of self focuses upon his efforts to create a role and present an appearance of that role to others. "Altercasting examines the other side of the coin, as it were, the effect that a self-presentation is in a sense an attempt to constrain the potential response". Thus altercasting operates by seeking to place limits upon the capacity of others to play parts of their own choosing. This phenomenon is graphically illustrated in the Parent Teacher Association Case Study elaborated later in this Chapter.

Each actor acts on the basis of his particular definition; as he expresses what he takes to be appropriate behaviour, it becomes obvious whether or not his perspective is shared by others. In most cases during the three years the Headteacher's and external others' definitions were compatible, people were familiar with the situational script, found few problems with the roles assigned to them and fitted their lines and actions to those of others with little or no difficulty. Occasionally definitions were incompatible and a process of improvisation occurred, the nature of which was influenced by the physical setting, the props and the purposes of others. The outcome was compromise, an improvised reality which allowed the interaction to proceed on at least a temporary basis. In problematic situations individuals are seldom allowed to perform exactly the role they would like, nor do they comply exactly with the roles in which they are cast by others. Continuation of the interaction is dependant, therefore, on the ability of participants to accommodate or at least to align themselves with some part of the projected and interpreted reality. What develops, in effect, is an agreement not to disagree; a working agreement that allows the participants to proceed, characterised not by consensus and clear agreement, but more by the absence of large scale disagreement. "At the very centre of human behaviour, therefore, is definition and performance, compromise and improvisation".

Actors do not interact in a void and construct their social world "ab initio" on each and every occasion, but they approach interaction already influenced by past social experience and by the patterns of behaviour most frequently used by other social actors past and present, in what are taken to be similar circumstances. Such patterns of mutual accommodation arise as individuals seek to make the world more predictable by structuring their associations. When a relatively stable working agreement is arrived at, it is in the interest of both parties to preserve it and in such cases elements of a joint act or "situational
script" can be identified. Parents' Evenings, School Fetes and Christmas Plays provide opportunities for ritual and ceremonial conduct. At the other end of the continuum are the circumstances in which expectations and parts to be played are much less clear and much more subject to improvisation. The more novel or problematic the situation, the more consciously must those involved create and test out particular courses of action. For example, the Headteacher's interactions with a complaining parent and an aggressive headteacher colleague were initially novel scripts. The distinction between routine and novel is, however, much less absolute than at first appears. In a number of routine circumstances there is room for improvisation and innovation and in the most novel of circumstances there is often an element of the stable and the predictable.

Stated at the simplest level Redland School may be viewed as a process, a continuous exchange of definitions and affirmations. All shared understandings lack permanence and must be continually reaffirmed or renegotiated; rules, procedures, order and structure are not automatic occurrences but rather must be worked at and sustained by the repeated acts of participants. "The working scripts which characterize organizational life arise from and are dependent upon the process of interpretation and self-presentation, altercasting and improvisation"¹. Thus impression management becomes a rather slippery concept as the process is an organic and dynamic one. The Headteacher's desired self-presentation underwent changes during the observation period and inevitably the complexion of a desirable institutional face also reflected cosmetic surgery. Notwithstanding these considerations, within the walls of Redland it was possible to identify "a team of performers who co-operate to present to an audience a given definition of the situation"².

The Headteacher's presentation of self to the Redland audience could be viewed as commencing with his performance at his interview by the Governors and Authority Representative. Even before his arrival staff and parents sought to construct an identikit picture of the man based on fragments of information gleaned from every available source. His preliminary visits to the school provided the backdrop for his initial headteacher "performances". The capacity to convey impressions or create an image appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign activity, the expression given and the expression given off. The first involves verbal symbols or their substitutes used to convey information -
communication in the traditional and narrow sense. The second involves a wide range of action that others can treat as symptomatic of the actor, the expectation being that the action was performed for reasons other than the information conveyed in this way. His initial desire was to have the whole audience think highly of him and to have them think that he thought highly of them. Regardless of these particular objectives it was in his best interests to seek to control the conduct of others, particularly in their responsive treatment of him. He believed this control could be achieved largely by influencing the definition of the situation which co-participants came to formulate in the light of his legitimate claims to institutional power. He could influence this definition by expressing himself in such a way as to give them the kind of impression that would lead them to act voluntarily in accordance with his own plan. The traditions of the headteacher role undoubtedly conveyed a clearly defined impression to the whole audience without the incumbent either consciously or unconsciously being disposed to create such an impression. Nevertheless, knowing that the individual is likely to present himself in a light which is favourable to him, the audience may have divided what they witnessed into the two elements identified above, namely his verbal assertions and the expressions he gives off. The audience may then use "what are considered to be the ungovernable aspects of his expressive behaviour as a check upon the validity of what is conveyed by the governable aspects"².

When the Headteacher took up the headship of Redland School he implicitly requested his total audience to take seriously the impression he generated for them. They were asked to believe that he actually possessed the personal and professional attributes explicitly claimed by his appointment to this post. Upon his arrival the Headteacher embarked upon a three year performance, an act designed for the consumption of his audience. His inward belief in the role he was acting provides an interesting starting point from which to consider his impression management strategies. "It is probably no mere historical accident that the word person, in its first meaning, is a mask. It is rather a recognition of the fact that everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously, playing a role. It is these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves"⁵. A Headteacher colleague reassured me before taking up my appointment, by asserting that others would see me as a Headteacher before I saw myself as one. He went on "remember they have to impress you now and not the other way around!" Notwithstanding, in the early days performing as the Headteacher was an
unfamiliar role and "in a sense, and insofar as this mask represents the conception we have formed of ourselves - the role we are striving to live up to - this mask is our true self, the self we would like to be. In the end, our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality"\textsuperscript{5}.

An initial strand in the Headteacher's impression management strategy was elaborated in Chapter One and involved the relocation and re-organisation of the Headteacher's Room. This room would provide the setting for much of the subsequent drama and the furniture, decor, physical layout and other background items would supply the scenery and stage props for the human action played out within its walls. The esoteric educational literature and the wipe-clean display boards, with immediate action plans written upon them, were indicators of the Headteacher's desire to project a particular image. The atmosphere of the room was calculated to have an effect upon all who entered and by designing it in this way the Headteacher was making a statement about himself. In this way the setting is an important part of the Headteacher's expressive equipment. Other items of expressive equipment are inherent in his personal front, such as sex, age, size and looks, posture, clothing, speech patterns, facial expressions, body language and the like. Some of these vehicles for conveying signs are relatively fixed, such as age, sex and size, while others are more transitory, such as facial expression or body language, and can vary during a performance. The stimuli which make up personal front can be subdivided into appearance and manner. Appearance obviously relates to the performer's dress, his personal tidiness and his general visual impact. Manner may be taken to refer to those stimuli which function at the time to warn us of the interaction role the performer will expect to play in the oncoming situation. Thus the Headteacher's appearance was largely consistent throughout the three years while his manner varied greatly in dealing with a visit from the Chairman of Governors and a disciplinary interview with the Caretaker. The key to impression management is the ability to mobilise the stimuli which will express during a specific interaction the message the actor wishes to convey. The Headteacher was particularly conscious of his desire to perform well for new parents visiting Redland for the first time. Clearly his performances were designed to present an idealized view of the situation, but as Cooley\textsuperscript{6} asserts, "if we never tried to seem a little better than we are, how could we improve or train ourselves from the outside inward? And the same impulse to show the world a better or idealized aspect of ourselves finds an organized expression in the
various professions, each of which has to some extent a cast or pose, which its members assume unconsciously, for the most part, but which has the effect of a conspiracy to work upon the credulity of the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{6}

The first impression management challenge to the new Headteacher was to project a picture of poise, efficiency and confidence, with no hint of fumbling through a difficult learning period. Furthermore, the Headteacher role had multiple faces with different groups of people demanding different performances. "We may practically say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups."\textsuperscript{7} As both effect and enabling cause of this kind of commitment to the particular part one is currently performing, audience segregation occurs. By means of audience segregation, the Headteacher ensured that those before whom he played one of his parts would not be the same individuals before whom he played a different part in another setting. Furthermore he sought to foster the impression that his current performance and relationship to the audience involved a special and unique quality. It rapidly became plain that he had ample capacity and motive to misrepresent the facts, particularly to externally significant others, such as parents, governors and representatives of County Hall. He determined upon a policy of propounding the positive and neglecting the negative. Thus in both his personal and institutional impression management he only embroidered the truth. When the Headteacher was auditioned for his new part he was not told in full detail how to conduct himself. It was assumed that he already had in his repertoire a large number of bits and pieces of performances which would be required in the Redland setting. A theatrical performance requires a thorough script, but the vast part involving "expression given off" is often determined by meagre stage directions. It is expected that the performer of illusions will already know a great deal about how to manage his voice, his face and his body, although he may find it difficult to provide a detailed verbal account of this knowledge. Thus the Headteacher did not have to learn a totally new part, but rather appropriate linkages to weave together parts of previous roles into an apparently virtuoso headteacher performance.

While it is difficult to disentangle the headteacher's personal and corporate institutional impression management it would be an over-simplification to see the two as indistinguishable. Clearly the
first is an individual performance while the second is a team effort. Obviously the Headteacher is the single most influential team member, as he is both the front man and the person with the greatest claim to legitimate institutional power. Coulson's research suggests that a primary headteacher's close ego-identification with his school develops an institution which reflects his own personality and philosophy and the Headteacher was striving throughout the observation period to make Redland a reflection of his own education philosophy. Nevertheless we commonly find that the definition of the situation projected by a particular participant is an integral part of a projection that is fostered and sustained by the intimate co-operation of more than one participant. Indeed while a team performance is in progress, any member of the team has the power to give the show away or to disrupt it by inappropriate conduct. Each team-mate, therefore, is forced to rely upon the good conduct and behaviour of his fellows, and they in turn are forced to rely upon him. Furthermore when members of a team co-operate to maintain a given definition of the situation before their audience they become accomplices in the maintenance of a particular appearance of things. For example, teachers felt that if they were to sustain an impression of professional competence and institutional authority, they must be sure that when angry parents came to the school with complaints that the Headteacher would defend them, at least until the parents had left. Thus the interaction between teachers and parents could be viewed as a dialogue between two teams, with the social setting in which the interaction occurs managed by the teacher team. Parents' Evenings illustrate the social drama, the teachers perform in their own setting and the parent team predominantly acts the role of audience. Nevertheless, the parents also provide a team performance, which is analysed in detail by the other team at the conclusion of the match.

Teachers "affirm a backstage solidarity even while engaged in a performance, expressing with impunity unacceptable things about the audience as well as things about themselves that the audience would find unacceptable". Control of the setting gives the "home team", the teachers, a sense of security. The Headteacher, by virtue of his institutional position, is endowed with the right to direct and control the progress of the dramatic action - he is the accepted director of the play. A basic problem for the director is that of information control; particularly at Parents' Evenings, the parents must not acquire destructive information about the situation that is being defined for them. In other words, the teaching team must be able to keep its secrets
and have its secrets kept. The collusion of non-teaching staff is particularly critical in this context.

There will be facts about almost every performance which are incompatible with the impression fostered by the performance, but which have not been collected and organised into a usable form by anyone. In retrospect the formation of a Parent Teacher Association Committee could provide a clearing house for parental complaints and the machinery to transform these individual concerns into a team weapon. Indeed, as Chairman of the P.T.A., the Headteacher operated as the go-between of the teacher and parent teams and gave an impression not unlike a man desperately trying to play tennis with himself. Interestingly the most difficult sorties by members of the parent team to repel, involved parents who are also teachers. These people inevitably came directly to the Headteacher and ceremonially proposed a bargain: "You sort out my child's problem and I won't tell on you".

In analysing institutional impression management it becomes obvious that it is crucial for each member of the teaching team to maintain dramaturgical discipline and to exercise it in presenting his own part. A disciplined performer, dramaturgically speaking, is someone who remembers his part and does not commit unmeant gestures or "faux pas" in performing it. He is someone with discretion, who does not involuntarily give the show away by disclosing its secrets and he has the presence of mind to be able to cover up on the spur of the moment for inappropriate behaviour on the part of his team-mates. In short the three attributes that team members must have if their team is to perform in safety are loyalty, discipline and circumspection.

The dramaturgical perspective provides an analytical tool with which to order available social facts concerning Redland School. The foregoing discussion has provided a broad introduction to a closer analysis of the actual personal and institutional impression management techniques employed during the three years. As the single most influential actor in the school, each time the Headteacher appeared before others, he knowingly and unwittingly projected a definition of the situation, of which a conception of himself was an important part. Indeed his ego was deeply involved in his identification with the Headteacher role and in consequence he was very sensitive to direct, or even implied, criticism. By definition the external team could not experience the internal reality of Redland School and the fundamental dialectic maintains that while
these externally significant others would like to experience this reality, they necessarily had to base their perceptions upon appearances. This state of affairs reinforced the importance of successful impression management.

The Headteacher's impression management behaviour can be dichotomised into two broad categories, the active and the reactive modes. The active mode involved him in initiating or directing performances for the consumption of an external audience, while the reactive mode was engaged by external agents creating a situation in which he was required to respond. In the first term the Headteacher felt as if he had a high public profile, both inside and outside the institution. His behaviour inside the school has already been elaborated at some length but his performances for external audiences require further elucidation. Term started on 27 April 1981 and the Headteacher's first public appearance was at the School Swimming Gala on 11 May. Unfortunately, a recent cartilage injury had necessitated the wearing of a plaster cast on his left leg and hopping around the swimming pool with a walking stick was an unpromising adjunct to his first contact with "the parents". Furthermore, the presence of his predecessor, invited by the Deputy to present the trophies, was perceived as an additional constraint. Nevertheless, the ceremonial nature of the event carried it through and provided the Headteacher with the opportunity to practise his verbal communication. The event was extremely well organised by Mrs Jordan and the Headteacher was pleased with the impression of institutional efficiency, even if his personal image fell short of his ideal model.

Parent Consultations took place on consecutive evenings at the end of May and provided the next opportunity to meet parents. Tradition dictated that the Headteacher was available in his room to parents who wanted to see him. This arrangement meant that the Headteacher met very few parents and in the encounters that did take place was in the reactive mode. The desire to project an interested, professional and caring image was restricted by the parameters of the situation. The School Sports Day in early June provided the next opportunity to address the parent body, without a leg in plaster, and the expression given off was more carefully managed. The Headteacher sought to project an image of involved athleticism, with a new track-suit proving an appropriate costume. Again the event was very smoothly organised, this time by Mr Andrews, and the Headteacher could confidently front the proceedings, secure in the knowledge that the event had been a 'good performance'. By simply
appearing at events involving Redland pupils, the Headteacher’s image was elaborated. Mrs Confrey, the Ancillary Assistant, informed him how pleased the parents were that he had attended a play at the Phoenix Theatre and the Area Swimming Gala. His participation and demeanour in accompanying a class trip to Dudley Zoo was also perceived positively by the parents in attendance. The annual School Fete on 27 June provided a further opportunity for the Headteacher to elaborate his image. The theme of the event was "The Royal Wedding" and much against his better judgement he was prevailed upon by Mrs Jordan to take the part of Prince Charles, leading the procession through the main street of the village. Mrs Jordan took the part of Princess Diana and the rest of the staff and pupils joined the procession in fancy dress. The Headteacher had some misgivings about the efficacy of this impression management ploy, but concluded that his bravery and good nature would outweigh the "fool making" element of the exercise. Indeed the Fete passed off very successfully and the Headteacher got to know a number of parents by labouring alongside them on a number of activities.

The most critical event in the Headteacher’s impression management strategy took place on the final Thursday of the first team. At Mrs Jordan’s suggestion, he hastily convened a meeting of parents to explain next term’s vertical grouping of the third and fourth year into three parallel classes. As noted in the last chapter it rapidly became clear that arranging this meeting had been a mistake. The Headteacher went through his carefully rehearsed script with little response from the packed audience, but upon inviting questions was very vigorously challenged by four parents, three of whom were teachers themselves. The opening response from the floor apparently encapsulated the mood of the meeting; "lots of us parents will not be happy with vertical grouping!" In his naivety the Headteacher was unprepared for such vehement opposition, and the field note captures his state of mind, "try to stay calm and think quickly". Indeed the Headteacher outwardly dealt confidently with the assaults of his four protagonists and carefully rehearsed the benefits of vertical grouping. In so doing he also sought to reveal his claim to esoteric educational knowledge and his unswerving resolve in the face of opposition. In fact it was later suggested by a neutral observer that he "put his opponents down with some aplomb". It is noteworthy that the staff team also came to his assistance and both Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings made very telling contributions. Rev. Rivers also delivered a crushing broadside upon the protesters. This rather stormy meeting was followed directly by an innovative Leavers’ Evening,
organised by the Headteacher for children and parents. Each leaver was presented with a book and the children provided a short entertainment. Rev. Rivers took the opportunity to congratulate the Headteacher upon his very successful start and several parents expressed their support for next term's arrangements. In the fulness of time it became apparent that the Headteacher had unknowingly repelled the attacks of the four most vocal parents involved in the school and in so doing had gained a reputation for steadiness under fire or extreme obstinacy, depending upon the standpoint of the perceiver.

The most cursory analysis of the Headteacher's impression management strategy during this first term indicates the existence of audience segregation and the necessity to develop a number of parallel performances. The field notes indicate four principal external audiences, namely parents, governors, colleagues from other schools and representatives of County Hall. In almost all these interactions the Headteacher was responding to situations which had been initiated by other people and the diversity of this range can be readily exemplified by listing some of the performances demanded during the first term under the above four categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Governors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 8 New parent &quot;rising 5&quot; query</td>
<td>April 27 Rev. Rivers visits to welcome me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11 Swimming Gala</td>
<td>May 19 Governors Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27 &amp; 28 Parent Consultations</td>
<td>June 3 Rev. Rivers made an informal visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3 Head &amp; Wife attended Phoenix Theatre</td>
<td>June 12 Caretaker Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9 Head visited Dudley Zoo with J2</td>
<td>June 26 Interview for temporary teaching post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10 Area Swimming Gala</td>
<td>July 2 Parents' Meeting on vertical grouping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 17 Area Sports at Welland Park</td>
<td>July 2 Leavers' Evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 27 Annual School Pete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 29 Parent &quot;rising 5&quot; query</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2 Parents' Meeting on vertical grouping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2 Leavers' Evening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of these performances were new roles for the Headteacher and in almost every case he was reacting to other actors who were initiating the interaction. First impressions are of great importance and therefore the Headteacher was particularly eager to perform well in all these situations, nevertheless, he had unwittingly cast himself in the role of reactor rather than director. As the reactor the script is more problematic and involves improvisation rather than a carefully rehearsed performance. It is impossible to quantify the efficacy of this strategy, however, the new Headteacher could have dominated the interaction more by constructing situations in which he was directing the action. Indeed the Parents' Meeting to discuss vertical grouping, by default provided an opportunity to display a directive role and as such was probably the most significant performance of the first term.

The performances catalogued above represent a selective sample of the Headteacher's total presentation of self. The audience is seeking to establish the identity of the actor and he is striving to present an appearance which will reassure and impress them. The Headteacher is attempting to project a positive image of a role about which he himself is uncertain and is negotiating within himself. The complexity of the role is exacerbated by the variety of the audiences and during the first term the Headteacher's first priority was to impress the inhabitants of
the institution, the staff and children. Indeed the first channel of communication to the outside world was the messages the participants took home with them. Parents learn most about schools by debriefing their own child at the end of the day, therefore the Headteacher's image with the pupil body was critical to his total impression management programme. Likewise teaching and particularly non-teaching staff can communicate in-school behaviour to the outside world. The school-gate meeting and the bush-telegraph are significant vehicles for the construction or demolition of individual and institutional reputation. Indeed audience segregation can never be total and the Headteacher felt he had to maintain role-consistency in every situation. In the first instance he wanted the total audience to perceive him as professional, committed, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, approachable and totally dedicated. In fact these constructs can be summarised in the general statement that he wanted to vindicate the judgement of the interviewing panel.

Analysis indicates that the first term was predominantly a reactive phase with the Headteacher seeking to establish his dramaturgical identity within scripts written and directed by others. Indeed, at times he felt like Mr Lake's understudy, improvising in a bewildering complexity of different scenes. Upon returning to school after the summer holiday the atmosphere felt quite different, the Headteacher's Room had been moved, staff had changed, new children were being admitted and the Headteacher began to "feel" his new role. As he began to make changes to the internal organisation and curriculum of the school he had a definite mission to explain these improvements to the wider audience. Thus the Headteacher moved from a reactive to an active phase, from a pure presentation of self to the front-man of a developing organisation. Successful acting is predicated upon confidence and as the Headteacher's self-confidence grew, he became more eager to perform for external audiences. Indeed these performances were interactive and success upon one stage generated confidence for playing different kinds of roles.

The interactive nature of the strands of the Headteacher's total impression management strategy complicates the isolation of constituent elements, nevertheless in the interests of conceptual clarity I propose to review the evidence in terms of the four categories already identified. The Headteacher perceived the parents to be the most influential and critical audience and for this reason I will deal with this category last. A brief case-study of the formation and first two years of the Parent Teacher Association provides a valuable insight into
headteacher-parent interaction and will form a postscript to that section of the text.

The Headteacher's interaction with the Governors was elaborated at some length in the last chapter. Indeed the vast majority of these interactions involved one to one, informal meetings between the Headteacher and the Chairman, Rev. Rivers. The Headteacher rapidly became aware that Rev. Rivers was the critical reality defining figure upon the Governing Body. He led the Governors with a clear resolve to uphold the autonomy of the institution provided by the Trust Deed. In fact Mr Lake had delivered an extensive warning about how difficult Rev. Rivers had been during his headmastership and I approached the relationship with some timorousness. Clearly he had to be won over and the obvious strategy was to allow him to define the relationship, to react to his leading. By acknowledging his legitimate power, the Headteacher quickly struck up a very positive relationship with Rev. Rivers. Once it became obvious that the Headteacher would accept his advice, Rev Rivers almost always deferred to the Headteacher's professional judgement. The key to the situation appeared to be the Headteacher's preparedness to acknowledge his power and to allow him to make the running in the conversation. The Headteacher also made it a practice to keep Rev. Rivers informed about everything going on in the school and to ask his advice, even on matters in which he had already decided his course of action. By involving Rev. Revers in the school in a meaningful way, the Headteacher gained a very valuable ally. This fact had been graphically illustrated at the afore-mentioned Parents' Meeting.

The relationship between the Headteacher and Rev. Rivers was elaborated by each participant revealing something of their lives outside the school situation. As committed Christians an obvious bond existed and Rev. Rivers always displayed a pastoral concern for the Headteacher's extended family. Similarly the Headteacher was able to advise Jane Rivers, the Rector's daughter, who was training to be a primary teacher. In this way the web of mutual obligation was elaborated and reciprocity extended. Carefully calculated impression management gave way to genuine friendship, but the basic parameters of the relationship always maintained. For example, at the shortlisting for a new Deputy Headteacher, Rev. Rivers commenced by reading from the Articles of Government, stressing that the Headteacher and the Authority had no direct influence upon the appointment. Once this principle was acknowledged he deferred totally to the Headteacher's professional
judgement and would have backed it against any opposition, particularly the other Governors or County Hall. Furthermore, the Headteacher, gave Rev. Rivers a free hand in the school and invited him to lead assemblies, organise Church Services, advise on Religious Education and involve himself in any area of school life he so desired. In essence the Headmaster's strategy was a simple one.

1. acknowledge the chairman's legitimate power

2. seek his advice and keep him informed

3. be prepared to spend time talking to him

4. give him a free hand in the school

5. project a professional and a Christian attitude at all times

The school became much more involved in Church activities, the children worshipped in church at Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Mrs Jennings prepared the School Choir for other services and the Headteacher read various lessons. Most importantly the Headteacher organised a Leavers' Communion Service which had long been close to the Rector's heart. In short the relationship was always very carefully managed by the Headteacher and much time and energy was devoted to it. Furthermore, these performances obviously had a much wider audience than just Rev. Rivers and the warmth of the relationship was an important strand in conveying a positive impression of the Headteacher to parents and villagers.

Direct formal contact with the total Governing Body took place at the termly Governors' Meeting. This event provided an ideal forum for the Headteacher to manage the impressions conveyed to this group. Firstly his written Headteacher's Report was distributed before the meeting and provided a perfect medium to present a very positive commercial about the school and by implication about the Headteacher himself. The first report and subsequent meeting were approached with some trepidation by the Headteacher, but the Governors proved to be a very unthreatening and appreciative audience. It rapidly became obvious that the Governors, with the exception of the Chairman, were afraid or reluctant to actually visit the classrooms and have direct contact with teachers or children. Thus their impressions of the school were based upon the appearance.
presented by the Headteacher, rather than the reality observed in classrooms. The Headteacher had a carte blanche to communicate his own reality of the school, implementing his policy of propounding the positive and neglecting the negative. Furthermore, as the only professional educationalist present at these meetings, the Headteacher possessed indisputable claims to esoteric knowledge.

Notwithstanding his professional knowledge, the Headteacher displayed an appropriate deference to the Governors and always tried to respond to their questions with tact and diplomacy. In truth the nine meetings were low key events, devoid of any sign of conflict, and an ideal stage upon which the Headteacher could perform. It was also very reassuring to know that the director of the action, the Chairman, was a firm friend and confidant. These gatherings were social events rather than business meetings and the provision of tea and cakes set the tone of the interaction. The Headteacher symbolically served the Governors with these refreshments and made every effort to involve them in the social life of the school. An invitation to Christmas Lunch was particularly well received and reserved seats at plays and sports events reinforced the Headteacher's apparent desire to involve the Governors.

The Headteacher could be viewed as being very fortunate in working with such an amenable group of Governors, particularly in the light of their formal power. However, he believed that they responded favourably to him in so far as they were reassured by the professional image he projected. This view was reinforced by their behaviour at appointment panels, because in every instance the Headteacher's chosen candidate was appointed. Indeed the interviews themselves provided a further opportunity for the Headteacher to display his impression management skills, by conducting the event professionally, phrasing appropriate questions, displaying care and concern for the candidates and exercising appropriate deference in the selection phase. In short, the Headteacher viewed the Governors as a body of people he had to impress, not least because the Chairman may be required to act as a referee for his future applications, but also because they had great formal power vested in their hands. As a group they visited the school each term and carried away messages which would be disseminated in their various villages and workplaces. They were important agents in the Headteacher's impression management strategy.

The Headteacher's performances for colleagues in other schools,
catalogued earlier, suggest the importance of establishing a positive local reputation. In fact, the two visits to local playschools were the first active elements of the Headteacher's impression management strategy. The overt agenda of these visits was to strengthen links and meet the children, but the covert agenda was to impress the playschool teachers so that they would pass on positive messages about the Headteacher and school to the parents. The Headteacher perceived the importance of successful public relations to be heightened by the fact that local schools were competing for a dwindling child population, indeed the "rising fives issue" has been extensively rehearsed in earlier chapters. Making a positive impression upon the Headteacher of the High School was also seen to be important as his contact with former Redland parents would undoubtedly engender a feedback mechanism. In fact, the visit from the High School Headteacher developed into a very interesting event, as both participants revealed an overwhelming desire to impress the other and the meeting devolved into a points scoring contest. Nonetheless, an initial contact was made and I was invited to visit the High School for a day during the following term. I approached this day with some trepidation, performing on an unfamiliar stage with an unknown cast held some fears and a nagging worry that my inadequacy would be "found out". I was frustrated by being held at arm's length and unwittingly created an impression by asking what were perceived to be uncomfortable questions. Thereafter, I was treated rather circumspectly by the Headteacher of the High School. Representatives of Redland, however, became involved in every High School liaison initiative and indeed Redland was the only local primary school to participate in teacher exchange with the High School. Most importantly the High School furnished objective evidence of the outstanding success of Redland pupils, in terms of academic set placements. This information was extremely useful to the Headteacher of Redland and could be deployed as hard evidence of institutional success, with the broad implication that results were better than other local primary schools. In fact, this yardstick conflicted with the Headteacher's underlying philosophy of education, but was at the heart of what parents, particularly new parents, wanted to know. The Headteacher consoled himself with the notion that parents must be reassured, but at the same time experienced an element of cognitive dissonance.

A group of approximately ten local primary Headteachers met in the autumn of 1981 to discuss the production of the school brochures demanded by the 1980 Education Act. This group developed into a locally-based
Headteacher Seminar Group which met approximately twice a term to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Headteacher of Redland found these meetings frustrating because they were anecdotal and unstructured, but enjoyed observing the impression management strategies of local colleagues. A young male colleague, who subsequently replaced the Headteacher at Redland, manipulated the action from the background, he engineered situations in which he was asked to do the very thing he wanted. He was articulate, relaxed and always one step ahead and I admired his style and learnt from it. The hidden agenda of the meeting was by far the most interesting aspect, but I was unwilling to abandon the group as I found it a valuable venue in which to observe and practise self-presentation skills. Indeed as the youngest member and the Headteacher of the largest school, I was initially cast in the role of "young upstart" and developing the techniques to overcome this negative stereotype was a valuable learning experience. I concluded that my public presentation of self should involve the following ingredients, humanity, good manners, sense of humour, professionalism, assertiveness and the claim to esoteric educational knowledge. In terms of the last ingredient my recent MA Studies and access to research were powerful weapons.

The Headteacher was involved in a variety of headteacher seminar groups and an invitation in his second term to speak at the New Headteachers' Conference provided an excellent opportunity to perform for approximately fifty colleagues and four Advisers. The apparent success of this performance led to invitations to join other seminar groups and to speak at other events. In this way the Headteacher's self image was enhanced and he became more confident as a result of the approbation of his peers. The most effective way to practise public speaking is to speak in public and success with these audiences increased his confidence and range when speaking to parents. An invitation to be a member of a small group led by Mr Saville investigating the efficacy of school-based INSET furnished the opportunity for the Headteacher to work with senior colleagues and to be involved in the cut and thrust of educational debate. Similarly membership of the small group of headteachers visiting French schools provided a new setting in which to develop the presentation of self. Indeed, membership of these groups itself transmitted certain impression management messages and formed the basis for designing novel scripts.
As Redland was a Church of England Aided School, the Headteacher was required to attend Diocesan Headteacher Meetings on a termly basis. The Headteacher sought to establish strong links with the Diocesan Officers because he felt they could make a contribution to the school and they could also be instrumental in his future promotion. Indeed the Diocesan Adviser presented some excellent assemblies at Redland, which impressed the parents, and he formed a positive relationship with the Headteacher. The Headteacher prepared thoroughly for the termly Headteacher Meetings and always made it a practice to contribute to the discussion as early as possible, which had the effect of relaxing him when making further contributions. He also sought to display his enthusiasm by volunteering for any pilot schemes, such as the revival of Bishop's Visitors and the visit of Partners in Mission. The Partner in Mission was a German schoolteacher who spent the morning at Redland and was most impressed with an assembly led by the children. In her subsequent visits to local church groups she extolled the virtues of Redland and the Headteacher concluded that the exercise had been worthwhile. The Headteacher also volunteered to host one of the termly meetings and used the visit of headteachers and colleagues as a motivator in presenting the school in its most positive light. The balance had to be struck between calculated professionalism and personal warmth, between stimulating educational debate and satisfying catering. Managing impressions of the school for twenty headteacher colleagues was an interesting task and one in which the whole staff team had to be involved.

By introducing externally significant others into the school situation, the Headteacher believed he could influence the expectations of the staff team, he could encourage teachers to manage impressions more effectively. Representatives from County Hall were viewed by the Headteacher and staff alike as significant others and involving them in the school was viewed as a calculated risk. It was unlikely that Advisers would arrive except by invitation, however, once they had appeared, they could discover things that the Headteacher would have preferred to remain veiled in blessed secrecy. Notwithstanding, the Headteacher initially felt confident about inviting Advisers as he could not be held responsible for the state of affairs in the school. Furthermore, for County Hall to be able to quantify the efficacy of his headmastership, the "before and after" would have to be assessed. Additionally the ability to actually get Advisers into school would be perceived as impressive, as the school had been visited very infrequently in the past. The visits of County Hall personnel catalogued earlier
reflect the active mode of the Headteacher's impression management strategy. He never missed an opportunity to involve outside agents in the school and during the three years the following array of actors all visited Redland: the Assistant Education Officer for Primary Education, the Primary Advisers, the Mathematics Adviser, the Drama Adviser, the Religious Education Adviser, the Physical Education Adviser, the Advisory Teacher for Nursery Education, the Advisory Teacher for Environmental Studies, the Advisory Teacher for English, three Advisory teachers for Drama, the Advisory Teacher for Dance, the Educational Psychologist, the Reading Specialist, and the Area Special Needs Co-Ordinator. A number of these people were regular visitors, notably the Primary Adviser, the Mathematics Adviser, the Advisory Teacher for Nursery Education and the Advisory Teacher for English.

By involving all the above personnel the Headteacher believed he was creating an open institution in which the inhabitants would gain from and respond to visitors. Impression management is interactive and each visitor brought something and in return took something away from the school. Inevitably the Headteacher himself gained from each interaction and transmitted a particular message to each co-actor. The County Hall view of the school and the Headteacher was constructed by individuals pooling their perceptions and checking the validity of their conclusions with one another. (As an Adviser I now understand how this apparently haphazard process operates).

The Headteacher was accorded greater access to the County Hall machine by virtue of his PhD research study. Mr Saville was very supportive and interested, having learnt of the Headteacher's research proposal from a mutual friend at Loughborough University. The Headteacher's developing relationship with Mr Saville provided the entree to interviews with the Assistant Director and Director of Education. Indeed the Headteacher initially found Mr Saville a rather daunting character, a man of great gift and intelligence, who had the capacity to see very quickly into the heart of situations. By creating an initial agenda based on the Redland Research, the Headteacher felt he had the upper hand in his interaction with Mr Saville. This was a false premise, nevertheless Mr Saville's personal warmth and positive reinforcement served to elaborate the relationship and increase the Headteacher's confidence. Indeed three very stimulating days were spent at County Hall discussing the research and observing Mr Saville's highly developed impression management abilities. The Headteacher's close association with Mr Saville was in
itself viewed as a positive sign vehicle by staff and other headteacher colleagues. The Adviser's patronage elaborated and reinforced the Headteacher's opportunities for impression management. Upon these occasions the Headteacher not only experienced a desire to build his personal reputation, but also a responsibility to present a positive impression of Redland School. It was unlikely that the school would have a positive reputation if the Headteacher's personal image was unsatisfactory, or to a lesser extent vice-versa.

In my interviews with County Hall personnel I deliberately posed a question on impression management and the responses merit some elaboration. When asked "are you aware of individual schools attempting to impression manage?" the Assistant Director\textsuperscript{10} retorted in the following way "It is difficult to say. Advisers quickly perceive if the situation is managed, for example, if displays change overnight. There is a kind of Head whose conversation is entirely to do with how good his school is."\textsuperscript{10} Clearly some imperatives about what not to do in that statement. "Some teachers believe promotion lies in going to Advisers' courses."\textsuperscript{10} The obvious implication is that it does not and yet the Advisers write confidential references for the three hundred and fifty or more headteachers in the Authority and clearly they know some better than others. Indeed Mr Saville wrote the confidential for my present post and therefore the instrumental value of effective impression management is starkly highlighted. A jaundiced observer might ask "Is the appearance more important than the reality in seeking promotion?"

The Advisers provided a much more comprehensive answer to the same question. "You develop frameworks in order to look for certain things that have not been spoken about. You develop structures to look at the school and follow up people's statements in order to check what they really mean". This approach sounded deceptively scientific and Mr Saville went on to elaborate the criteria upon which he based his judgements. "The three broad areas of criteria area a) visual appearance, b) match of tasks to child's ability and c) the relationships between teachers and children. You have to build up a comprehensive picture."\textsuperscript{11} My view, as both a Headteacher and an Adviser, is that in practice this comprehensive picture is built up from fragmentary evidence. In fact, the vast majority of my contact with Mr Saville was away from the school setting, when the opportunity for impression checking is greatly reduced. Evidence can be selectively presented to provide a picture, which may be at odds with reality. It is my
contention that Headteachers are often judged on their personal impression management abilities rather than the state of health of their schools.

The Director of Education responded to the above question by explaining how "County Hall's view" of a school and its headteacher is constructed. "It depends on the involvement of pastoral and advisory staff and is an aggregate view of all these people." In an Authority containing over three hundred and fifty primary schools, however, some of the views could be rather ill-defined. Nevertheless the Director implicitly supported a vigorous impression management strategy by going on to assert that it was his responsibility to project a positive image for the Authority. "In order to recruit high level people we have to display hard educational thinking and communicate well with the newspapers and the media. We have to encourage the right people." In this way it could be concluded that impression management is carefully operationalised at every level of the education system and to fail to understand its importance could have a deleterious effect upon the success of the individual actor.

As stated earlier, the Headteacher perceived "the parents" to be the group he most wanted to impress as they were potentially the most critical audience. The parents by definition had more contact with the Headteacher and the school than any other external group. For at worst they had daily second hand experience of the school through their children and other adults and often had first hand experience. Despite desperately wanting to reassure the parents, the Headteacher had no coherent impression management strategy at the outset and the earlier catalogue indicates that his mode was largely reactive during the first term. As the observation period wore on the Headteacher moved from a reactive stance to a much more positive mode and rapidly perceived the importance of positive evangelism with regard to the school's aims, objectives and achievements.

The Headteacher's contact with the parents can be analysed in terms of the following formal - informal continuum, moving from impersonal written communication to chance meetings away from the school setting.
### Headteacher - Parent Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FORMAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>INFORMAL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Written communication</td>
<td>notices, newsletters, notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performances</td>
<td>church services, school plays, sports events, class assemblies, Kaleidoscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consultations</td>
<td>Parent Meeting, Parents' Evenings, Curriculum Evenings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Collaborative Activities</td>
<td>School Fete, Parent Teacher Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parent initiated Interviews</td>
<td>New parents, Parental concerns, Parental counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Incidental Visits to School</td>
<td>Collecting children, Non-school business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chance meetings away from School</td>
<td>Social and Sports Events, Meeting in the street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This tabulation is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative of the range of contacts and the degree of attendant formality. The Headteacher's first contact with parents was in the form of a written communication distributed on his second day. The style of the letter was intended to convey an impression of efficiency, professionalism and friendliness and the Headteacher was somewhat dismayed to discover after the letter had been distributed that it contained a spelling mistake. Indeed the Secretary's inability to spell and type accurately complicated this mode of communication and the Headteacher was unhappy with the visual impact of these letters until the new Secretary took over. Thus
his impression management was dependent upon the skills of a co-participant. Notwithstanding, written communications fell into three basic types, formal notices informing parents of immutable County or school policy, newsletters extolling the virtues of the school and informing of forthcoming events and informal notes to individual parents. The three styles were quite different and were calculated to create differing impressions. The major problem with written communication, however, was the fallibility of the distribution system. In short the children lost or failed to deliver the letters, which generated some parental frustration.

The second category "performances" typically involved the Headteacher, or the staff, presenting an act for a passive audience of parents. The Headteacher's slot at the conclusion of Sports Day and Swimming Gala has already been alluded to and the vote of thanks at the end of plays involved a similar imperative to discharge the niceties of the occasion. The 1981 Harvest Festival in Redland Church, however, provided the Headteacher with the first real opportunity to perform in front of parents. In his estimation the key to success was to be seen to relate to the children in a positive fashion. Mr Williams, as organiser of the event, had asked the Headteacher to deliver the sermon and clearly this fifteen minute performance before a packed audience of parents would be crucial. The Headteacher told a story, spontaneously involving the children as actors and allowing them to eat the visual aids which were cakes and biscuits. The event was a great success and the Headteacher received a substantial amount of positive feedback from parents. The most significant innovation in the area of performances was the decision to invite parents to class assemblies, an arrangement which commenced in the autumn of 1982. Parents of the performers arrived with the children and went straight into the hall and were thus able to observe the staff's ability to control and organise pupils. They saw children entering the hall, watched the assembly and witnessed the Headteacher's summing up. The Headteacher viewed this as an ideal opportunity to perform, once more he could use his relationship with the children to impress the parents, as undoubtedly their greatest interest was in the way their own child was being treated. The standard of the assemblies was uniformly high and the content discharged an educative function, but most importantly the children thoroughly enjoyed participating. The Headteacher always symbolically identified with the children by physically moving into their midst to offer his public thanks and appreciation. He always then went on to transmit a very positive message about the school within the
framework of this summing up, both verbally and non-verbally, and hoped that the captive audience of parents would disseminate this information. It could be about sporting or academic successes, improvements to the school building or reinforcement of the highest behavioural and academic standards. Indeed the participation of the school in sporting and dramatic events on a County basis implicitly projected the message that "this is an enthusiastic and successful school". For example, the Headteacher was not slow to remind parents that only twelve of the County's three hundred and fifty primary schools were participating in Kaleidoscope at the Haymarket Theatre in 1983. The efficacy of performances in toto was difficult to quantify as parents were essentially passive participants in these events, however, the Headteacher perceived these activities to be the most fertile area through which to construct a positive public image.

"Consultations" involved more of a dialogue, but the Headteacher and teachers retained primacy in the interaction by virtue of the their access to records of the curriculum and the performance of individual children. Parents in the main accepted the teacher's definition of the situation and sought information rather than challenging the professional performance of the institution. Likewise curriculum evenings were designed to evangelise rather than consult, parents were encouraged to participate in practical activities but not to challenge their philosophical basis. Notwithstanding, the Headteacher and staff perceived themselves to be creating an open dialogue.

"Collaborative activities" provided an environment in which parents and teachers could work alongside one another on a common task and in consequence deepen their personal relationships. The labels, however, never really fell away and these events often devolved into mutual impression management exercises. The staff were seeking to impress the parents with their willingness to work outside school hours for the benefit of the children, while the parents were often seeking greater access to "inside information" or negotiating preferential treatment for their own child.

Interviews initiated by parents fell into three basic types, the induction interview, the parental concern interview and the counselling interview. The induction interview developed into a stylised performance over the three years, presentation of the brochure, propounding the positive and neglecting the negative, followed by the selective grand
tour and final question - answer session. The Headteacher believed the key to success was establishing rapport with the child, if the child wanted to attend the school success was guaranteed. Parental concern or disquiet largely related to either behavioural or academic problems. The single largest area of concern was behaviour on the school bus followed by supervision at lunch-time. The Headteacher dealt with eight parental contacts concerning academic underperformance or inadequate teaching during the total observation period and most of those were in the first year. He believed that in both social and academic problems he had to be seen to acting decisively and he pursued every investigation until he was certain that the parent was satisfied. Counselling interviews initially involved parents seeking the Headteacher's advice on how to deal with their children in a range of situations, but eventually developed into requests for advice on marital and other personal problems. The Headteacher felt woefully inadequate in dealing with these situations and relied upon personal warmth and a willingness to listen. Indeed he was rather amazed that people would share intimate details of their lives with a virtual stranger and was reluctant to get over-involved.

Incidental visits to school by parents, for example to collect children for a dentist's appointment, were difficult to stage manage. Parents were more likely to see "reality", rather than "appearance", on these occasions. What was important in the Headteacher's view, however, was the way in which visitors were received. Despite the Secretary's aforementioned limitations, she had a charming personal manner and provided a very positive welcome to the school. Her telephone technique was also excellent and all these small considerations cohered to present a total picture to parents.

Chance meetings with parents away from the school setting were also perceived as important by the Headteacher. He always felt he should be neatly dressed and groomed when going into the local town and that his own children should be well-behaved. His desire was to portray an image of relaxed friendliness.

In summary the Headteacher wanted to convince the parents that Redland was a good school in order to ensure that the intake was as high as demographically possible. Reputation was a key consideration in projecting a positive image and ensuring that parents were well disposed towards the school. Every opportunity was taken to bolster and elaborate this reputation. All the different categories of contact elaborated in the
foregoing paragraphs represented integral parts of the total impression management policy and their holistic effect was more important than their individual efficacy. The Headteacher perceived internal consistency to be a critical consideration, for example, a glowing report in the local newspaper of the school's achievement would be negated by a feeling of being unwelcome in the school. Clearly the impact of the total policy is impossible to quantify and different sections of the audience probably responded differently according to where they were sitting and their personal criteria of relevance. Nevertheless impression management is an area the Headteacher would approach much more systematically in the future.

A brief case-study of the formation and development of the Redland Parent Teacher Association will add some illustrative flesh to the skeletal outline provided above. During the early part of 1982 a number of parents approached the Headteacher about forming a PTA and expressed what appeared to be a genuine desire to help the school. Against good advice from headteacher colleagues and the Chairman of Governors, the Headteacher and staff succumbed to these entreaties. The Headteacher's motives were not entirely selfless as he perceived certain instrumental values in the formation of such an Association.

1) The responsibility for fund-raising and particularly organising the School Fete would be transposed to the parents.

2) Parents could be positively evangelised concerning the aims, objectives and achievements of the school through the guise of PTA events.

3) An open, two-way channel of communication would be established and parents and teachers would get to know one another better.

4) This case-study would provide interesting material for his research.

The inaugural meeting of the Association took place on the 14 October 1982 and was attended by forty eight people. Subtracting the teachers from this total, the remainder represented approximately 10% of the parent population. In fact, it was difficult to form a committee which included a representative
from each of the seven contributory villages. Nevertheless, a committee of sixteen people, fourteen parents, Mrs Wood and the Headteacher, was ultimately constituted and one of the parent representatives was Mr Holloway the original proposer of the Association. Indeed Mr Holloway suggested that the Headteacher should take the Chair for the first year and he engineered his own election as Vice-Chairman. The Committee met in early November and thereafter on a monthly basis. The early meetings were very pleasant affairs and it was decided to organise three types of events, namely, social, fund-raising and educational. A Barn Dance was organised for February 1983, followed by an educational evening entitled "How schools have changed since I was there" and the Summer Fete would be the main fund-raising event.

The Barn Dance was well attended and a great success, however, my field notes for the day of the February Committee Meeting (28-2-1983) foreshadowed some rapidly forming notions. The Headteacher was already pondering whether the formation of the PTA had been a good idea. The launch had been carefully organised and a clearly worded constitution had been drawn up from a draft provided by the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations. Item 19 had been added by the Headteacher and read as follows:-

"The Headteacher shall have the ultimate decision on all educational matters." 13

Nevertheless, he was already experiencing some disquiet. On the positive side the PTA would organise events efficiently and raise money to purchase equipment the capitation allowance could not provide. Individuals on the Committee had valuable contacts the school could capitalise upon and money could be saved in this way. Most importantly links with parents could be strengthened through the medium of the PTA. On the negative side, however, the Headteacher was exposing himself to close scrutiny, for example, his capacity to chair the meeting was on display, but more importantly his mystique and social distance were being eroded. The PTA was also taking up a lot of the Headteacher's time and an inordinate number of the School Secretary's hours in producing newsletters, publicity and minutes. For example, the money for Barn Dance Tickets was collected in school and had to be recorded and counted. Most worringly, had a self-perpetuating, elite clique of parents been established?
The educational evening took place on 16 March 1983, and was attended by approximately seventy parents. The division of labour involved the Headteacher and staff presenting a workshop on the recent changes in primary education, while the other Committee members handled the catering requirements. This arrangement reflected the Headteacher's concept of an ideal parent-teacher relationship, although he did not rationalise it in such simplistic terms. Indeed this whole event provided the Headteacher with the opportunity to mount an impression management exercise on a grand scale. The field note for the day encapsulates the Headteacher's orientation and the underlying theme of his presentation, "to tell them we are doing a good job and that they are lucky to get the opportunity to be involved in the school". The Headteacher's concerns at the start of the evening were threefold.

1. Providing the right impression.

2. Would any parents take the opportunity to ask embarrassing questions?

3. How would the staff present themselves and the curriculum?

In the event, the evening passed off smoothly and apparently successfully. Seventy parents from a target population of over four hundred, however, suggests that such an event has limited appeal and only attracts people who display a mixture of the following characteristics: interested, supportive, confident, inquisitive, sociable, critical. The Headteacher was asked questions which indicated that all these characteristics were indeed represented. Furthermore, it is worthy of note that the Barn Dance generated three times more participants than this event.

A Sub-Committee was formed to organise the Summer Fete and apart from attending normal full Committee Meetings, the Headteacher was not involved till the event itself in early June. The Fete was exceptionally well-organised and was very successful, both financially and socially. Over a thousand pounds had been raised with very little involvement of the staff, in contrast to the massive workload of previous years. One particular parent, Mr Stephens, had displayed an amazing talent for organisation and had largely directed the whole event single-handed. Some of the quieter, female members of the Committee had also distinguished themselves and in the Headteacher's view the Committee was very obviously divided into "talkers" and "doers". Nevertheless, the
Headteacher concluded that the first year of the life of the PTA had been on the whole successful and the funds were in a very healthy condition.

Newsletters to parents inviting nominations to the new committee generated one volunteer, Mrs Blair. The Headteacher perceived Mrs Blair to be the school's sternest critic and some of his interaction with her has been elaborated under the heading of "Conflict", presented in the last chapter. Mrs Blair was duly elected at a poorly attended Annual General Meeting in early October and the atmosphere of the Committee rapidly began to change. Mr Holloway had now assumed the chair and Mrs Blair's presence drastically altered the tone of the meetings, from being very relaxed friendly affairs they now became events at which the Headteacher had to be on guard. The field note made after the November Committee Meeting (23.11.83) identifies the major changes. "Last year nobody tried to gain an unfair advantage for their child. The atmosphere is changing and I suddenly feel powerless to stop it". The Headteacher had found being Chairman rather an encumbrance, but now realised that in that role he could direct the course of events. Mr Holloway had developed a close alliance with Mrs Blair and was now, either by accident or design, placing the Headteacher in defensive positions. Mrs Morgan had taken over from Mrs Wood as staff representative and as the teacher of Mrs Blair's child found some of that lady's contributions somewhat inflammatory. In short, the PTA had become a burden rather than a pleasure to the Headteacher.

A further complication also became apparent at this time. Previously the Headteacher and staff had used School Fund to buy additional equipment as they saw fit, but now PTA permission had to be sought to gain access to the profits of the Fete. Furthermore the PTA were reluctant to purchase small items and wanted to buy exclusively expensive pieces of equipment which could be "shown off" to other parents. After much debate and justification by the Headteacher approximately £700 was spent on new furniture for the library. This furniture was purchased from Mrs Morgan's husband - another error of judgement on the Headteacher's part. After a few weeks in school the backs came off the new chairs and the Headteacher was in an uneasy man-in-the-middle situation between Mrs Morgan and the remainder of the Committee. During this period a very successful Christmas Social for parents and children was organised by Mr Stephens, with the Headteacher featuring as Father Christmas. Once more the dichotomy between "doers" and "talkers" was particularly pronounced, with Mr Holloway and Mrs Blair firmly located in the second category.
By February 1984 the Headteacher knew he was leaving at the end of term and consequently developed a detached view of the PTA. The vast majority of the Committee was labouring for the benefit of the children, however, the Headteacher believed Mr Holloway and Mrs Blair had alternative motives. Over the months a number of small comments had cohered to solidify this impression and when Mr Holloway raised some reported criticism of the school's induction procedure under "Any Other Business" the Headteacher seized the opportunity to "clear his chest". In transactional analysis terms, this action can be viewed as the cashing in of the psychological trading stamps, accumulated over the previous PTA Committee Meetings. Clearly he would not have responded in this way if he had not known he was leaving, however, some general reservations about the existence of a PTA were hardening in his mind as pertinent questions.

1. Does the PTA Committee view itself as a self-appointed watch-dog body?

2. How dare they comment on school policy and staff behaviour?

3. How representative of the parents are the Committee?

4. Can a very small minority of members generate a disproportionate amount of conflict?

In summary, this case-study serves to illustrate that increased interaction can be a double-edged weapon. The Headteacher set up the PTA to strengthen relationships with parents, but many have in practice weakened them. Once constituted the PTA was a monster which was difficult to control and was vulnerable to abuse by disaffected participants. The Headteacher perceived the PTA to be a mixed blessing, some very able people offered the school great support while others used it as a vehicle to air their own grievances. Indeed the whole PTA project was the least satisfying element of the Headteacher's time at Redland. He reviewed some of his naive views on parental involvement and concluded that he preferred a social gulf to exist. It had been easy to set up a PTA but controlling it was much more problematic.

In considering the efficacy of an overall impression management strategy it is important to reverse the telescope and to seek to discover what the audience wants to see. The professional view was summarised earlier by Mr Saville, "The three broad areas of criteria are (a) the relationships between teachers and children, (b) visual appearance, (c) match of tasks
and children. Other colleagues appeared to employ a similar framework within which to organise their impressions, while the Governors tended to operate from a similar standpoint to parents. The Headteacher often half-jokingly asserted that "parents want schools to have a compulsory uniform, teach tables and give weekly spelling tests and if a school meets these criteria parents will be satisfied." Indeed it is difficult to construct an accurate picture of parent views of the school as there were as many views as there were parents, nevertheless some general considerations do emerge. In common with the Cambridge Accountability Project, many parents valued the human qualities of the school above its technological efficiency. "It's a happy, caring school". The Chairman stressed Christ's commandment, "Care for my lambs". At the Parents' Meeting to explain vertical grouping the floor was dominated by a small number of vocal parents concerned about academic achievement, while subsequent feedback indicated a much larger, quieter majority who were in favour of the arrangement because class sizes would be smaller. Thus it was possible to misperceive the consensus view and be misled by the vociferous minority.

Objective evidence of parental views of the school was difficult to accumulate, however, a number of underlying concepts emerged during the three years. "What follows depends on the realisation that the school is embedded in its geographical, historical, social and psychological context. The type of school and the nature of its relationship with the context in which it is set are significant determinants." This view was supported by the expectations many new parents exuded, they had a particular concept of a "friendly village school". One family specifically moved from Leicester so that the children could attend a "village school". Even an educational researcher from Leicester University approached Redland with a particular mental set and thought "the curriculum would be more traditional than it is." In this way the setting, location and building predisposed parents to certain views of the school and folklore concepts became self-perpetuating. Additional incidental information about the school and its inhabitants served to elaborate or contradict this local reputation. The possible origins or incidental information include the following.

**Staff and Head**
- Teachers' dress, public behaviour and life style (entertainment, sport, consumer habits etc)
- Teachers' control of children in public
- The staff car park
Comments of pupils and former pupils
Comments of ancillaries
Comments of other parents
Myths/folk tales regarding long serving teachers

Pupils
Random observation of pupils travelling to and from school, especially at bus stops
Comments of ancillaries
Pupil behaviour and presentation in public
Comments of pupils and former pupils
Comments of shopkeepers
Random observation of playground
Observation at sporting events and plays etc
Observation of babysitters

Curriculum
Casual observation of children working out of school, traffic surveys, environmental work etc.
Comments from parents, pupils and former pupils
Involvement in local drama, music, fetes etc

Teaching
Pupil reports of classroom events
Ancillaries' reports of classrooms
Parent helpers' reports of classrooms

Pupil Progress
Random observation of pupil achievement
Inter-pupil comparisons
Perception of pupil progress against own perception when pupil Inter-school comparisons.

The concern most often articulated by parents was the personal happiness of their child and the idea of a friendly, rural school reinforced their notion of care for the individual. As a crude indicator more parents sought an interview with the Headteacher to discuss welfare/social concerns than academic matters. Notwithstanding, parents were concerned about their children being "stretched and pushed", ever mindful of the fact that placement in the top set upon arrival at the High School usually meant GCE success. Parents wanted to feel that the school was interested in their child as an individual and was making specific arrangements to accommodate his or her individuality. This was particularly true of parents of children with special educational needs, but also extended to the desire of some parents for specific
extra-curricular activities. The Chess and Rugby Clubs were parent-initiated and reflected the staff desire to respond to parental wishes. Most importantly parents wanted to feel welcome in the school and this recurrent theme emerged at successive New Parents' Meetings. Indeed accessibility was identified as one of the main changes in primary education at the PTA educational meeting described earlier. This concept of "welcoming" mirrors the concept of "approachability" identified in the Cambridge Project and the main elements might be summarised as:

*a. a willingness to provide external audiences with information about professional policies and practices.

b. a willingness to enter into a free and open discussion of this information.

c. being open to changing and modifying policies and practices in the light of discussion.

The PTA case-study indicated that the Headteacher at the outset of the three years perceived himself to be "approachable". However, by the end of the period he was reluctant to participate in the third element of the above definition. Nevertheless, the evidence of the development of the art curriculum, elaborated in the last chapter, suggests that practices were modified in the light of discussion and at least a section of the parent population must have been aware of this responsive accountability. It would seem that the Headteacher was more responsive to individual parents than the PTA Committee as an entity.

In concluding the PTA case-study it is worthwhile reflecting upon its impact upon the parents. In common with the Cambridge example, the motives for parental involvement were complex. "Some wanted more information about the school and the staff, others hoped to obtain better facilities for the pupils. Most sought to support the teachers, whereas a few turned to it in the hope of finding a means of exerting individual and collective influence upon educational policies." Paradoxically, an organisation designed to increase parental involvement may have actually reduced it by virtue of the gap between the minority actively involved in committee membership and the majority who were not. Furthermore each committee member brought a local biography to the situation which may have predisposed other parents to a particular view of the PTA. Notwithstanding, the statistics indicated a very different
response to school-sponsored as opposed to PTA-sponsored events, the former generated almost one hundred per cent attendance while the latter decreased to the point where the Spring '84 event had to be cancelled through lack of support. In short the PTA was a very mixed blessing for both teachers and parents.

This chapter has been devoted to recounting the Headteacher's attempts to construct a particular image for himself and his school. In his capacity as a performer he was concerned with maintaining the impression that he was successfully discharging the headteacher role and living up to the ideal fiction that others held of this position. The recurrent implicit question inherent in this whole impression management strategy, however, involves asking "Was he more concerned about engineering a convincing impression than affecting the underlying reality, did he spend more energy creating impressions than discharging his official responsibilities?" Thus the whole strategy could be viewed as amoral, but I believe this would be an oversimplistic conclusion. As Geoffrey Holroyde quickly identified at Sidney Stringer, "reputation" is a key concept in shaping parents' views and consequent reaction to the school and yet reputations are established upon the flimsiest of evidence. Furthermore, in a situation where schools are competing for a dwindling pupil population, the public image of the school is particularly critical. The Headteacher is the public relations officer of the school and he is obliged to professionally advertise the achievements of the human resources placed in his charge. The interactive nature of personal and institutional reputation also has obvious instrumental ramifications for the future promotion prospects of the Headteacher and this was the greatest motivation for projecting a positive image of Redland to the widest possible audience. An impression management strategy implies that the Headteacher's behaviour was coherent and carefully planned, when in fact it developed on an "ad hoc", opportunistic basis. However, from the moment of his appointment he believed to ignore a positive presentation of self would be a perilous oversight. "To use a different imagery, the very obligation and profitability of appearing always in a steady moral light, of being a socialised character, forces one to be the sort of person who is practised in the ways of the stage."
References


10. Interview with The Assistant Director of Education. County Hall, 1 June 1983.

11. Interview with the Primary Advisers. County Hall, 9 June 1983.

12. Interview with The Director of Education. County Hall, 15 August 1983.


"The human race is a myriad of reflective surfaces staining the white radiance of eternity. Each surface refracts the refraction of refractions of refractions. Each self refracts the refractions of others' refractions of self's refractions of other's refractions...."¹ Thus the variety of perspectives in social relationships is endless and the total number of views of the Headteacher corresponds with the total number of viewers. Laing's¹ choice of the word "refraction" communicates a great deal about the nature of social relationships and the countless number of refractive surfaces inherent in each actor. The most significant element in the concept of refraction is that something changes direction and the act of perception is like a refraction. We perceive an event but the values we bring to the act of perception ensure that there is a change of direction. For example, curriculum development is viewed quite differently by each of the following, Headteacher, teachers, pupils and parents; the event is refracted through the act of perception. Furthermore, refraction can lead us to perceive things physically in positions other than their true position and in this fashion we often see another actor's behaviour in a very different way from that he intended. The reality of everyday life is shared with others but nobody except me can truly experience my own unique reality. Nevertheless, it may be argued that the other actor in any dyadic, face-to-face situation is more real to me than I am to myself. Of course I know myself better than I can ever know him. My subjectivity is accessible to me in a way his can never be, no matter how close our relationship. My past is available to me in memory in a fullness with which I can never reconstruct his, however much he may tell me about it. But this better knowledge of myself requires reflection. It is not immediately appresented to me "To make it available requires that I stop, arrest the continuous spontaneity of my experience, and deliberately turn my attention back upon myself. What is more, such reflection about myself is typically occasioned by the attitude towards me that the other exhibits. It is typically a mirror response to attitudes of the other."²

My aim in this chapter, as suggested above, is to "deliberately turn my attention back upon myself" in order to "feel" once again the impact of the views of others upon me and my view. This desire is not motivated by narcissism, but by a quest for self-understanding within a reconstruction of a participant's point of view. Indeed the plethora of recent research
on primary education, represented by the work of Waters\textsuperscript{3}, Jones\textsuperscript{4} and Whitaker\textsuperscript{5}, signally fails to represent the impact of others upon the behaviour and existence of the Headteacher. A superficial consideration of role theory sorely impoverishes the rich complexity and texture of primary school social life and it is my desire to tell it like it really feels on the inside. The Headteacher's perception of the views of him held by other participants is a critical influence upon his behaviour. "The presence of these others has a profound reactive effect on me."\textsuperscript{1} Indeed Mead\textsuperscript{6} asserted my concept of myself is mediated by the "generalised other" and Cooley\textsuperscript{7} elaborated the concept of "the looking-glass self". In this way if we obstinately continue to regard human beings as persons, then it is clear that my field of experience is not only filled by my direct views of myself and of others, "but of what we shall call meta-perspectives - my view of the other's view of me."\textsuperscript{1} Thus the Headteacher constructs his own direct perspectives with regard to the other participants in the school, namely, Governors, County Hall, parents, non-teaching staff, teachers and pupils, but is also constantly acting in the light of their actual or supposed attitudes, needs and opinions about himself. "My view of the others' view of me, my perspective on the others' perspective of me, is what we are calling a metaperspective, and the other that I take myself to be for the other, how I think you see me, is what we are calling my meta-identity."\textsuperscript{1}

Each of the participants in Redland School came to the particular circumstances of the observation period with a unique biography. Any incident could have been, and undoubtedly was, interpreted from a variety of points of view. These different points of view stem from different sets of values and Laing\textsuperscript{1} argues that we are all pre-conditioned by our experience to process incoming data in a certain way. We carry around with us a set of criteria which we apply, often unconsciously, to the interpreting of other people's behaviour. This often acts as a barrier to understanding.

The Headteacher could not be aware of the unique biography which underpinned the behaviour of others in a particular episode or situation, indeed "the actor becomes aware of the other's subjective 'experiences' only to the extent that these experiences are dramaturgically available. Interaction proceeds on the basis of whatever it is that one takes to be the other's subjective experience."\textsuperscript{8} In this way the Headteacher could only validate his perceptions through the sharing of meaning about particular events, situations and relationships and such sharing was
partially realised symbolically, rhetorically and, as the last chapter emphasised, dramaturgically. Focussed interviews with a very small number of confidants also provided a mechanism for additional "perception checking" and these will be elaborated later in the chapter.

"I apprehend the other by means of typificatory schemes even in the face-to-face situation, although these schemes are more 'vulnerable' to his interference than in 'remoter' forms of interaction."² Thus the Headteacher apprehended others as a "pupil" or a "teacher" and these typifications determined his actions unless challenged, while the other apprehended him as a "headteacher". "The other's typifications are as susceptible to my interference as mine are to his."² In other words the two typificatory schemes enter into an ongoing negotiation in the face-to-face situation. The typifications of social interaction become progressively anonymous the further away they are from the face-to-face situation and the social reality of everyday life can be apprehended as a continuum of typifications. At one pole of the continuum are those others with whom I frequently and intensively interact, such as pupils and teachers, while at the other are the highly anonymous members of County Hall departments who are inaccessible to the Headteacher. Indeed I propose to focus only upon actors with whom the Headteacher had direct, face-to-face contact and to consider their views in an order which reflects the frequency and intensity of their interactions with the Headteacher - governors, representatives of County Hall, parents, non-teaching staff, teachers and pupils. Finally a consideration of the Headteacher's view of the Headteacher will provide an appropriate conclusion. "What we aspire to when we work autobiographically is not adherence to conventions of a literary form. Nor do we think of audience, of portraying our life to others. We write autobiography for ourselves, in order to cultivate our capacity to see through the outer forms, the habitual explanations of things, the stories we tell in order to keep others at a distance."⁹

The behaviour of the Headteacher can be viewed from as many standpoints as there are perceivers and how I describe these standpoints is a reflection of my personal perspective. Paradigms provide ways by which we help ourselves and others to make sense of what we observe and Gray⁸ posits three vague, general paradigms or levels of organisational behaviour, which simplify analysis of views of the Headteacher. In a clinical view of organisations the following behavioural scheme can be employed.
Political: This is the level of power-seeking and power-redistribution and is the level on which most organisations overtly function. There are rules and rituals (norms) for political behaviour, the main objective of which is to gain more power for oneself.

Social: This is the level of normative, consensus-seeking, peer-related behaviour. It is the social organisation concerned with polite, non-confronting behaviour which maintains the status-quo.

Psychological: This is the level of hidden agendas, the level of personal motivation and need, it is the level of hidden reasons for actions.¹⁰

The Headteacher, and other actors, functioned at all three levels, alternating between the first and second according to the nature of the situation, but if we really wish to understand why people behaved in particular ways we have to focus upon the psychological level. This cannot be fully done by observation, but only by getting inside the mind and reality of the actor. My research design provides a unique opportunity for the researcher to walk in the Headteacher's shoes, to experience his reality. Notwithstanding a recurrent theme throughout the observation period was the dearth of direct feedback to the Headteacher on his own performance and meta-perspectives were often constructed upon the basis of obscure inferences, chance conversation and serendipity.

The Headteacher's meta-perspectives relating to the Governors were based upon the assumption that at least a majority of them had considered him to be the best candidate for the post. Unlike the other co-participants in Redland they had had the political power to appoint the candidate of their choice. "The Governors" were personified by Rev. Rivers and as has already been elaborated in earlier chapters, the Chairman and the Headteacher developed a very positive social and professional relationship. Indeed Gray's¹⁰ definition of social behaviour elaborated above encapsulates the nature of the relationship, it was polite, non-confronting and maintained the status quo. The political dimension involved the Headteacher in acknowledging the Chairman's claim to legitimate institutional power and acting accordingly and in return he received a guarantee of unequivocal support. The Chairman often said "You are the professional and I will support your judgement" and backed
up his words with appropriate deeds. The Governors made it obvious that they wished to take no direct part in the curriculum and internal organisation of the school and implicitly said to the Headteacher we have confidence in your professional ability. Termly Governors' Meetings were distinguished by a pleasant, warm, social atmosphere and the members only came to life when they were discussing the state of repair of the building, particularly the exterior parts which were the Governors' financial responsibility. The only potential source of conflict during the three years was the disposal of the branches brought down in the freak storm in April 1981. The Headteacher quickly deferred to a Governor's desire to distribute the logs to the senior citizens of the village, having already made alternative arrangements. Indeed the Governors were potentially sensitive about the building and school grounds and occasionally transmitted the feeling to the Headteacher that he could never be a true "villager". Nevertheless they unanimously supported his professional judgement on staff appointments, internal organisation and curriculum reform.

The Headteacher received a letter in the summer of 1984 from Rev. Rivers which appeared to encapsulate the Chairman's view of his headmastership.

"My dear Neil,

I sincerely hope you are all nicely 'settled in' and that you are enjoying your new sphere of activities. I would very much liked to have said a more public farewell to you, because I feel very appreciative of all that you did here. I know the staff certainly valued it.

Will you please accept the enclosed as a token of appreciation from the Managers - sorry Governors!

Our very best wishes to you all - and again, Neil, thank you very much indeed for all the 'improvements' to Redland."

Three significant phrases relating to the Chairman's view of the Headteacher can be isolated, namely "all that you did here, the staff certainly valued it" and "all the 'improvements' to Redland". The first and third phrases combine to indicate an opinion that the Headteacher had been instrumental in moving the school forward in a variety of ways. The second phrase indicates the basis upon which Rev. Rivers was making his judgements, by talking to the staff and sampling the social-emotional

-230-
atmosphere of the institution. The warm tone of the letter indicates the personal friendship which necessarily complicates the objectivity of Rev. Rivers' assessment, nevertheless this friendship was a critical influence upon the Chairman's perception of the Headteacher.

It is clearly impossible to establish with total certainty how the Governors perceived the Headteacher, however, it is possible to elucidate the Headteacher's metaperspectives concerning the Governors. At the outset he was afraid of the Governors, particularly Rev. Rivers, as a result of Mr Lake's warning, and made every attempt to appear professional, co-operative and friendly. Governors' Meetings were ideal opportunities for the development of impression management strategies and the Headteacher believed that in the main he was successful in creating the image he desired. As the months passed he became more confident in his dealings with Governors, reassured by the Chairman's support and the absence of any conflict or apparent dissatisfaction. His desire was to encourage the Governors to be involved at the periphery and to retain unfettered personal control of the central issues. He felt he was very successful in operationalising this strategy but had to be constantly vigilant with regard to negative parental intervention which could prejudice this state of affairs. The maintenance of good relationships with Governors was accorded a high priority and the nature of the feedback received suggested that the Governors perceived the Headteacher in terms of the image he sought to create. The following direct quotations from my field notes represent some of this feedback and were all statements made by the Rector "At last I've got somebody who will stand up to the parents."

"I am happy for you to start a PTA, as I know you won't let them dictate to you." (proposed formation of the PTA).

"You are the professional, I am very out of date with teaching methods - you must have your choice as you are the one who will have to work with them." (shortlisting for the deputy headteacher).

"That was very interesting to sit in on that Staff Meeting to see how things work." (following a staff meeting on curriculum development).

"People have said they don't expect you will stay long. I have said if he gives us five years he should be allowed to move on". (report of the Chairman's conversation with a parent).
The Headteacher's view of his interaction with the representatives of County Hall was dominated by the realisation that these actors would be critical in his "psychological" desire for future promotion. The reality of the political parameters of the situation was that Education Officers and Advisers would be involved in internal appointments and would write confidential references for external applications. In short, it was vital that they had a positive opinion of him. Indeed, as has been identified in earlier chapters, "County Hall" is a convenient corporate fiction representing the diversity of individual views and purposes located within its ambit. The Director himself revealed that the corporate County Hall view of an individual was constructed by the pooling of the opinions and perspectives of its personnel - "it is an aggregate view of all these people." Notwithstanding these considerations, the vast majority of the Headteacher's interaction with County Hall was conducted at the political and social levels of behaviour. Most of the interaction was routine and habitual and simply involved the Headteacher in being a competent administrator, in which case he would not draw attention to himself and his anonymity would be maintained. A conversation with the Assistant Education Officer: Primary in August 1983 indicated that this anonymity was perceived to be an indication of a "good school", in as much as no complaints from parents, governors or other departments were being received in the Education Office. In this way the positive was inferred by the absence of the negative. In fact the Headteacher's contact with School's Branch during the three years, research interviews apart, was restricted to formal, termly Director's Meetings and two visits from the Assistant Education Officer. The first of these was to welcome the Headteacher upon his arrival and the second, in August 1983, to draw up the shortlist for a new Deputy Headteacher. This shortlisting proved to be an interesting event and the Headteacher drew a number of tentative conclusions about the "County Hall view" from the proceedings.

1. The Officer did not carry any notes about possible candidates - all the information was carried in his head (he had not had previous access to the application forms).

2. The school candidates were presently working in appeared to be a powerful determinant of their suitability as the following quotations indicate.
"That school is very much right of centre".
"There have been some problems there".
"That is an excellent school".
"Mrs Edwards runs an excellent school".

Thus the candidate's chances are strongly influenced by his present school and particularly his present headteacher's reputation.

3. The mechanisms of negotiation and the implicit "trade-off" were very apparent. The shortlist was constituted largely by forty or more candidates being eliminated for negative reasons, rather than the chosen six being included for wholly positive reasons.

4. Both the Officer and the Chairman were ultimately prepared to defer to the Headteacher's desire to include particular candidates.

This shortlisting was the Headteacher's only professional, face-to-face contact with School's Branch during the three years. At one level he was pleased that contact was minimal as the implication was that "no news is good news", in other words no complaints about Redland had reached County Hall. On the other hand the Office record keeping system appeared rather haphazard - "did anybody really know what individual people were doing in schools?" Obviously the reputation of the institution and its headteacher had very clear implications for the promotion prospects of its inhabitants. The Headteacher was able to harness the power of this fact in enjoining the staff to undertake future institutional initiatives and the elevation of Mrs Jordan to a headship underlined the validity of his contention that institutional reputation influenced individual promotion. The Headteacher's own subsequent preferment and the appointment of Mr Andrews to a Leicestershire deputy headship lent retrospective weight to this contention. Implicitly the Headteacher was saying to the staff "it is in your own best interests to make me look good" and in this way the basic "trade-off" was operationalised. The Headteacher's eagerness to have the school participate in "Kaleidoscope", the primary dance festival, was partially motivated by his prior knowledge of the Director's interest in this particular event and a personal letter of congratulation from the Director after the performance was perceived to be an appropriate reward. The School and the Headteacher had been noticed for the right reasons.
The Headteacher's interaction with the Advisers' Section has been elaborated at some length in earlier chapters, particularly in Chapter Five. The most significant element of this interaction was the Headteacher's relationship with Mr Saville, the Primary Adviser. It was Mr Saville who invited the Headteacher to speak at the New Headteachers' Conference in the autumn of 1981 and made the invitation an annual event. Mr Saville also invited the Headteacher to represent the Authority as one of the small group of headteachers visiting French schools and encouraged him to be a member of the working party reviewing school-based INSET initiatives. A vast amount of incidental positive reinforcement was thus forthcoming from Mr Saville and the Headteacher perceived him to be the most critical of the reality defining figures involved in the school. Feedback from other Advisers concerning Mr Saville's glowing comments about the Headteacher also had a reinforcing effect and reassured him that the County Hall view of Redland and himself was a positive one. Mr Saville's advice to the Headteacher to consider applying to Her Majesty's Inspectorate or for advisory posts also suggested that he considered him to be professionally capable.

Notwithstanding a recurring theme in the Headteacher's mind was the chance manner in which these contacts had been developed and had metaphorically distinguished him in the crowd of over three hundred and fifty headteacher colleagues.

As time passed a number of fragments of information, derived from chance conversations and contacts, cohered in the Headteacher's mind to reassure him that he was considered in a positive light by County Hall personnel. This data was necessarily subjective, however, two more objective pieces of evidence support the view constructed upon this basis. Firstly the Headteacher was informed upon taking up his present post as Primary Adviser that his Confidential Reference had been quite outstanding. A second piece of objective evidence can be derived from a comparison of the details for candidates for the headship of Redland School issued by County Hall before and after the Headteacher's tenure. By implication the March, 1984 document includes an appraisal of the last three years in the school's life. The document circulated in June, 1980 is very concise and suggests to the researcher that the representative of County Hall who wrote it either had had little contact with the school or considered there was little worthy of note. The 1984 document provides exactly the same basic information, but an extended Section 5 has been inserted and this has been reproduced in its entirety below.
The school has been involved in an extensive programme of curriculum development and school-based INSET. Written guidelines have been constructed to cover all aspects of the Primary curriculum. A wide range of sporting, musical and extra-curricular activities are flourishing. A recently-formed PTA is developing steadily and parental involvement in the school is substantial. Close links with the Parish Church exist, the Rector of Redland is also Chairman of the School Governors, and the School is linked with Church House through the Diocesan R.E. Adviser and Bishop's Visitor.

In general the school stands with many other Leicestershire Primary schools in the forefront of curriculum review and growth. A Head is sought who will set the highest standards in Primary practice and devote considerable energies to a progressive teaching style and curriculum which will be discussed and extended through staff debate. Good progress has already been made in establishing the value of such a curriculum in the eyes of parents and governors, and under strong but flexible leadership this momentum should be continued, alert to fresh stimuli and capable of adapting teaching style and content to the individual child. It will be clear that in emphasising the high quality of the professional contribution which a new Headteacher will be expected to make, close working relations with the County Advisers will be actively encouraged.

The final sentence suggest that this section of the total document was constructed by a member of the Advisory Team and the style closely resembles Mr Saville's. The extract consists of two paragraphs, the first of which bears all the hallmarks of the Headteacher's impression management strategy. Indeed this paragraph reflects the information about the school the Headteacher was required to provide for County Hall. In short, it is a precis of his headmastership and how he would like people to see the school and, by implication, himself. It propounds the positive and neglects the negative. The second paragraph reflects the Authority's presentation of self and image creation techniques, encapsulated by the phrase "in the forefront of curriculum review and growth", and provides some clues about the County Hall perception of the Headteacher. The following constructs can be identified in the text - "highest standards in Primary Practice", "momentum should be continued" and "close working relations with the County Advisers." These constructs mirror the very flattering remark made by Mr Saville to the Headteacher during discussions about the latter's future - "I regard you as one of
the brightest young Heads in the Authority. You have got a breadth of experience and good academic qualifications. I see you as somebody who can think analytically and can extract a lot of information from a situation. The world is your oyster!"

In considering the Headteacher's metaperspectives of County Hall it is interesting to note that, notwithstanding his academic understanding of the individuality of its representatives, he did perceive it as a corporate entity with one opinion of the school and himself. In my present post I become frustrated by people's conception of "the Officer's view" and yet as Headteacher I stubbornly refused to acknowledge the inevitable diversity of perspectives held by wide variety of County Hall representatives. A recurrent thought was that I was painstakingly constructing a positive reputation, creating the right impressions and developing a positive image, however, one day somebody would discover the real truth about the school and me. All the skeletons in cupboards would be revealed and my future prospects would be torpedoed for ever! The darker side of impression management is the uncomfortable feeling that the truth is being distorted for personal gain and aggrandisment and thereby the manager and purveyor of impressions is vulnerable to exposure. In fact, as an Adviser I have discovered that this is a widely experienced fear among headteachers and leads some colleagues to attempt to remain as anonymous as possible in relation to the Education Office, upon the premise that if one representative discovers "the truth" then the game is up. Nevertheless the Headteacher quite deliberately sought dialogue with County Hall personnel in order to further the development of the school and his own career.

The Headteacher's confidence in his dealings with County Hall personnel increased as the observation period progressed, however, it is noteworthy that a significant part of this interaction was occasioned by undertaking this research. My first contact with Mr Saville was by way of a mutual acquaintance at Loughborough University and thereafter Mr Saville was always aware of my developing research. This fact in itself generated invitations to speak and thereby provided opportunities for impression management unavailable to my colleagues. Indeed Mr Saville had more contact with me in research and lecturing settings than in the school situation and his conclusions about me as a headteacher may have been based upon my performances as a social scientist rather than those as an educational practitioner. Other members of the Advisory Service actually visited Redland and worked with staff and pupils over an extended period
of time at the Headteacher's invitation. These invitations illustrated the Headteacher's growing confidence in the institution and members of the Advisory Service. Positive comments, grounded in first-hand inside experience of the school, made by these people further reassured the Headteacher with regard to the County Hall view and their cumulative effect was to encourage the institution as a whole to become more self-disclosing. The complete absence of negative feedback from County Hall during the three years, allied to increasing positive reinforcement from representatives of that institution, combined to increase the Headteacher's confidence in his dealings with the other constituent groups involved in Redland School. He felt that at both the political and social levels of behaviour, County Hall and the Governors perceived him in a positive light.

"The parents" was obviously the largest group involved in the school, including over five hundred individuals living in seven or more villages. In terms of social class, educational background, occupation, wealth, personality and aspirations for their children there was very wide diversity. The only factor that they all shared was that their children attended Redland School and therefore they all had a very real interest in the behaviour of the Headteacher. The Headteacher also had a very real interest in their opinions, views and feelings as they were his consumer public. Furthermore, his relationship with "the parents" was far more open-ended and negotiable than his interaction with the other internal and external groups involved in the school. The Headteacher - parent relationship was not defined by clearly prescribed political and social parameters and was potentially more idiosyncratic. At the outset the Headteacher believed he had the power to define the nature of this relationship and perceived the Headteacher - parent relationship to be a monolithic structure - one that would embrace all interaction. As time passed it became apparent that five hundred or more Headteacher - parent relationships would necessarily exist and the vast majority of these would not involve any direct face-to-face contact. Indeed the Headteacher rapidly became familiar with two minute sub-groups of the parents - "the concerned" and "the admirers". The former group often prefaced their opening gambit with "I am concerned about ..." and their worries ranged over discipline, curriculum and pastoral welfare. An analysis of Headteacher - parent interactions indicates that this group constituted less than five percent of the total parent population. "The admirers" was a similarly sized group and included parents who responded very positively to school-initiated events by either
congratulating the staff in person or by writing a letter of congratulation and thanks. It is noteworthy that membership of these groups was almost immutable, people rarely moved out once they had become members. By far the largest section of the parent population was the ninety per cent who belonged to neither of these extremist sub-groups. These people in the main faithfully attended Consultation Evenings, School Plays, Sports Days and other events but largely retained their anonymity. It is unlikely that they got involved in the PTA Committee, leaving that area of school related life to members of the more discrete sub-groups. In short, the Headteacher had very little direct contact with over ninety per cent of the parent population, a consideration he appeared to be unable to fully comprehend during the three years.

The Headteacher perceived his relationships with parents to be the most problematic area of his existence at Redland as they were at one and the same time a very significant but very inaccessible group. Indeed there was no formal mechanism for gaining feedback from parents and taking the temperature of parental relations was largely an intuitive exercise. Access to parent opinion was initially gained through the dual group membership of Mrs Holmes, the Secretary and Mrs Comfrey, the Ancillary. Mrs Holmes reported back to the Headteacher as a parent, by relating how her sons perceived him as a headteacher, while Mrs Comfrey brought intelligence about other parents' views of the school and the Headteacher. Not surprisingly these comments were all very positive in nature and, by virtue of the communication channel, were calculated to generate a particular effect. Both these ladies appeared to believe that the Headteacher needed reassurance in the early days and viewed the transmission of reported speech as discharging this function. Likewise the Chairman of Governors also had his finger on the pulse of local opinion and selectively fed back snippets of information to the Headteacher. Notwithstanding, the mechanisms available for measuring consumer satisfaction or uncovering parental opinion were very crude and the Headteacher operated in a vacuum with regard to the feelings of a group he dearly wanted to impress.

Before taking up his post the Headteacher was informed by a colleague in another school that "the parents" were very worried about his appointment as he was so young. This comment was probably based on a throwaway remark which was transmitted through the grapevine to the Headteacher and filled him with a combination of trepidation and anger. In truth few parents were probably aware of his existence until he arrived at
Redland. Nevertheless the effect of such a remark is stored away deep inside the consciousness and predisposes the individual to search for further proof of this contention. It may even begin to generate a suspicion of a group which can make judgements based on the flimsiest of evidence.

Upon arrival the Headteacher perceived a situation in which parents had been metaphorically held at arm's length. They had been superficially involved as helpers in the school but a certain lack of real openness existed. The staff seemed to view parents as a group which had to be humoured, but treated rather circumspectly as potential dynamite. Indeed there was a very strong feeling that they should not be allowed to discover the real truth about the school. The Headteacher rather naively believed that all the barriers should be thrown down and parents should be involved as equal partners in the educative process of their children. The Parents' Meeting to explain vertical grouping at the end of the first term, described at some length in the last chapter, rapidly encouraged him to review this belief. He quickly perceived that in his heart he did not view parents as equal partners, especially those who disagreed with him, as they did not have a background or real understanding of primary education. The imperatives for action were obvious, parents had to be evangelised into realising that his methods and beliefs were the most eminently sensible ones and they had to be made aware of what an excellent job all concerned were doing, particularly the Headteacher! At the time the Headteacher convinced himself his motives were based upon altruism and parent re-education. It is interesting to note, however, that the Headteacher within the space of a term amended an active strategy into a reactive response - he moved from a deeply held desire to involve parents in a totally open fashion to a more circumspect, justificatory posture. In essence, negative feedback from a very small minority of parents encouraged him to swiftly shift ground. This shift was related to a lack of confidence in dealing with parents and an unsuspected ambivalence with regard to total institutional openness. He concluded that he would be as open as parents allowed him to be - a truly reactive strategy.

The early part of the second term was characterised by the Headteacher actively seeking to reassure the three parents who had been unhappy about the vertical grouping arrangements. Parent Consultations were in consequence perceived as defensive events requiring a justificatory posture. The whole notion of justification complicates the
Headteacher-parent relationship, it is predicated upon perceived
dissatisfaction and to be successful requires an attitudinal change in at
least one party. It is also difficult to quantify the efficacy of such a
meeting, as the non-reappearance of the parent could signify total
satisfaction or an indication of the fact that he believes he is wasting
his time entering into dialogue with the Headteacher. Indeed uncertainty
and ambiguity pervade parent-school relationships as there is a dearth of
open, frank discussion because both sides feel they have too much to
lose. The parent is concerned that any unpleasantness will rebound on
her child, while the Headteacher is concerned that the institution's
reputation will be negatively affected. Furthermore there is a lack of
regular face-to-face contact in which mutual perception-checking activity
can take place. By making an appointment to see the Headteacher, a
parent is implicitly stating "I have a problem I want resolving" and by
definition the Headteacher is cast in a reactive mode, he is being called
to account in the sense of responsive accountability. The parent is
emotionally involved in the school in a way none of the other actors are,
however, the majority of their school experience is vicarious,
second-hand through their children and this fact complicated some
parent-Headteacher interviews. The total number of interviews with
"concerned parents" was less than twenty during the three years and the
same parents were involved on more than one occasion. None of these
interviews involved the Headteacher as a central actor, they were all
concerned with the staff and other pupils, nonetheless he was expected to
be able to sort the problem out. Once again the low incidence of these
interviews could be perceived ambiguously, on the one hand problems did
not occur, while on the other parents did not express their concerns to
the Headteacher because he did not follow them up. The Headteacher
preferred the former conclusion and took the lack of negative feedback to
County Hall or the Governors as evidence of this fact.

As I have already emphasised, sampling parental opinion and generating
unequivocal consumer feedback was a very haphazard exercise. The
Headteacher's metaperspectives were based almost entirely on subjective
evidence, gained at second or third hand. The non-teaching staff were
the most fruitful source of feedback and the cleaner provided an
illuminating perspective at the end of the first year. She said "the
parents think you have been sent here to sort the place out and when you
have done it you will move on to a bigger school." The improvements to
the building and the grounds which, quite by chance, took place during
the first year, lent weight to the view that the Headteacher was able to get things done. The newly appointed caretaker rapidly improved the cleanliness and tidiness of the establishment and the raising of these standards was also attributed to the Headteacher's influence. Feedback from other non-teaching staff personnel indicated that the parents perceived the Headteacher to be a change-agent, somebody who would introduce modern educational methods. This belief was greeted with a very mixed response and the old truism was operationalised "it is impossible to please all of the people all of the time". Different sections of the parent population held diametrically opposite views and what reassured one group was a matter of great concern to another. The following quotations culled from direct and reported speech capture the flavour of this diversity. "Schools nowadays are trying to do far too much, instead of concentrating on the basics". (Parents overheard while examining new mathematical equipment). "The children spend far too much time on basics and don't do enough art work. They need to paint and express themselves". (Parent to the Headteacher)

"I believe they need discipline. When I was at school I would have got a clip around the ear". (Parent to Headteacher)

"It's like Colditz up there. They are not allowed sweets at break and they have to work far too hard". (Reported speech from a new parent)

"Do you really believe in these modern methods?" (New parent to Head)

"They don't know their tables, they really don't!" (Parent to Headteacher)

"May I urge a move towards new mathematics and computing". (A Parent's letter to the Headteacher reproduced in full in Chapter Four)

"Thank you for all you have done. I have always said that this is a great little school." (Satisfied consumer to the Headteacher)

The above comments have been juxtaposed to highlight the contradictory nature of parental opinion. These inherent contradictions were reinforced by some research conducted by the children at the Headteacher's behest. Some upper juniors were asked to interview their parents for the school newspaper in order to find out how schools had changed and the schedule was designed by the Headteacher. The same
cluster of constructs emerged from this research - a) a decline in
discipline b) less emphasis on the basics, notably tables and spelling
c) a broadening of the curriculum d) a more interesting existence for
modern pupils. The imperatives for action were confused, either parents
needed to be re-educated, or the school needed to be more responsive to
parental wishes.

At the end of the three years the Headteacher believed that the majority
of parents felt that he had discharged his professional duties
efficiently. There was no hard evidence to support this conclusion, only
the absence of contradictory data. In fact, he had failed to make direct
contact with over ninety per cent of the parent body and assumed they
were reasonably satisfied as he had not heard from them, either directly
or indirectly. The formation of the PTA had failed to provide a
mechanism for making a relationship with the silent majority and the
Committee had become dominated by the vociferous minority. The
Headteacher believed that this minority alienated a section of the other
parents and by identifying himself with this self-elected elite he had
further distanced himself from the majority. These experiences increased
the Headteacher's self-awareness and prompted him to realise that he did
not respond positively to implied criticism, nor did he really want to
involve parents as equal partners in the school. Despite his espoused
liberal philosophy, he resented parents seeking to dabble in professional
matters of education and his evangelistic strategy was aimed at
converting the population to his way of thinking and socialising them
into a code of behaviour that was convenient and acceptable to him. He
finally realised that no such group as "the parents" actually existed,
simply an aggregation of individuals whose children attended Redland, who
had very different perspectives and very different needs. A very
generalised metaperspective to include all these people was too vague to
be useful and the obvious solution was to deal with each parent as an
individual. Interestingly the Headteacher held recognition of each
child's particular uniqueness to be a basic tenet of primary education
and yet persistently sought to force diverse adults into the stereotyped
"parent" straightjacket.

The non-teaching staff constituted a much smaller group including the
Caretaker and his cleaner, the Cook and four Kitchen Assistants, the
Secretary, two Ancillaries and four Dining Supervisors. Indeed the
Headteacher had virtually no contact with the Kitchen Assistants and so
this group consisted of approximately ten people. At the outset the new
Headteacher had no previous experience of managing non-teaching staff and his style was based upon "ad hocracy" and intuition. In retrospect I was rather uncertain about how to treat this group of people as I had no clearly defined views on the subject other than not wishing to appear aloof and over-authoritarian. Using my last Headteacher as a role model, I sought to develop a series of relationships based upon friendliness and mutual respect. During the first weeks Mrs Holmes, the Secretary and Mrs Comfrey, the Ancillary, proved to be the easiest people to get to know. They were very open, welcoming and friendly and both furnished the Headteacher with positive reinforcement and "inside information".

Interestingly, as indicated earlier in this chapter, they were both mothers of children in the school and had a double interest in making a positive impression upon the Headteacher. Mrs Holmes in particular rapidly became a trusted ally by demystifying the mystique of ritualised form-filling, traditionally the Headteacher's major claim to esoteric knowledge. As elaborated in Chapter One, her vivacious, gregarious personality made her a popular member of staff and the Headteacher initially found her very useful in gaining entree to both staff and parent culture.

During the first term the Headteacher's relationship with Mrs Holmes elaborated rapidly as he had more direct contact with her than any other participant in Redland. She had the recipe knowledge to induct him into the day-to-day administration of the school and to supply first-hand information about Mr Lake's regime. The Headteacher experienced some cognitive dissonance with regard to his own interest in Mr Lake's headmastership and while seeking to maintain a professional stance, listened very attentively to the background knowledge Mrs Holmes supplied. The arrival of a letter indicating that Mr Lake had failed Mrs Holmes on her probationary period placed the Headteacher in a delicate situation shortly after his arrival. He was required to re-appraise her performance on very limited evidence and was influenced by her personality rather than her professional competence. The Headteacher displayed his inexperience by recommending the successful completion of her probation and having "acted in haste he was to repent at leisure". The reciprocity phenomenon was rapidly operationalised, Mrs Holmes worked beyond her statutory hours and the Headteacher helped her resolve her frequent dinner money and register problems. The Headteacher initially conceived of this arrangement as teamwork and felt that he was acting as a supportive manager. As time passed, however, Mrs Holmes became more involved in her husband's business and her school performance became more and more unsatisfactory. The Headteacher was preoccupied with neatness.
and accuracy and became progressively more frustrated by the standard of work Mrs Holmes produced. Matters reached to a watershed on 25 August 1982, when the Headteacher received a letter from Mrs Holmes, delivered by her son, explaining that she would not be coming to work as her husband was ill and "he had a few prior engagements which he can't get out of today, so I will have to stand in for him." The further deterioration of the Headteacher-Secretary relationship has been rehearsed at length in Chapter Three, however, it is noteworthy that the Headteacher became progressively more remote and demanding in his dealings with the Secretary. Both participants maintained a flimsy veneer of friendliness but each became more and more disenchanted with the other. The Headteacher demanded higher standards and rejected unsatisfactory work while the secretary responded by cutting even more corners in terms of effort and timekeeping. The inevitable conclusion was acted out in the summer of 1983, the Secretary resigned. Within their own terms both protagonists defined this as a victory - the Headteacher believed he had winkled her out by putting her under increasing pressure and the Secretary believed she had seen her sons through the school and therefore there was no further vested interest in staying.

A cursory account of this interactional biography once more re-emphasises the fact that views of the Headteacher, or any other participant, are not static, immutable constructs, but rather are organic and dynamic belief systems constructed upon the most recently available evidence. The above biography is of particular interest because the Secretary's view of the Headteacher ranged across the whole continuum, from the positive pole at the outset to the negative extreme upon her resignation. Furthermore, this interaction could not take place in an institution of Redland's size without affecting the views of other participants. Although other participants were not directly involved, a variety of actors were inevitably included vicariously. Mrs Holmes enjoyed a particularly close relationship with Mrs Livingstone and to a lesser extent Mrs Comfrey and the non-teaching staff culture had its own particular machinery for disseminating information. In contrast Mrs Jordan and other members of the teaching staff became progressively more critical of the Secretary's professional performance and Mrs Jordan felt particularly responsible as she was instrumental in her appointment.

Mrs Smith replaced Mrs Holmes in September 1983, having previously been an ancillary, and subsequently supplied some interesting insights into
views of the Headteacher derived from the above events. I expressed some concern about the state in which the filing cabinet had been left and Mrs Smith retorted by saying "You must realise Mrs Holmes wasn't very happy with you. She said that the job had changed after you came. The previous Head typed a lot of his own letters and you expected her to do too much in the time available". The Headteacher felt rather concerned that his behaviour had been badly misrepresented by Mrs Holmes and that other people in the school viewed him as an overbearing taskmaster. It all seemed rather unfair he could not rush around the school saying "no it wasn't really like that at all, this is what happened". Another incident the following week provided further evidence of the view promulgated by Mrs Holmes. Mrs Smith failed to appear in the Staff Room at break-time and upon investigation the Headteacher found her in the office attempting to reconcile the dinner money. It came out in conversation that she had been informed by Mrs Livingstone that she would get no help from the Headteacher if she had problems - "She had been there when Mrs Holmes had asked for help and he just walked away". This was a reference to the specific incident reported in Chapter Three, nevertheless the Headteacher felt this insight was rather illegitimate in relation to the many times he had resolved secretarial problems. Indeed Mrs Smith provided insight into other folklore incidents that pervaded non-teaching staff culture, for example, Mrs Comfrey had informed her that "He gets very cross if things are not typed properly. He thumps the table and says 'this won't do' and flings the work back across the table." The Headteacher had some problems in identifying himself in that caricature as in reality he had always found it difficult to reject inadequate work and felt as if he almost apologised for finding fault.

These incidents caused the Headteacher to ponder his past and future interaction with non-teaching staff. In his view Mrs Holmes had badly misrepresented his behaviour in a manner which he felt was rather unfair. His dilemma was to decide whether to attempt to repair possible interpersonal damage or to simply ignore this intelligence. In practice, it was impossible to quantify the magnitude or pervasiveness of this negative image creation, even if the Headteacher had decided to address the problem directly. In fact it would appear that the audience had been restricted to a small number of the non-teaching staff, nevertheless the Headteacher believed that his relationship with Mrs Livingstone never fully regained its previous positive quality. The Headteacher had little direct contact with Mrs Livingstone and largely allowed her to discharge her duties unhindered by his personal involvement. Mrs Livingstone ruled
the Kitchen in the manner of an enlightened despot and the only problematical areas were her relationship with the Caretaker and her responsibilities vis-a-vis the Dining Supervisors. The Headteacher's man-in-the-middle managerial function with regard to the Cook and the Caretaker and the intergroup conflict between Dining Supervisors and Teachers have been rehearsed in some detail in Chapter Three and in both these situations the Headteacher could not by definition please all the participants. The Headteacher was viewed as a final arbiter whose sympathies always lay with the teachers and the children rather than non-teaching staff.

The Dining Supervisors enjoyed an uneasy relationship with the Headteacher. He perceived that his behaviour did not match the ideal role model the Dining Supervisors had constructed - he believed they wanted a Headteacher who would make their existence as comfortable as possible, by "disciplining" naughty children, (having them standing in fearful silence outside his room), by allowing them to conduct social conversations in convivial knots around the playground and by supporting their erratic behaviour without question. The Headteacher was unwilling to do any of these things and his management of these ladies became more authoritarian as the weeks passed. They particularly resented his desire to investigate their arbitrary punishment of pupils and perceived him as becoming increasingly critical and demanding. He responded to this perception by exerting tighter control upon their behaviour.

Mr Jackson featured prominently in the conflict case-studies elaborated in Chapter Three and his view of the Headteacher was a particularly interesting one. On most occasions Mr Jackson was extremely eager to impress and please the Headteacher and a field-note for August 1983 illustrates his behaviour. "Mr Jackson showed me all the work he has been doing during the holidays, all the things he wants me to compliment him on". On the same day he also informed the Headteacher that he had attended a caretakers' meeting at the local secondary school and "it was good because the Head Caretaker said we could get together to discuss problems other people don't understand". In essence, he believed that the Headteacher did not understand his problems and probably viewed the Headteacher's conflict resolution strategies as evidence of this fact. From his standpoint the Headteacher always seemed to support the teachers in conflict situations and nobody fully appreciated his point of view. This conclusion was reinforced by Mr Jackson's comment to the Deputy that he intended "to get to the new head teacher early and get some things
sorted out properly." Indeed Mr Jackson responded very positively to the Headteacher after the latter lost his temper with him and became rather direct. Mr Jackson revealed that he expected to be shouted at by his superiors and that had always been the accepted norm in his previous occupations. Hitherto he had perceived the Headteacher's human relations approach as an indication of weakness.

A view of the Headteacher, shared by the majority of the non-teaching staff, was that he did not fully understand the particular difficulties under which they were working. Furthermore he was most likely to support the teachers in any dispute and entertained some rather liberal views in regard to how the children should be treated. He was also seen as an over-demanding taskmaster who was always seeking to improve things.

As a new Headteacher I felt ill-equipped to deal with non-teaching staff, as my experience and training in this area of management was virtually nil. I set out to be as friendly, supportive and encouraging as possible and sought to provide room for individual initiative and flair. It gradually became apparent that this approach may not have been the most appropriate and in common with establishing discipline in a classroom situation it may have been better to have started out tougher and thereafter relaxed. Initially everything went smoothly and role-distance was rapidly eroded, I encouraged all the staff to call me by my christian name and superficially got to know them quickly. Mr Jackson and Mrs Livingstone, however, clearly felt uncomfortable about calling the Headteacher "Neil" and surnames were the order of the day. This apparently small consideration immediately caused some interpersonal uneveness amongst the staff and in retrospect it would have been wiser to retain my predesessor's more formal mode of address. I wanted to be viewed as friendly, professional and committed, in short I wanted to be liked. In practice I may have been seen as a pedantic perfectionist, always demanding more than people felt they could give. Clearly it is exceptionally difficult to re-negotiate role relationships which have been established by case-law and default and certain non-teaching personnel resented the Headteacher's tightening grip. The only totally successful method of role redefinition is to replace the incumbent and I felt very happy with the professional relationship developed with the new Secretary, however, all relationships could not be renegotiated in this manner. Inevitably individual members of the non-teaching staff group held very different views of the Headteacher and these views changed during the three years. The Headteacher's own views upon how non-teaching staff should be managed also underwent some
radical modification and from starting out a devoted disciple of McGregor's Theory Y, he found himself embracing some Theory X concepts by the end of the three years. He became as authoritarian as he felt the situation demanded.

The Headteacher perceived "the teachers" to be a particularly critical group as his educational philosophy would be operationalised vicariously through them. Teachers obviously have very much more contact with the children, and their parents, than the Headteacher and therefore they were powerful reality defining figures in the global existence of the institution. The Headteacher commenced his period at Redland hoping that the teachers would view him as professional, able and dedicated, he also wanted to be liked. Gaining evidence of their views, however, was problematic, as unlike the non-teaching staff they did not supply direct feedback. Mrs Jordan acted very professionally by implicitly refusing to carry impressions, direct quotations or gossip back to the Headteacher and therefore all my initial metaperspectives were based upon intuition and inference. My own appraisal of my performance in assemblies, staff meetings and other situations was complicated by this lack of direct feedback and in the early stages I implicitly sought staff reassurance. In retrospect I failed to fully grasp the reciprocity of this situation by not supplying teachers with the reassurance they needed.

Informal head teacher appraisal figures high on the agenda of most teaching staffs and having had experience of this absorbing exercise in a variety of settings, I found it particularly frustrating in the early days not to know what the staff were thinking. Once more the ubiquitous fantasy of believing 'the staff' had one view maintained and my interpersonal sensitivity was strained to the limits in seeking to uncover this view. As time passed views elaborated and hardened and inference from interpersonal behaviour became easier. However, it would have been inappropriate to ask a member of staff to elaborate their view of me, indicating the criteria upon which this view was based. My imminent departure at the end of the three years radically altered this situation and I was able to conduct two focussed interviews, one with Mrs Jordan who had now taken up her own headship and the other with Mrs Jennings who had recently been appointed to the deputy headship. The data generated from the interviews supplied a perception checking device and the opportunity for triangulation of my own views.

The following paragraph is a verbatim account of Mrs Jordan's answer to
the question "How did the staff perceive me as a new Headteacher?" "In the first instance staff were looking for somebody who would not make too many drastic changes. There was a measure of excitement on the part of some staff that something new might happen. Some people felt threatened by the fact that you might curb their autonomy and impose restrictions. People were looking for a friendly face, somebody pleasant and easy to get on with. In the early days there was a pooling of perceptions and individuals were bound to take in a bit of other people's views. Some people thought your ideas expressed at the first staff meetings were good and some did not. The visitors you introduced into the school may have threatened people. People were worried that your expectations were too high and the educational jargon you used also worried people. They felt the could not live up to you. I (Mrs Jordan) think you have toned the jargon down, or people have got used to you. I felt threatened - maybe he will expect more than I can offer! In fact you changed my career. You made everybody think about the job and made it very uncomfortable for a short time. People eventually got used to your ideas and became more confident in expressing arguments in staff meetings. In the early days I tried to put your personality over to the staff, perhaps you were a little cold."¹⁶

Mrs Jordan's view of the staff's perceptions of the new Headteacher indicates a number of underlying constructs. The teachers were looking for a comfortable perpetuation of the status quo, with the additional excitement of a moderate amount of the novel. Instead the Headteacher appeared to have threateningly-high expectations and talked like an educational text book. Teachers felt uncomfortable and perceived the Headteacher as cold. The scenario is reminiscent of one of Laing's¹⁸ knots, involving the spiral of reciprocal perspectives. The Headteacher desperately desired feedback but did not receive any and the staff required warmth and in turn did not get it from the Headteacher. Indeed, the Headteacher was more open and friendly towards the non-teaching staff than in his dealings with teachers.

Mrs Jordan confirmed that the non-teaching staff responded very positively to the new Headteacher on the basis of his warm personality and ability to deal with troublesome pupils. A critical event in the teaching staff's perception of the Headteacher was his performance at the Parents' Meeting to discuss vertical grouping at the end of the first term. This event showed the Headteacher "in a very positive light because he was able to deal with trouble-makers in a very professional
way. In essence, the teachers were reassured by the conclusion that the Headteacher would insulate them from difficult parents. This event also served to illustrate that the Headteacher had the courage of his convictions and had the strength of character to see them through. Mrs Jordan also indicated that the staff were impressed by the Headteacher's other public performances, such as assemblies and sporting events. In retrospect the Parents Meeting referred to above was probably the most critical event of the whole observation period. The Headteacher publicly proved to parents, staff and most importantly himself, that he possessed the personal wherewithal to manage any situation.

The Headteacher felt very much more confident at the start of his second term and the departure of Miss Russel had been a particularly fortuitous event in his opinion. He perceived Miss Russel to be a potential opponent and a complicating factor in developing positive staff relations. As indicated in Chapter One, she wielded enormous informal power and perceived any proposed change as an assault upon her personal power base and an insult to Mr Lake's regime. She had been his lieutenant in charge of the Infant Department and resented any erosion of her professional autonomy. Mrs Wood and Mrs Morgan became eminently more receptive to new ideas upon her departure, however, a certain residual effect always existed in the opinion of the Headteacher. He was particularly sensitive to the exchange of meaningful glances between Mrs Wood and Mrs Morgan in staff meetings and felt he had to work hard to overcome the "Infant separatist tendencies" in these ladies, which were a legacy of Miss Russel's influence.

The Headteacher classified the teachers in three distinct categories within his own mind. The first category consisted of individuals viewed as "imaginative and inspiring", the high achievers. The next category included the people he saw as "stolid and systematic", the middle range and the third category involved the "unimaginative and unintelligent", the least exciting members of staff. These rather oversimplistic ideal types provided the basis for his musings on staff development and may have generated self-fulfilling prophecies. The symmetry of interpersonal perception was interesting in this context and it became apparent that the teachers classified in the first category had a correspondingly positive view of the Headteacher. Likewise the teacher classified as the most "unimaginative and unintelligent" had the most negative view of the Headteacher. These perceptions became increasingly self-fulfilling as interactional biographies elaborated and developing every member of staff.
posed an increasingly complex problem to the Headteacher. Experience rapidly proved that it was easy to develop the "imaginative and inspiring" teachers, they enthusiastically sought to participate in curriculum discussion, attend appropriate courses and translate theory into practice for the benefit of the children in their charge. The Headteacher found it exciting and interesting to work with these people, not least because they were responding to his initiatives and reflecting a very positive "looking-glass image." The middle range group also made some progress, they participated at an acceptable level and their classroom practice was perceptibly modified. These people did not display the same initiative as the high achievers, but their work was sound and very solid and the Headteacher reassured himself with the conclusion that he would not mind having his own children in their classes. The third category individuals proved to be the most demanding, they appeared to consistently misunderstand curriculum initiatives and by design or default provided a very low level of classroom experience for the pupils in their charge. The Headteacher experienced some difficulty in understanding the motivation, or absence of motivation, of these people, but persisted in seeking to fully involve them in the development of the institution. He was particularly frustrated by their reversion to methods and material which were both archaic and ineffective.

The Headteacher believed that he treated all the teachers in exactly the same fashion and this may have been true at the outset. As time passed, however, the teachers became individuals and each one had a developing interactional history with the Headteacher. He got to know their personalities, values, capabilities and responses to him and likewise they uncovered his criteria of relevance and personal idiosyncracies. The allocation of curricular responsibilities and more subtly the development of informal networks, served to reveal the constituent elements of the Headteacher's appraisal of individual staff. He stubbornly believed that throughout the three years he always treated all the teachers in an equitable fashion and yet his behaviour tended to suggest elements of his underlying appraisal categories. His informal contact with people was very uneven, for example, after school he tended to spend more time talking to Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings than the other staff. The Headteacher also made a special effort to make a positive relationship with Mr Andrews in order to involve him more centrally in school affairs and simply increase his confidence. Mr Andrews had previously experienced some problems at Redland and the Headteacher's patronage may have been rather a mixed blessing. This conclusion emerged
from the interview with Mrs Jennings which I have paraphrased in the next paragraph.

Mrs Jennings identified the following critical incidents during the three years.

1. The Parents' Meeting already discussed at some length.

2. The Headteacher's response to a critical parent who was particularly unpleasant towards Mrs Wood.

3. The "rising-fives" issue.

4. The setting-up and handling of the PTA.

5. The opening-up of the school by introducing outside professionals.

6. The appointment of the Deputy Headteacher.

7. The non-appointment of Mrs Edwards.

It is noteworthy that the first four identified all relate to the school's relations with parents and suggests the teachers were more concerned about the maintenance of external boundaries than the modification of the curriculum. Mrs Jennings did go on to identify the Headteacher's ability to relate to children as a critical determinant of staff views of him. The manner in which curriculum development was undertaken, was also seen as important as the substance of the curriculum changes and the notion of a staff development policy was positively perceived. The staff saw the Headteacher's style to be genuinely participative and were impressed by his willingness to discuss policy decisions. Notwithstanding, Mrs Jennings did point out that "people may be influenced by things you would never even dream of." She cited as an example the fact that the Headteacher had not perpetuated Mr Lake's practice of inviting new infant children to his room for a sweet was very badly received. The fact that no one had informed him of this practice further complicated an understanding of this response, but reinforced the researcher's view that even the best executed impression management strategy cannot control people's perceptions of you. Indeed some members of staff were outraged by the Headteacher's praise of Mr Andrews in
certain staff meetings and the same people inferred from their observations that the Headteacher "did not get on with Mr Williams." The three elements of the behaviour of the Headteacher identified as critically important by Mrs Jennings, in fact, were congruent with the researcher's retrospective view.

"1. The biggest job is being a public relations man. You have to be on your best behaviour all the day as there are so many people to impress.

2. The positive leadership of the staff in virtually everything. You have to be seen to be interested in every aspect of the school.

3. You have to show them that you are 'the boss'. You have to be willing to be unpopular, you can't be one of the boys."17

This final statement was the nub of a realisation that gradually dawned upon the Headteacher during this three year period. At the outset he subconsciously wanted to be liked, by the end he wanted to be a respected leader, he was prepared to be unpopular. It would be unprofessional to elaborate upon the comments provided upon every teacher in Chapter One, however, it is obvious that the Headteacher developed very different relationships and was perceived very differently by individual teachers. One teacher characterised him as someone who "never had time to listen and was so clever with words that he could tie people in knots", while a colleague viewed him as "a bright, articulate professional who had revolutionised the school and the people inside it." Clearly the Headteacher felt more comfortable with some people than others and the ongoing challenge if he had remained at Redland would have been to maximise the contribution of the third category teachers. Superficially the period was devoid of major staff conflict, however, a number of significant hidden agenda items were developing beneath the outwardly calm surface. The Headteacher implicitly offered each member of staff the same bargain - you support me in creating a glowing reputation and I will reciprocate. This "trade-off" was more appealing to some than others and the Headteacher moved on before the possible negative ramifications of his strategy became manifest. Notwithstanding his greatest frustration in relation to his "unimaginative and unintelligent" colleagues was that they were systematically failing to provide meaningful and worthwhile experiences for the children in their charge and he was largely unable to modify their practice.

-253-
Redland School was established to educate children and the manifest function of the Headteacher was to ensure that they received an education appropriate to their age, aptitude and ability. Notwithstanding the identification of "the pupils" as the most important group involved in the enterprise, the Headteacher perceived these actors to be the least problematic in the social equation. Upon his arrival he felt very confident that he would create a good impression with this most perceptive of groups, after all he had devoted the last twelve years of his life to refining his techniques with this client body. The Headteacher was very comfortable in the teaching situation and enjoyed close contact with children and it was presumably the success of his class management that had gained him the post in the first place. Nevertheless, the Headteacher quickly discovered that the parameters of the situation in respect of his teaching performance had altered. From the first day he found that each time he taught he was performing for a much wider audience than the children in his immediate charge. The class teacher, teacher colleagues, parents, other children and a number of other interested parties were eager to monitor his technical efficacy and the messages transmitted by his pupils were critical in the construction of his reputation. He was expected to be able to perform at short notice with any age group, from reception infant through to top junior, and in any area of the curriculum. Furthermore, he had to be able to cope with any number of interruptions and intrusions and maintain the flow of the lesson.

The Headteacher enjoyed time-tabled teaching and looked forward to the development of planned topics and relationships. During the first term, class teaching provided the best method of making relationships with all the children in the shortest possible time. It also provided valuable insight into the classroom organisation and practice of the incumbent. The Headteacher was able to present his view of education through his own teaching and effective demonstration was worth hours of theoretical description. Indeed the Headteacher used his own planned teaching to lead curriculum development, undertaking creative writing with the older juniors or science with the younger infants. He also timetabled himself to neutralise the known deficiencies of particular teachers, volunteering to help out in their areas of curriculum weakness. The Headteacher also shared a fourth years junior class with Mrs Jordan for the autumn term of 1982, during a period of staffing reduction. This arrangement was successful because of the philosophical compatibility of the partners and Mrs Jordan's long-suffering acceptance of the competing demands upon the Headteacher's time.

-254-
The Headteacher occasionally became frustrated by his teaching commitment, particularly the short notice supply teaching variety caused by the absence of colleagues. Inevitably absence occurred at the most inopportune moments in the Headteacher's schedule and attempting to execute two or three functions simultaneously, particularly if one involved young children, was a recipe for disaster. For example, visitors would inevitably appear unexpectedly when the office was unmanned and seek the Headteacher, who was perhaps teaching in one of the mobile classrooms, and he would be faced with conflicting demands upon his time. Notwithstanding his initial desire to teach without interruption, some pressing matters often needed his attention and his teaching thereby became fragmented. The older children readily perceived that the Headteacher had a rather different role to that of their class teacher and reflected this view in a number of ways which will be elaborated in succeeding paragraphs.

The Headteacher gradually came to terms with his changed role-relationship to pupils. The closeness that had characterised his previous class teaching, based upon daily face-to-face contact, was no longer a viable possibility. He was constrained by his view of the Headteacher role and the pupils' responses were conditioned by their expectations of the 'Headteacher'. The Headteacher felt this role-distancing particularly keenly at Christmas and the end of the school year when he had previously been used to relating very closely with individual children, not to mention receiving many presents. In darker moments he also felt that people's judgement of his personal teaching abilities was based upon an unfair premise, namely that if the lesson was successful and the children responded positively it was because he was "the Headteacher", on the other hand if the response was negative it was because he had performed badly. This dichotomy, between views of his personal characteristics and role expectations for the Headteacher, emerged very clearly from the children's writing which constitutes a portion of the data upon which this section of the text is based.

The Headteacher used his personal teaching to generate a plethora of writing designed to reveal how children perceived him. The themes included "A Day in the Life of Mr Suggett", "A Letter to another Planet describing Redland School", "The Friday Report" and "A Reference for Mr N Suggett". Surveys were constructed for completion by other pupils, interviews of pupils by pupils and other teachers conducted surveys based upon a real problem solving course.

-255-
organised by the Mathematics Adviser. This work was evenly spread over the final two years of the observation period and indicates the perceptiveness of some pupils. Most of the writing was undertaken by third and fourth year junior pupils, however, some of the interviews were conducted throughout the school.

The "Letters to another planet" written during the autumn term of 1982 begin to reveal some incidental perspectives about the Headteacher.

"We sing some songs in assembly, then Mr Suggett speaks to us, then we say a prayer."

"We start by having assembly and our Headmaster usually tells us a story then we sing a few songs."

"One thing I like is gymnastics, that really is thumbs up, brill! And where would we be without Mr Suggett our headmaster who owns the school."

"The unusual thing about our school is that our headmaster is kind sometimes."

Children judge the Headteacher upon their face-to-face contact with him and Assembly is particularly significant in this context. When the younger infants were surveyed by the older juniors and asked "What does Mr Suggett do?" the most frequent answer was "tells stories." Indeed story-telling was generally perceived to be one of the Headteacher's strongest attributes by the children and reflects the fact that they all observe him discharging this function on almost a daily basis. The Assembly, however, is an occasion during which the pupil has to exercise discretion, particularly if "Mr Suggett is in a bad mood" as you may get "told off." The problem solving questionnaires conducted by Mrs Jennings and Mrs Jordan suggested that Assemblies were generally perceived as interesting, but that the possibility "of getting told off" was an area of concern. This phenomenon in the children's eyes involved both a reprimand to an individual and a blanket verbal assault upon the whole school. The Headteacher viewed his own performance in Assembly as rather low-key and unthreatening, he believed he acted very tolerantly and rarely chastised an individual and almost never the whole school. What he viewed as a gentle reminder was perceived as an explicit threat of punishment to any offenders. An older female pupil had her own method of ascertaining the Headteacher's mood in Assembly, if he stopped the music...
that was playing as pupils entered the Hall to reproach a noise maker that was a very bad sign.

The pupils' views of the Headteacher were based upon a mixture of the following considerations, what they expected of a headteacher, their observations and what the Headteacher disclosed about himself. Initially they undoubtedly compared the Headteacher with his predecessor and throughout the period compared the Headteacher with their own class teacher. Parents and other significant others help to construct role expectations for the headteacher in children's minds and pupils monitor personal experience in terms of this framework. Pupils then feedback their perceptions to parents rather than the other way around. These perceptions are principally influenced by first-hand interaction and this takes place formally in classrooms and the assembly hall and informally in the playground, extra-curricular clubs and the dining hall. School field-trips provide the best opportunity of all for children to really get to know their teachers and the week in Scarborough in June 1983 furnished the richest mutual monitoring scenario for both the Headteacher and pupils. Self-disclosure is high on the hidden agenda of such an event, but the Headteacher also had other opportunities in which to decide how much of himself as a person to disclose to the children. Assemblies, class teaching, club activities and particularly incidental conversations each furnished additional opportunities.

Pupils' views of the Headteacher ranged along a continuum, from a perception of his formal function at one end to an appraisal of his personal characteristics at the other. One of the above quotations revealed the view that he owned the school and in the eyes of the pupils he was invested with great institutional power and personal autonomy. Some other pupils were aware that he might spend some of his time "talking to governors and that sort of thing", but the majority of children believed he was in total charge. Indeed the younger infants had some lack of clarity, and very little interest, about exactly what he did and viewed him as the person who "tells stories in assembly", "sometimes teaches us" and "you get sent to him if you are naughty." In fact a total of three infants were sent to the Headteacher during the whole period and a similarly small number of juniors suffered the same fate at the hands of their teachers. Nevertheless the question "what do you think worries children of your age" stimulated responses which included the following; "getting sent to Mr Suggett", "when someone speaks seriously to us, like when someone put things down the loo and it made me
scared", and "getting told off by Mr Suggett." The Headteacher is viewed as an authority figure with the capacity to "worry" children. Likewise the Headteacher is seen as someone who can offer the highest accolades of praise for good work or sporting achievement, usually in Assembly. I was surprised at how highly children valued this form of positive reinforcement, even children I had already praised, for example in a gymnastic club situation, liked the Headteacher to compliment them in his "headteacher role" in an assembly setting. Children also enjoyed bringing good work to show the Headteacher, an activity he preferred to receiving malefactors for punishment. Thus the Headteacher was perceived by the children as the ultimate source of both negative and positive reinforcement.

The children's accounts of "A Day in the Life of Mr Suggett" reveal a large area of underlying peer agreement regarding his role.

"He arrives early and goes into his office to open the post. At ten past nine he takes Assembly and after that he goes back to his office or takes a class if the teacher isn't there". The children believe he spends the time in his office writing letters, ordering equipment and answering the telephone. They also surmise that he spends a lot of time reading and writing personal records about them. Most of their accounts characterise the Headteacher concluding his day with a staff meeting and acknowledge his authority over other teachers. The most perceptive respondent notices his idiosyncracies and weaves them into the account of his day, "then he goes to fondle his plants and waters them as he walks into assembly....... he walks back to his plants and says how beautiful they are." She goes on to suggest that the only things in the school that understand the Headteacher are his beloved plants. In this way the children also appraise Mr Suggett as a person as well as a headteacher.

Children were asked to write a reference for the Headteacher (15 February, 1984) based upon their knowledge of him over three years. The constructs which emerged reflected his personal characteristics as the pupils saw them.

"He has got good looks and nice clothes".

"He is good at making stories interesting".
"He is very good at running. He has run in a marathon and he is very fit".

"He is good for handling problems and a lot of noise, also he is a good teacher who keeps us quiet and makes us get on".

"He gets on well with people, especially if they do as they are told".

"He has a voice which you listen to when you hear it".

"He likes to teach gymnastics and is sometimes funny and kind, he seems to do a lot of handwriting".

The final quotation illustrates the fact that children categorize people in terms of the activity they see them involved in. The Headteacher was classified as very fit because he ran in marathons, coached the gymnastics club and very importantly owned a pair of Nike training shoes. His interest in sport and neat clothes were both seen as indicators of the type of person he was and seemed to make him easier to identify with. The fact that he can "sometimes" be funny and kind suggests a certain unpredictability and his tolerance of noise is perceived as a key issue in this area.

"He can't stand too much noise".

"He loses his temper quickly".

"He gets quite angry with people who misbehave".

"He can shout very loudly and he gives you a fright".

"He has things he does badly, one is he doesn't sing loudly. It is not essential but I think he could sing louder".

To summarise, the pupils viewed the Headteacher as interesting, kind, friendly, athletic, neatly dressed, a good teacher and a firm disciplinarian. They also saw him as loud, moody and slightly unpredictable with a low tolerance of noise and misbehaviour. The Headteacher had approached "the pupils" confidently at the outset, had encountered few problems with this group of actors and was very pleased with his relationship with them at the end of the three years. He had
not pursued any form of impression management strategy with this group, he had simply acted spontaneously and had been himself. It is not surprising, therefore, that their perceptions closely matched his own view of himself.

It is noteworthy that of all the groups involved in Redland School, the Headteacher believed that the view of the pupils most closely matched his own. The reasons for this symmetry have been partially explored above and the most powerful reside in the fact that in terms of "the pupils" he already knew who he was at the commencement of the period. In other words he was confident, spontaneous and straightforward in his self presentation to the children, he expected to be liked and respected and he believed he was. He had a wealth of first-hand experience of interacting with pupils to draw upon and a proven record of success. In contrast, his dealings with the other groups involved in the school were much more tentative, he had no background of interacting with these people and did not initially fully understand the parameters of the situation. He negotiated his relationships with these actors on a trial and error basis and modified his behaviour in relation to perceived success and failure. At the outset he did not truly know himself as a headteacher, he had some guiding principles, but in retrospect they were no more than that. He wanted to develop a participative management style, based upon McGregor's Theory Y, and he wanted to transform Redland into an open institution, offering total access to all the participants involved in the enterprise. He sensed a reluctance inside himself to exert the authority and power inherent in his position, other than upon the pupils. The teachers, however, from the start perceived him to be demanding and the summary introduction of after-school staff meetings, without prior consultation, was cited as evidence of this fact. He was initially very tentative in his dealings with parents and only organised the fateful first term Parents' Meeting at Mrs Jordan's behest. At this event his presentation of self was based more upon reaction than action and but for opposition from the floor, he might have projected a very different image. Nevertheless, thereafter he viewed parents with some suspicion and operated accordingly beneath his welcoming public face. The formation of the PTA was his greatest mistake during the three years and he bitterly regretted his rather headstrong action in disregarding the sound advice of trusted colleagues. The reasons for its formation reflected the self-interest of a number of actors and the Headteacher's main motivation was the provision of a case-study for this report. Notwithstanding he rapidly perceived his
error of judgement. The PTA Committee were predominantly a group of altruistic, interested parents who were genuinely seeking to advance the interests of the school and their own children. A caucus, however, was operating at the psychological level of behaviour, bent upon constructing a vehicle with which to bulldoze the Headteacher and the school. The Headteacher bitterly resented people beating him at his own game, in other words imposing their view of reality through the selective manipulation of impressions, and became very disenchanted with the whole enterprise. His overwhelming desire was to uncover an appropriate method of disbanding the PTA so close to having set it up in a blaze of publicity. Indeed the PTA Committee rapidly distanced itself from the parent group by virtue of its composition and seemed destined to self-destruct.

The Headteacher's view of his interaction with the participant groups in Redland ranged along a confidence continuum. He was most secure in his dealings with pupils and viewed his interactions with parents as potentially the most problematic, while the other groups were located at various points between these two extremes. It is vital to realise that none of these perspectives and metaperspectives were static or immutable. Indeed views of the Headteacher were elaborated and modified over time, particularly reflecting the latest encounter, and likewise his views reflected changing perspectives and experience. The Headteacher's own view of himself was particularly vulnerable to circumstantial considerations often beyond his own immediate control. Nevertheless, the image that we have of ourselves in any particular role is an important determinant of our self-esteem and of our behaviour. Similarly, the image that others have of us determines their attitude and behaviour towards us. Neither of these images is necessarily an accurate reflection of how we really are, since we can easily delude ourselves, and others can stereotype us from inaccurate and distorted data.

The image the Headteacher held of how he would really like to be and the image he wanted others to have of him represented goals to which he aspired. The difference between the currently perceived image and ideal image provided a source of energy for development and pointed the direction in which he needed to grow. Self-development involved an increase in technical competence, understanding of curriculum development and teaching methods, and a greater awareness of interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills training did not figure as part of the Authority's headteacher induction programme and in the researcher's view this was a
grave oversight. The Headteacher badly needed greater interpersonal awareness at the outset and specific training in this area before coming into post would have been invaluable. It is impossible to renegotiate relationships entirely when a biography of conflict or mutual suspicion exists and therefore the initial development of a relationship is critical to subsequent interaction. A new Headteacher who does not know either himself or the other actors in a social situation is in a "double-bind".

Comparison of the Headteacher's self image and the image others had of him occasionally revealed an undesirable state of ignorance in these others. For example, Mrs Livingstone's altered view of the Headteacher manifested itself in more distant behaviour and he was faced with the dilemma of addressing the problem directly or pretending not to notice. In order to address the problem he would have had to challenge the data supplied by Mrs Holmes upon which the view was based and this would have been unprofessional in his opinion. Alternatively the comparison of the images provided by self and others can provide clues to possible self-delusion. The Headteacher often suggested to himself that people viewed him more negatively than their evidence indicated. One dissatisfied parent became generalised into a view that all the parents were desperately dissatisfied with his performance and contradictory evidence was very welcome.

One of the Headteacher's greatest disappointments about himself was his inability to actually exist apart from Redland School. He desperately wanted to be able to purge his mind of school and its inhabitants during his non-contact hours, however, the place and the people constantly forced their way into his consciousness. The long summer holiday provided the worst examples of this phenomenon, when stray thoughts would creep into his mind like clouds into a clear sky. The end of the holiday generated concerns about all the things that could go wrong and the recurrent worry, elaborated earlier, that this term he might be "found out". Happily these thoughts largely disappeared as soon as the children reappeared.

In concluding this chapter upon the Headteacher's view of views of the Headteacher it is important to re-emphasise that views are particularly slippery phenomena as they are subject to constant modification and re-definition and often reflect the most recent interaction. The same actor may superficially amend his view on an almost daily basis,
particularly in the early stages of a relationship, and even the underlying perception may undergo a radical shift, as the example of Mrs Holmes illustrates. Some actors, on the other hand, may not have had a deeply held view of the Headteacher, for example some parents and reception infants had very little knowledge or interest in what he did. The dichotomy between role expectations and personal characteristics is also a fertile area for further study, many views are conditioned by the incumbent's role status and personal characteristics appear to increase in importance in relation to the amount of face-to-face interaction involved. Indeed the Headteacher regretted revealing more his psychological self to the PTA Committee and would rather have had their view located at a greater social distance. This view in itself, however, became very much clearer in hindsight.

The views of particular groups have been analysed in isolation in the interests of conceptual clarity, however, in the richness of everyday existence it is impossible to disentangle their interrelatedness. The Headteacher did not appraise his own performance in relation to seven sets of different criteria, nor could he interact with each group in isolation. In reality the views of these groups were interactive and even viewing the aggregation of individuals within each group as having the same perspective is scientifically suspect. There were as many views of the Headteacher as there were actors involved in the enterprise, but in the heat of battle it was difficult to realise that fact and the Headteacher may have responded to a group view that actually did not exist. Thus if an individual is going to undertake particular patterns of behaviour in response to his perception of the views of other actors, it is vital that he maps the total topography rather than just the most obvious undulations.
References


12. Interview with the Director of Education County Hall 15 August 1983.


16. Interview with Mrs Jordan 16 September 1983.

17. Interview with Mrs Jennings 1 March 1984.

Chapter Seven

An Account of "the account" and a Consideration of its Methodological Efficacy

My fieldwork at Redland School began with the first preliminary day-visit, prior to taking up my appointment in April 1981, and was concluded with my departure in April 1984. From that first visit, as both a novitiate participant observer and "the Stranger," I was eager to make sense of the new social world I was entering. The frames of reference I carried with me to execute this "sense-making" exercise, related back to two separate sources, firstly my past experience and common sense understandings of similar educational institutions and secondly the theoretical paradigms supplied by my academic training. Professor Lou Cohen's course in Educational Research Methods had introduced me to participant observation and ethnography and Wolcott's study of "The Man in the Principal's Office" had inspired my particular research undertaking. My paradigmatic orientation drew much of its inspiration from symbolic interactionist and phenomenological perspectives, with T Barr Greenfield representing something of a super-hero in the research literature. Notwithstanding my experience of ethnography was very limited, both in a practical and a theoretical sense, and I actually learned about it by getting on and doing it. In fact, the capriciousness of chance provided an imperative and an opportunity to commence this project somewhat sooner than I would have ideally chosen. Indeed, I draw great comfort from Rock's belief "that the fieldworker needs only a minimum of theoretical orientation before he begins his observations ....... he may be positively handicapped if he postpones his fieldwork until he feels that he has a thorough grounding in theory." Retrospective justification is a trap I do not wish to fall into in this natural history of my research, however, I do firmly believe that approaching the field-setting with an uncluttered mind was advantageous. Ethnographic fieldwork has been likened to riding a bicycle, no matter how much theoretical preparation you do, there is not substitute for actually getting on the bicycle. Indeed, I feel grappling with the theoretical underpinnings of ethnography becomes a more meaningful exercise when you are attempting to make sense of a body of data and to refine your research perspective.

The project started out as a period of ten weeks fieldwork for my MA Thesis "An Interpretive View of the First Term of a Primary Headship" and like Topsy it just grew and grew. As indicated in the Introduction, my MA Thesis generated more questions than it answered, as its focus was
restricted to a consideration of the intra-institutional participants in the social drama. This approach necessarily simplified reality by not fully communicating the complexity of the primary headteacher's daily existence; many of the metaphorical plates he was constantly asked to spin had artificially been removed from the act. I wanted to tell it like it really is, in all its fullness! Thus the observation period was extended to an indefinite finishing time and I cast around for the best method of organising and understanding my data. After numerous conversations with various representatives of varying hues of academia and a number of false starts down wrong turnings into a linguistically biased ethnomethodological approach and a pre-occupation with the accountability debate, I found myself with a meaningful research proposal and a sympathetic supervisor. This process had taken something over a year and during that time a vast amount of field data had been accumulated.

In retracing my steps through the genesis of my research design a number of strategic field decisions are laid bare. I began my fieldwork with the desire to observe and record everything. Attempting to record everything precipitates at least two helpful ideas. First, because you cannot record everything, you start to question why you intuitively elect to record some things and not others. Second, what you do select provides important clues about your own observing, and whether your gaze is sufficiently wide-ranging. My initial broad sweep strategy generated pages of unstructured notes and catalogued a developing acquaintanceship with the setting and its actors. Indeed, following Wolcott's technique, I observed and looked for nothing in particular, waiting to be impressed by recurrent themes. In this way particular elements stood out by virtue of their incidence in the field diary and impressed themselves upon my consciousness. I became increasingly pre-occupied with the complexity and diversity of the headteacher's daily existence and the bewildering array of different individuals and groups with whom he was involved. This preoccupation engendered a review of my unstructured field-note recording strategy and its replacement with a more systematic observation sheet. Upon this sheet a space was provided for noting observations about each of the following - children, headteacher, County Hall, non-teaching staff, teachers and governors. This instrument was employed throughout the autumn term of 1982, however, it rapidly became apparent that it was something of a Procrustean bed and was abandoned in favour of a more flexible arrangement. The new strategy involved developing a loose leaved folder and an accompanying box for
each of six recurring themes, identified from the data collected thus far (to February 1983). With some revision, these themes provided the substantive focus of the first six chapters of this text. The final four terms provided the opportunity to focus almost exclusively upon these six themes in an effort to both validate and elaborate them. Thus a focussing down process had taken place, commencing with an open mind by recording everything and progressively moving to a sharper emphasis upon identified themes.

Participant observation represented my principal data gathering methodology, however, additional insights were generated by a variety of other means. As the Headteacher I had legitimate access to all the normative, objective data passing through the office and the filing cabinet provided a researcher's treasure chest, containing pupil profiles, staff records, communications from County Hall and letters from parents. The School Log Book provided a historical record of the development of the institution and my own entries during my three year tenure proved very interesting in retrospect. Indeed photocopies of this document and many of the other letters, circulars, minutes and memoranda which crossed my desk provided a wealth of data. I attempted to process these photocopies on a regular basis and systematically consign them to the appropriate theme-box. The written work produced by pupils furnished another source of data, relevant to "views of the Headteacher", and this material has been elaborated at some length in Chapter Six. Indeed this work indicated a whole new enticing avenue to the insights of the children engaged in the enterprise. However, professional considerations and temporal constraints, dictated that this work should be secondary, illustrative data, rather than a main thrust of the research. By contrast a small number of focussed interviews generated evidence that has been utilized extensively in Chapters Four, Five and Six. Initially I decided to conduct an interview with the Primary Adviser, designed to reveal the contribution representatives of County Hall made to the underlying themes of these three chapters; how the school is influenced, how the school creates an impression or image and how a "County Hall view" of a headteacher is constructed. The interview took place at County Hall on 9 June 1983 and actually involved both Primary Advisers. At their behest I had already interviewed the Assistant Director of Education: Primary the week before, employing the same basic themes. These interviews were largely unstructured conversations, developing from my introduction of the three themes. My interview with the Director of Education was a more structured affair and the questions I posed,
reflecting the same three basic themes, have been reproduced in full below.

"1. Mr Jones and the Advisers believe that the ethos of the Authority comes from the Director and the staff he has appointed. By what mechanisms do you feel this ethos is transmitted to individual schools?

2. How does the Authority influence what goes on inside a particular school?

3. In your report upon the "Inspection Function of the LEA (1976)" you identify one of the main tasks of Schools' Branch as keeping its finger on the pulse of schools. How is this done?

4. How do you differentiate between appearance and reality in your feedback from schools?

5. How are perceptions of an individual Headteacher constructed?

6. Mr Jones sees the Director of Education as "the stabilising influence in the Authority". I wonder if you would like to comment on that statement?

Further interviews were conducted with Mrs Jordan on 16 September 1983 and Mrs Jennings on 1 March 1984, focussing upon views of the Headteacher. With Mrs Jordan I predicated the interview upon a talk I was writing, for presentation to a group of new headteachers, entitled "Perceptions of the Headteacher". I asked her to empathise into the role of the various participants identified in Chapter One and provide her view of what each of those people would be looking for in a new headteacher. She had recently taken up her own headship and was distanced from Redland and with very little prompting, she presented her view of the early days of my headship. The interview with Mrs Jennings involved a more direct, straightforward approach, and the following questions were posed.

"1 What do you consider to be the critical incidents in the life of the school during the past three years?
2. On what basis did you make assessments of me as a new headteacher?

3. On what basis did other people make assessments of me?

4. How did people view my views of other people?

5. How do you view the role of the headteacher?

The data derived from both these interviews provided the means to triangulate my own metaperspectives and made a valuable contribution to the substance of the text.

To summarise the genesis of my methodology, I set out with a theoretical understanding of participant observation and a burgeoning desire "to do ethnography". None of my reading on research methods seemed to present a model of fieldwork practice which I could translate directly into a ready-made structured approach to data collection. I started out with a wide angled lens and by degrees drew particular concerns into a sharper focus, systematically building up various sets and categories of data. My methods were perceived to be intuitive and responsive, reflecting the specific demands and contours of the social situation within which I was operating - I was thinking upon my feet and trying to ensure that nothing of real value slipped through my fingers. As Rock asserts, "fieldwork is accomplished chiefly in action, it cannot be mastered by speculation."⁴

Notwithstanding such statement did little to calm the fears or assuage the insecurities of the apprentice ethnographer. The existence of the Headteacher⁵ can be a lonely one and the additional pressure of undertaking problematic fieldwork further increases the stress level. The recurring questions reflect this duality, firstly "am I doing a good job professionally?" and secondly, "am I really getting the data I need to present a viable study?" A further fear drives from a concern about re-inventing the wheel - "does everybody else already know this anyway?" Wax conceives this process as a "rite of passage" for the emergent scientist, where "young anthropologists often embarked on a first field trip in a spirit not unlike that of adolescent primitives facing initiation into the tribe. In solitary agony, supported only the wise sayings of their anthropological ancestors, they met their crucial and mysterious ordeal."⁷ The heavy investment of energy, time and money and my psychological need to achieve within the parameters of the academic community, heightened my drive to get to grips with the theory
and practice of ethnography and translate my observations into a coherent, meaningful piece of research.

Participant observation differs fundamentally from other research methods in its lack of specificity and prescription. This is both inevitable and necessary, as theoretical rather than technical precepts are being implemented and the observer seeks to study the action from the position of the actor. "Since action is forged by the actor out of what he perceives, interprets and judges, one would have to see the operating situation as the actor sees it." In my study I was the principal actor as well as the researcher and this situation is very much in keeping with Becker's definition of participant observation. "For our purposes we define participant observation as a process in which the observer's presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and, by participating with them in their natural life setting, he gathers data...." The participant observer is committed to becoming embedded in the perspectives of those who inhabit the social world that is to be described and analysed; as Headteacher I had no choice in this matter. Nevertheless, I was introduced into this world with a specific social and cultural position which in itself facilitated and constrained my participation, a consideration which merits further analysis.

I have briefly outlined my participant observation strategy, its surface methodological features and strategic changes of direction, however, thus far I have not described how I actually did the observing. The reason for this is that the observation period and a section of the text were completed before I asked myself that question. I gained entree in a formal sense by virtue of my appointment to the post, but I still had to negotiate access to the informal networks within the school. Some of these informal social networks were "off limits" to me as Headteacher, while my entry to others was debarred by my lack of social skill, or as a function of particular personality characteristics. For example, I never really found my way inside the mores of the "infant teacher mafia", nor at a personal level, did I have any real desire to do so. In this way what I was actually able to observe reflected my professional role and my friendship patterns. Conversely these friendship contacts provided access to perspectives typically unavailable to the participant observer, in the way that Mr Saville cleared my path to the Director of Education. Notwithstanding it would be naive and oversimplistic to suggest that the
whole world was my oyster and that I could observe anything I desired, in fact, this realisation forced me to move "the headteacher" into a more central role than I had originally intended. Certain areas of the social life of the school are invariably taboo to the headteacher and rather than generating disharmony and disjuncture by seeking to "break and enter" it seemed prudent to concentrate upon the segment of social action immediately and invitingly available - the existence of the Headteacher. Even Wolcott could not experience the Headteacher's experience, but therein resided the problem of differentiating the observer/researcher from the observer/headteacher, the observer-as-participant from the participant-as-observer. As well as the "what" actually observed, the "how" is also of critical importance, observing as Headteacher immediately threw me into a different relationship with the action and the actors in a more permanent way than an outside researcher. Secondly I had a very strong, vested interest in the outcome of the drama, and thirdly I had a professional obligation to lead the enterprise and observe from the front.

My note-taking strategy was prescribed by my professional role and my desire to stay undercover. I could not openly take notes, except in staff meetings and other events where professional concerns legitimated the activity, and I had to scuttle back to my office to scribble a hurried account of recent events. I then wrote up a fuller version in the evening or during a lull in the day's activities. I invariably experienced a sense of guilt about writing up my notes during school time and reacted to a knock upon my door like a naughty schoolboy "caught in the act". The reasons for these guilt feelings are difficult to rationalise, as I commenced the project with the Director of Education's blessing and I constantly reminded myself that I devoted most of my waking life to Redland School, so a few minutes here and there during the school day to write up my notes were no more than I deserved. In retrospect, I believe it was the covert nature of the research that induced some uneasiness, people were interacting with me in a "natural" way and I was rushing off to commit it all to paper and ultimately to the scrutiny of the world. Notwithstanding, I was very relieved to find that my memory was both accurate and exhaustive and years after events have taken place I can still remember the minutest details without recourse to notes. I have always considered my memory to be good, however, I suspect my recall of the events during these three years was sharpened by my emotional commitment to and involvement in these events. Clearly memories provide rather subjective data and a stylized view of
proceedings, nevertheless I believe it has been of great value in writing up this account to recall how it actually felt to be there. The criticisms that Eyesenck\textsuperscript{10} levels at Freudian Theory, elaborated in the Introduction, appear to have broad applicability in this context, particularly the contention that there is no check of the subjectivity of memory, however, a number of additional mechanisms have been built into the research design to validate and objectivise these memories, principally the interviews. Indeed subjective memories become objective facts when two people share identical subjectivity and it is noteworthy that my field diary attests to the accuracy of my memories. Indeed, the notes reinforce the feelings my memories generate and in that sense indicate their internal validity. A further recurrent concern related to the extensiveness of my field notes, for as times passed they become increasingly cryptic and brief, and I was particularly delighted to discover Wolcott's view on the matter. "We are relieved when others help us understand that field notes are only mnemonic devices to prompt our memories for fuller details, thus assuaging anxieties that our notes are never quite complete, but we do not then turn our attention to why our notes for any one observation could not consist of a few well chosen words.\textsuperscript{11} Once more the observer and the note-taker learn by actually doing it and in the process learn what is appropriate to their future research needs, techniques are refined in the field to take account of the "state of play" in terms of both the action and the scientist.

I have already discussed my changing focus during the three years and identified the strategic point, at which I moved from a wide-angled lens to a more prescribed, microscopic inspection of the particular, as February, 1983. This decision appeared to be logical step at that time as it had the dual advantage of structuring my observations and reassuring me that six identifiable, viable themes were emerging. These themes reinforced the centrality of the headteacher and brought into play all the data stored up inside my emotions, as well as my field-diary, some of which had not been unearthed at this stage. The "how" of observing took on an additional context, it was now valid to inspect my own feelings and to become more introspective. This move from the total picture had inevitably begun from the first day by systematically identifying areas of interest and ignoring others, however, the notion of narrowing the focus too soon was a recurring concern and I reassured myself that if something really exciting occurred outside my identified themes I could easily amend them. In practice they were wide enough to accommodate a breadth of data and provided a sorting office within my
consciousness, where letters and packages were sent to different destinations. Inevitably some of this mail was the wrong shape to fit the pigeon holes and had to be discarded.

The specific wide-angled lens and the nature of the microscope I brought to the situation are of particular importance in judging the quality of magnification provided by my observations. My personal, theoretical and undetected biases may all influence what is observed. The autobiographical sections in the text reveal elements of my personal history, my phenomenological and interactionist affiliations suggest my theoretical standpoint and some of my undetected biases have been revealed both intentionally and accidentally in this account. As Laing indicates "behaviour is a function of experience" and I necessarily observed through the spectacles of my particular past experience. However, being alive is predicated upon a personal history and every observer operates from this basis. Reflexivity involves bringing these biases to the surface and being aware of their impact upon the nature of your observations, as it is clearly impossible to operate in a totally unbiased fashion. Indeed "telling it like it really is" includes a presentation of the Headteacher's biases and being able to stand apart and identify what they are. The process involves me in three conceptual shifts - seeing as the headteacher sees, looking at that perspective from the observer's standpoint and finally viewing the observer's view from a position of objectivity. Ultimate objectivity, however, is impossible to attain because of my biases, and thus the argument becomes circular. Suffice to say that my observations reflected my own biases, nevertheless it is impossible for anyone else to quantify the amount of bias unless they walk in my shoes and experience as I experience. Objective reporting is difficult, but objective observing is even harder. As an "involved" participant observer, the texture of my observations is influenced by my emotional commitment and in consequence reflects feelings rather than objective detachment.

I have read a number of ethnographies - Wolcott, Hargreaves, Lacey, Delamont, King, Willis, Ball, Davies and Sluckin to mention a few, but have found it incredibly difficult to ascertain precisely what they were observing that prompted one thing and not another to come to their attention. It would seem that we all employ the most intuitive of judgements - the kind we ordinarily reserve for our "real" lives - to judge when a given account has "internal consistency" or "face validity". Indeed the most helpful advice I received with
regard to observation derived from Wolcott's anecdote about Shaler and Agassiz, where the former was constantly redirected to observe the small fish, the more he looked the more he saw! The more I study my field notes the more I see.

In providing an overview of this section on data collection, it is important to consider the importance of "strategic relevances"22, that is the extent to which the interests, theories and problem definitions of the researcher are imposed upon and tend to fashion and colour case-study data. These systems of relevances influence both the long term orientation of the field-work, as noted above, and the minutiae of daily contacts with participants in the field. The fieldworker is a social being no less than the researcher and playing "headteacher" is a social process with clearly prescribed social rules. I was peculiar inasmuch as I carried a dual allegiance into the field, but strands of this duality are shared by every participant observer in the sense that "all research uses a research instrument; in social science the scientist himself is that instrument. He controls and manipulates in specified ways his relationship with those he seeks to understand in an effort to gain information ...... the social investigator has to commit at least part of himself, and is confronted as a consequence with difficulties in disentangling that self from the information gained, ultimately because the self is constantly modified by such experiences."23 The object of the exercise is to share in the socio-cultural relevances of the members being studied, while at the same time the researcher has to satisfy the external reference group provided by the academic community. This group supplies his raison d'être, this is his academic audience and it is from here that he draws his theoretical perspectives and frames of reference. Becker24 argues strongly that this leads to an "irreducible conflict" between the social scientist and those he studies, a conflict which "stems in part from the difference between the characteristic approach of the social scientist and that of the layman to the analysis of social life."24 He goes on to suggest that the sociological view of the world - abstract, relativistic, generalizing - necessarily deflates people's view of themselves and their organisations.24

I entered the field with twin objectives, to be an effective headteacher and to conduct a case-study, both of which separated me off from the institutional motives of the other actors. Schutz and Luckman's discussion of relevance systems is particularly pertinent in this context. "The individual never enters the situation 'completely' and
never grasps its thematic data in their absolute actually present uniqueness. He brings to the situation definite attitudes, plans, designs of acts, as well as a stock of pre-formed typifications and expectations; in short he enters the situation with a system of interpretational and motivational relevances.\textsuperscript{25}

Thus, for the researcher the motivational relevances are derived from the task of doing the case study, while the interpretational relevances are those theories, concepts and models with which he makes sense of the world, within the context of "doing research". A great deal of the strain and fatigue of the fieldwork stemmed from this dual orientation in and to social life. The researcher is obliged to make problematic the taken for granted world of the other participants in the drama, while at the same time striving to achieve a satisfactory reciprocal and inter-subjective lived experience with these people.

The quality of the ethnographic account will ultimately be assessed by the academic community, in this case both formally and informally. It will be the contours of relevance currently predominant in that community which will define appropriate forms of data collection, data analysis and account construction. Even before entering the field these "empathetic" and "socialised" relevances shape the design, direction and resource allocation of the case-study. Furthermore, other independent historically and biographically appropriated relevances come into play, such as previous research experience as a practitioner and client. I am not suggesting that these extraneous factors pre-determined the outcome of my research, but they did inevitably play an important part in defining what I counted as data and how that data was to be interpreted. In this way the influence of these motivational and interpretational relevances is discernible not only in the overall conception and organisation of my case study but also in the detail of its production. In the most obvious sense they were at work in the questions I asked, either informally in casual conversation or more formally in the context of interview situations. In short, theses relevances provided the nature of the lenses in my researcher spectacles.

The decision to wear a particular pair of spectacles is of course also a decision to set aside alternative seeing aids. By electing to focus down upon particular areas of life at Redland I was, in fact, employing a form of sampling. In Smith's view sampling "lurks behind every decision the investigator makes when he elects to be here versus there, to spend more
time here rather than there, what array of documents to read, of people to interview, of settings to hang around. At the data level the question is always, "Has one seen the nooks and crannies of the system as well as the main areas to give a valid picture of the system?" \(^{26}\) Sampling is not normally talked about by ethnographers as it carries with it a set of working assumptions about the nature of social reality which are alien to the spirit of ethnography. Nevertheless, in both an explicit and an implicit form, the field worker is engaged in sampling in terms of naturalistic coverage and the problems of selectivity. The first and most obvious point of selection in my research was the choice of Redland School, or the capriciousness of fate in selecting it for me. Further sampling decisions were fixed by the dictates of my headteacher role, I had to be in certain places at certain times undertaking specified duties and my researcher freedom was prescribed by these considerations. By virtue of the nature of the job, particularly at the beginning, my contacts were haphazard and I spent large portions of time in the reactive mode, interacting with people who initiated our meetings. During this period I wrote down everything of interest, reflecting my "orientation toward discovery", for my concern was "to actively explore the social world, a process in which one's normal routine preconceptions should, as far as possible, be suspended and thus left open to challenge." \(^{27}\) This openness underpins the value and power of participant observation and brings it "nearer than any other social science method to capturing patterns of collective actions as they occur in real life." \(^{9}\) But even here the distortions inherent in any kind of observation must be admitted. Access to a world of reflecting, overlapping, contradictory, murky, incoherent realities demands selective attention from the fieldworker. For everything that is noticed a multitude of other things go unseen, for everything that is written down a multitude of other things are forgotten. Great parts of the real world experienced by the participant observer, undoubtedly the greater part, are selected out. By drawing the Headteacher into a central focus and identifying six broad themes, a large part of Redland School was selected out and a major sampling decision had been taken. Even those parts of the Redland social world which were selected for close observation were subject to the distortions of abstraction, reification and temporal freezing. In addition to these perceptual and recording distortions, a further implicit sampling decision was inherent in my decision to spend more time with some people than others. As noted in Chapter Six, analysis of my field notes reveals that much more time was spent with Mrs Jordan, Mrs Jennings and Reverend Rivers than any of the other intra- or
extra-institutional actors. Initially Mrs Jordan's institutional status as Deputy Headteacher dictated that she would be my first point of professional contact and our developing relationship thereafter reinforced this arrangement. Similarly my contacts with Reverend Rivers were in the first instance defined by our formal relationship and developed from that basis. Indeed most of our meetings were initiated by Reverend Rivers and therefore I was reacting to the demands of the situation. My contact with Mrs Jennings was predicated upon respect for her outstanding ability and enthusiasm and simply the fact that I liked her. Notwithstanding, these informal social networks form a pattern that I was not aware of during the fieldwork phase. It is also noteworthy that these three characters all became key "informants" and shared the common characteristic of providing the Headteacher with a positive self-image! Indeed, all three were at times, as Lacey suggests, "brought into the analysis as a positive contributor - almost as a research assistant." My gravitation towards these three actors also probably owes something to what Cockburn calls "experiential commonality".

The fundamental backcloth to which the forms of gravitation are pinned is essentially social in nature, textured by an inter-weaving of experiential commonalities between fieldworker and participants. Epistemic and comparable status gravitation can be reduced to social gravitation. My pattern of contacts with particular Advisers indicates the operation of the same phenomenon and so the configuration of my interactions to an extent constituted a sampling decision based upon social gravitation. Furthermore the friendship component had implications for my opportunity and desire to get inside the consciousness of particular actors, "the extent of my knowledge of the other can naturally be quite varied," and therefore my degree of empathy ranged along a continuum. Even within the teacher group I empathised closely with the above ladies but found difficulty in identifying with Mrs Edwards and her subjective context of meaning. In fact some actors, for example, a large section of the parent group, were anonymous and I grasped "the factual existence and being thus-and-so .... only by means of derived typifications."

An important feature of my data collection is the extent to which it reflects the model proposed by Glaser and Strauss. They recommend analysis of the data during the course of the fieldwork and a shaping of the data collection process to develop that analysis, notably through theoretical sampling. Initially my approach came close to the opposite pole to theoretical sampling and involved what Hammersley calls
"dredging", choosing a setting and collecting all the data available in it relevant to particular foreshadowed notions. I developed my ideas about how the data might be analysed during the first five terms of fieldwork and the final four terms provided an opportunity to home-in upon the six selected themes. Indeed the distinction between data collection and data analysis in participant observation research is necessarily somewhat artificial. The effective use of the participant observation approach rests on the fieldworker's ability to plough back analytical insights into the on-going data collection process.

"The analysis of case-study data is essentially concerned with the process of interpretation. That is the translation of raw data into a coherent portrayal of an institution and institutional processes."22 This process of interpretation involves the data coming to represent a field of reality as the basis for an account of the setting. The data acquires the status of evidence for the account. In fact, "the field of reality with which a case-study is concerned is subject to a series of interpretational and selective stages before it emerges in the form of a final report."22 The first stage involved the identification and selection of what was to count as data in the immediacy of my observation of the field. Some events, actions and utterances were taken to be significant and relevant, while others were either deliberately or unconsciously excluded. At one level this was a necessary filtering of the reality with which I was confronted and without it the sheer volume and complexity of data would be overwhelming. I would like to believe that my sharpening focus provided a rational and consistent basis for the selection of data. Live social action was translated into data by being recorded as such inside my head and by being translated into field notes. The next selection point was the transference of field note material into the theme file or box and this often involved a rather arbitrary decision as the social action and resulting data had an uncomfortable habit of failing to divide neatly into the themes I had selected. I overcame this problem by moving pieces of paper from one file to another and ultimately redress to the photocopier solved the problem. This whole process sounds rather more coherent than it actually was and at times I felt as if I was drowning in a sea of paper, diaries, photocopies, files, folders and boxes. "The reality of research is constituted within the complexity of these forms of organising and recording ethnographic data."22 Through this process the real world of the observed is translated into the conceptual language and classifications of the social scientist and the production of the final
account represents the ultimate conclusion of this sifting and redefining process. The account makes the data available to the research community, but also serves to remove this data from the comprehension of the researcher. Indeed the validation of the final report by the people centrally involved in the action is one method of overcoming positivistic criticisms. However, in this case only a very small number of people could attest to its internal validity as I principally operated "undercover".

"At every level in the social world being studied, in the process of study and in the presentation of the results of study, different relations of interpretation come into play. Between action in the field and the reading of a case-study report there are a series of stages of interpretation and translation." The production of the final report is portrayed here as mediated by the writer's commitment to academic theory, but this still oversimplifies the chronological and biographical evolution of the final account. I began writing the account in February 1984 and it has taken almost two years to complete it. During that time I have changed my professional role, visited a great many more schools, taken part in an extended management course and come into contact with a variety of significant others. In short I am a different person to the fieldworker at Redland. The various chapters of this text testify to my changing perspectives and understanding of the field, and my elaborating understanding of myself. Ongoing reading in education in general, and ethnography in particular, has also modified my view of my data. The account is also subject to revision in the light of those criteria of adequacy currently predominant in the research community. "The account can only be taken to be finally adequate when or if it is acknowledged as acceptable by the members of the research community. Until that occurs the account stands as only temporarily complete, its status and usefulness are unknown."

It is a central assumption of ethnography that research is a social activity and must be understood as such. This assumption derives from a symbolic interactionist perspective.

"The actor engages in the process and flux of the natural and social world, and through his or her acts negotiates the world and the self. Through a constantly developing series of transactions with the world, the social actor creates and recreates social worlds and social meanings. . . . . . . In this manner the ethnographer navigates and explores the
varied surface of diverse social scenes: the backwaters as well as the main streams. By virtue of his or her acts, of the transactions he or she engages in, the ethnographer/reporter recounts the actor's discoveries and self-discoveries. Informants and hosts tell their stories, and in turn the ethnographers have their own tales to tell."

Recognition that research is a social activity, the principle of reflexivity, has some significant methodological implications. Firstly, it suggests that the researcher's own actions are open to analysis in the same way as those of other participants. "Social research must be treated as a process in which the researcher constructs lines of action over time to try to achieve his goals in the situations which face him; negotiating with others, and making trade-off decisions between imperfect alternatives." In turn these lines of action structure future options and thereby shape the nature of the findings. My research goals were not the only consideration influencing my decisions in the field, my priorities included being an effective Headteacher, enhancing my own promotion prospects and most importantly psychological survival. In one sense the research element of my existence provided a catharsis during my years at Redland and the timing of the conclusion of the observation period was dictated by a change in my professional circumstances. Indeed a particular action in the field graphically exemplifies the pervasive influence of my desire for promotion - the decision to interview the Assistant Director and Director of Education was based more upon the provision of an opportunity to be noticed than research concerns. Indeed the covert agenda for the questioning was to discover how one could gain a glowing reputation and the aim of the exercise was to create a positive image in the process.

The second implication of the principle of reflexivity is the obligation placed upon the researcher to make himself aware of the decisions he is taking and the motives that underly these decisions. The above example illustrates this process, but provides the problem of knowing exactly what to do about it. The Headteacher and the researcher were merged into one by the psychological desire for professional preferment, and professional and research decisions were taken under the influence of that overarching principle. Self-awareness is necessarily an evolving concept and the efficacy of my quest for promotion in one sense liberates me to be able to reflect upon the process. Chapters Five and Six were both inspired by an instrumental orientation, analysing the mechanisms involved in image creation and the construction of views of the
headteacher had an obvious professional pay-off. Represented in this way the researcher appears to be a calculating, promotion-obsessed, Machiavellian character and I did not perceive myself in that way during my time at Redland, nevertheless my research design was influenced by concerns other than "pure ethnography".

Thirdly the principle of reflexivity leads to the requirement that the activities of the researcher are not left out of the final account. "If the reader is to be able to understand how the findings of the research relate to the setting studied, and to be in a position to discount the biases that may be entailed, he must be provided with an account of the research process adequate for these purposes."33 Indeed this chapter has been designed to supplement the account incrementally provided in the foregoing pages.

Over the last thirty years a substantial literature has been generated on ethnographic methodology, and in the last fifteen years a plethora of ethnographic method texts have appeared. (McCall and Simmons34, Denzin35, Filstead36, Bogdan and Taylor37, Johnson38, Douglas39, Schwartz and Jacobs40, Dobbert41) It is not at all clear, however, that this literature has played any major role in the shaping of ethnographic practice. Thus there is something of a conflict between the "theory" and "practice" of ethnography and the cause of the disparity would seem to lie in the influence of a competing principle to reflexivity, that of "naturalism".

"In ethnographic terms, the concept of 'naturalism' implies a commitment to the observation and description of social phenomena in much the manner that naturalists in biology have studied flora and fauna and their geographical distribution."33 This sensitivity to the great variety and complexity of social phenomena and the relationship between each specimen and its local ecology35, has led ethnographers to opt for research in "natural" settings. Naturalism is undoubtedly an important doctrine, and it has not only shaped ethnography at the practical level but has also countered the theoretical challenge of positivism. Nevertheless, there are some problematic side effects. Firstly, by commencing from a presuppositionless starting point, in order to discover how to study the social world in the course of studying it, ethnographers have no epistemological or ontological guarantees available. Secondly, the influence of naturalism can lead to a serious neglect of the question of validity of findings, with ethnographers sliding from outlining the
techniques for the development of theory into suggesting that these
techniques also virtually ensure the validity of the theory so
developed. A third problem relates to the ethnographer's denigration of
data derived from "artificial" settings, such as interviews, in other
words concern for ecological validity. Ethnographers rightly stress the
dangers of generalizing from people's responses in interviews, however,
if people behave differently in different contexts neither can one
automatically generalize from observations of actors in one context to
what they will do in another, even within the same natural setting. For
example, what people said in staff meetings was often very different to
what they did in the classroom and what parents said to the headteacher
was often very different to what they had told other parents they were
going to say. Moreover, even within the staffroom, different contexts
are created depending on who is present. Thus, once the concept of
natural settings is reformulated in terms of ecological validity,
ethnographers should be much more sensitive to contextual variation in
participant activities and to the consequences that this has for the
inferences that can legitimately be drawn from observations. My
involvement in any participant activity was necessarily as "the
headteacher" and my presence inevitably affected the ecology of the
situation. In this way the problem of reactivity raises a similar issue
and the impact of sampling, discussed earlier, must also be addressed.
Sampling difficulties relate not only to generalizing insights from
Redland to other primary schools, but also to generalizing within Redland
School. For example, I have been at pains throughout the study to stress
that there is no such group as "the pupils", but rather two hundred or
more individuals who share one common characteristic - they all attend
Redland. Nevertheless I am constantly aware of generalizing about "the
pupils" from data about a small number of them, similarly with regard to
"the parents" and all the other groups, generalisations can derive from
limited data generated in one context.

Fourthly, "an associated problem with 'naturalism' is the highly
misleading conception of direct observation often associated with it: the
idea that simply 'being there', immersing oneself in a setting offers a
guarantee of validity, since it provides direct contact with
reality." Indeed Blumer describes ethnography as "lifting the
veil" and Lofland's version of the same notion hints at direct
empathy. Notwithstanding, as Laing asserts, you can never fully
experience my reality and I can never experience as you experience.
Indeed, it is a central assumption of interactionism that people actively

-283-
make sense of their environment, it does not simply impress itself upon them, and as a participant observer I was striving to understand Redland within my terms and frame of reference. Neither can my total participation in Redland be viewed as a guarantee of validity, I could not experience the reality of other actors and another person in the headteacher role would have experienced the same thing in different ways. Furthermore, simply because I was the researcher, my experience was distinct from that of other participants. Introspection, therefore, cannot provide direct access to the experience of others, but it can enable the participant observer to re-examine his own behaviour from a more detached standpoint.

Finally, ethnographic research reports are often permeated by the influence of naturalism, literary naturalism, and as Lofland and Rock assert, these reports purport to simply communicate 'how the world is'. Thus 'the stance of the naturalist as the passive transcriber of nature's dictates may be that of the dispassionate observer... This style conflicts with my interactionist model of how people generate accounts of their own social world and is very much at odds with my desire to describe my own subject-object relationship with the action. In short, my approach is predicated upon reflexivity.

This chapter, providing a description of my approach, has been included in the main body of the text, rather than as an appendix in the style of Hargreaves, Lacey, Sharp and Green and Woods, as I believe my activities as a researcher should be viewed in the same light as my behaviour as a participant. I have sought to resist the almost obligatory justification of my research strategy and confession to human failings as a researcher, for both considerations are implicit in the whole account. Indeed my fieldwork procedures were not idealised as scientific or technical matters, but rather as practical activities in their own right, analogous to those of other participants. Fieldwork is accomplished by the utilization of common sense knowledge and methods learned from other participants in the setting. "In the end, ethnography must be viewed, and documented, as a member's accomplishment." In documenting my actions and findings, I am illustrating how both ethnographers and participants, build and produce for themselves actual accounts of the world whilst also engaged in creating that world. My descriptions of behaviour at Redland are based upon what members said and did, made available through interaction, and these descriptions, therefore, are part of the setting they describe. This feature of
accounts has been described by Garfinkel as their inevitable reflexivity. “Only if the researcher employs the same interpretive methods as participants in the setting can his account have any claim to validity.”

The social organisation of Redland School was simultaneously revealed to me and modified through my interaction with other participants. These other actors also employed an ethnographic approach commonsensically in, for example, placing people, finding out about them and understanding their actions. In this way, the fieldworker's development of relations shared the most ordinary and important features of the process engaging fellow members, understanding the interpersonal relationships of that setting. That I did come to an understanding of the setting, an understanding of interpersonal relations at Redland School, and did develop relations in the field, is not in question; what is important is the character of the procedures whereby I came to have such understandings. I obviously cannot account for exactly the manner in which matters occurred and developed, for precisely the reason that involved prospective and retrospective procedures for finding out "what's going on" and "what was happening" and being talked about. I can, however, elaborate some of the aspects of my involvement in the field which provided me with the sense and understanding of events and relationships that I came to. My fieldwork relations with other participants were marked by my involvement in particular social networks, defined by patterns of interaction. Within the school I interacted most frequently with Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings, the people I defined as "imaginative and inspiring", and it is noteworthy that these were the only members of staff I interacted with outside the school setting. Indeed Mrs Jordan introduced me to her understanding of the reality of Redland in the very early days as part of the process of inducting the new Headteacher. She was a significant other in my sense-making process and provided a listening ear to my verbal siftings. Mrs Jennings became a more significant other as the period wore on, reinforced by her appointment as Deputy Headteacher, and she became more significant as I increasingly appreciated her professional excellence and the symmetry of her perceptions with my own. The Headteacher often engaged these two actors in dialogue appropriate to the formal head-deputy relationship and the conversation inevitably elaborated into other areas of social conversation. Hitchcock describes these processes as "tellings" and "listenings in" and these conversations are not simply reports of events in Redland School, but are in themselves events within Redland School.
By engaging in this dialogue members are making sense of the affairs in which they are involved. Wieder认为，自然语言的使用，如“告诉代码”，提供意见，背后谈论，八卦等，建立了“民俗社会学”中的设置。逐渐清楚的是，我不断地被广泛参与者的解释和描述所呈现或提供，这使我了解到应该如何看待参与者的行动或参与者的行动。确实，萨维尔先生和里弗斯牧师都有一个隐含的专业义务，要理解并调和林德兰的现实，并利用“他们的理解”作为平台来帮助校长理解。信任和信心在发展与这四位“顾问”以上所列的个人的关系中是重要的考虑。这两位提供“咨询”于内部的、非正式的社会学，而两位男士则提供了更广泛的社会背景的智能。这些理解使我能从专业水平上理解机构，以常见的社会水平来互动，以专业水平来生成关于红兰的社交关系的初级数据。然而，识别这些水平是人为的装置，因为专业和日常水平被包含在研究水平中，反之亦然。日常发现是通过我的体验在我在场中并最终提供给我来生产的，这使我能够生产这个研究报告。

社会学中的大量工作是根据这种观点进行的，这种观点认为，社会学的手段和程序与常见社会所涉及的手段和程序之间有清晰的和重要的区别。然而，我的研究和田野工作的策略，它们的合法化来自成员的民粹或日常知识，而不是“科学”方法论程序。这种方法听上去似乎简单而直接，涉及很少的“工作”的常规意义上的工作，因为数据是可由研究员简单地通过存在和体验这个设置来获得的。然而，非常需要的是，为了维持和理解在该设置中所发生的行动所需要的实践和解释性努力。从1981年我到达的时候起，调查的主题被成员所审查的部分结构化和组织化了。这个问题并不在于剥离这种结构并发现“事情的真正”设置。
are", but rather a process of describing and explaining the organic structure and organisation of Redland. I was not alone in doing ethnography, since in conducting their day-to-day lives, other participants were developing and employing ethnographies, albeit unwritten ones. The aim of my research was to explicate some of the resources we all used in coming to understand, and at the same time to create, the world of Redland School.

This ethnography of Redland School is first and foremost a descriptive endeavour in which I have attempted to accurately describe and interpret the nature of the social world created by the participants involved in the institution. Like Geertz, I have aimed at "thick description", in which a wink can be distinguished from a twitch, or a parody of a wink from a wink itself. The thicker the description the more it reflects the multilayers of social meaning and behaviour. During the three years, I was in a position both to observe behaviour in its natural setting and to, directly or indirectly, elicit from the actors observed the structures of meaning which inform and texture behaviour. As Spindler suggests, the practice of ethnography enables one to discover the cultural knowledge possessed by "the natives", as well as the ways in which this cultural knowledge is used in social interaction.

My initial goal upon entering Redland was to discover what was going on there. Unlike some novitiate headteachers, I sought to put aside my own preconceptions and stereotypes about what was "going on" and to explore the setting as it was viewed and constructed by its participants. Secondly, I have attempted to make the familiar strange, in order to notice what was taken for granted by the participants and the researcher! By exploring the common place and questioning why it exists in its present form, a myriad of insights were developed. Thirdly, I have assumed that to understand why things took place as they did, I must focus upon the relationship between the setting and its context. The scope of the study was necessarily wide in order to reflect the breadth of the context which bore upon the Headteacher and the other participants. The degree to which this context could be explored was defined by the resources at my disposal. Fourthly, in conducting my research I inevitably drew upon my existing knowledge of social theory in defining what was worthy of observation. As stated earlier, I started the fieldwork with a foreshadowed notion of what to study, based upon my experience in other schools and my academic background. The general problem of deciding what to focus upon was a significant task, because I
was attempting to understand Redland in its own terms and according to its own criteria of meaningfulness. I could not fully predict in advance which aspects of the system would have significance and the kind of significance they would have. Indeed, because I assumed that particular parts of the Headteacher's existence could only be understood in the context of the working whole, I could not predict in advance precisely where I should focus. In retrospect I feel it was beneficial to begin the research without specifically predetermined categories of observation, questionnaires, precise hypotheses, and so on. Ready-made instruments and overly precise formulations of the problem could have prematurely closed off the process of discovery. The essential part of the research task was discovering what was significant, what was to count as data and what was important to observe, I was continuously involved in a process of inquiry.

My inquiry process can be represented as a series of interrelated tasks - developing and maintaining a relationship with other actors in order to generate a flow of insights; employing a variety of research techniques to collect a wide range of data; spending sufficient time in the field to ensure that one was able to observe events often enough to establish recurrent themes and to interpret contextual data with confidence. Throughout all of this, I was constantly drawing on relevant bodies of knowledge in my past experience (and my research supervisor) to move the research process forward by progressively refining and refocussing the objectives of my study. Indeed this inquiry process required the immediate presence of an ethnographer, for as a participant human being I was able to absorb a wider variety of data than any series of mechanical devices could record. This report marks the culmination of the inquiry and its descriptive style has been selected to convey to the reader the fine detail of the social action which enabled me to see and interpret the social life of Redland School.

I have already articulated the inevitable danger of making the report represent the research process as more coherent and problem-free than it actually was. Indeed, "research is not a clear-cut sequence of procedures following a neat pattern but a messy interaction between the conceptual and the empirical world." In order to aid understanding of this messy "interaction", I propose to review my research process in terms of the framework proposed by Burgess. This five-strand framework focusses upon, starting the research, gaining entry, working with informants, collecting and analysing data and some ethical problems.

-288-
The starting point of my study can be traced back to my MA research⁵, "The Man in the Principal's Office"² and my appointment to the post at Redland. "Sociologists seem to claim that they became interested in topics because they read the work of other sociologists. It is true that other people's work has an effect upon the way in which they choose a research problem; but the main set of reasons for choice is to be found in the biography of the researcher."⁵² Thus, my biography influenced my choice of research problem and imbued it with a very obvious instrumental value in professional terms. Like Hargreaves and Lacey, my research role was based upon my teacher status and was conducted from an interactionist perspective utilising a range of ethnographic methods. In this way I was able to bring together my personal experience as a school-teacher with my sociological knowledge of schools and schooling. In the framework Burgess proposes, the researcher typically moves from an initial conception of the research problem to the location of an available site. In my case the available site engendered the development of the research problem - I was immediately aware that my appointment had conferred a unique research opportunity upon me and the difficult task was to refine the problem. Indeed the ultimate refinement of my research proposal had its foundations in the common sense behaviour of every new headteacher - I had to make sense of my position in my new social world.

"Researchers are often advised that gaining entry to a research site can easily be achieved by going to the most powerful person in a social setting, who it is argued, will sponsor the researcher in that setting."⁵¹ In a formal sense I was the most powerful person in Redland School, so I sanctioned my own entry as a researcher upon an unobtrusive basis, by not informing the other intra-institutional participants of my intentions. The Director of Education's approval legitimated my behaviour in my own eyes and implicitly provided access to County Hall personnel. Notwithstanding, in terms of my entry into the culture and social relations of the Redland teaching staff I still needed a sponsor. I arrived in 1981 as "The Stranger"¹ and Mrs Jordan negotiated my induction into the social world of the staff. Likewise Reverend Rivers sponsored my entry into the social world of the Governors and to a degree the life of the village. Indeed access to each level of Redland School's social relations involved delicate negotiations and renegotiations. In these terms, gaining entry to situations, to individuals and to documentary evidence was not restricted to one person or to one period of time but involved numerous negotiations throughout the project. In fact, the requirements for access and entry to particular

-289-
social groups changed as the research progressed. As themes elaborated it became desirable to develop new contacts, for example, with representatives of County Hall and the PTA. In this way it was important to be flexible in modifying my research design and applying the principles of social research. On a day to day basis I was confronted by decisions about what to study, who to study and where to study them. The significance of these sampling decisions has already been explored at some length, however, it was not till after the conclusion of the observation period that I began to appreciate the importance of my chance selection of key informants.

In a very real sense I was my own most significant key informant, I could tell it like it really was for the Headteacher. Nevertheless, I needed to gain access to the social world of at least one member of each of the groups involved in the enterprise, in order to develop a view of the global existence of Redland School. I entered the institution as a total stranger and Mrs Jordan, as Deputy Headteacher, had a professional obligation to sponsor my entry to the social relations of the staffroom. As the longest serving member of staff, whose own children has passed through the school, and an influential member of the local community, she had a depth of perspective and was a key source of information. Furthermore, I quickly perceived her to be an outstanding classroom practitioner and this view increased the credibility of her opinions in my eyes. "Informants need to be selected for the perspective they can provide, for their knowledge of a social setting and for their abilities to guide and teach the researcher the customs that are relevant in the school situation being studied."51 Mrs Jordan fulfilled all these criteria and spent many hours of her time in conversation with the Headteacher, providing information, elaborating her own perceptions and furnishing a listening ear. Mrs Jordan was selective in her performance as a key informant, filtering her perspectives through the sieve of professionalism, but at the same time providing a richness and uniqueness of insight. She was unaware of my research undertaking and simply responded as the Deputy to the Headteacher, whereas Mr Jennings was informed during the last term of the observation period and responded upon that basis. In the early days Mrs Holmes provided an entree to the non-teaching staff group and the parent group and Mrs Comfrey also furnished data from the same two perspectives. Indeed as a gregarious socialiser, the latter constantly brought intelligence of the view of at least some of the parents and this pattern was elaborated by the election of her husband to the PTA Committee. In this way she was privy to a wide
spectrum of opinion and was happy to transmit it with a minimum of soliciting upon my part. Reverend Rivers, as already stated, sponsored my entry to the Governor group and the social world of the village. He was an immensely powerful figure, both formally and informally, and a very valuable ally. Similarly Mr Saville provided access to the County Hall machine and was prepared to answer my questions with disarming honesty. Despite the mechanisms and perspectives described in Chapter Six, I feel that I never really successfully infiltrated the pupils' reality of Redland and did not spend sufficient time or energy with potential key representatives of this group. The children in my gymnastics club provided some insights, as did the pupils I taught most frequently, however, the truth of the matter is that like most headteachers I perceived the pupils as a "situational given" and did not fully explore their consciousness or identify key informants. I would have experienced some professional unease about spending significantly longer with one child than the others, notwithstanding in retrospect I believe this was an excuse for not pursuing this area of the research with more vigour. As noted above, Mrs Holmes and Mrs Comfrey were key informants drawn from the parent group, however, neither they nor some of the other parents like Mrs Blair and Mr Holloway could be described as truly representative, as the group was so heterogeneous. Thus the perspectives provided by key informants always have to be viewed in terms of the particular standpoint of the informer.

I have sought to elaborate my data collection and analysis methodologies in a number of complementary ways throughout this chapter. Nevertheless, I still have an overwhelming sense of simplifying and impoverishing the richness and complexity of these processes in this account. At a superficial level data collection involved participant observation, supported by semi-structured and informal interviews, written and documentary data. Ongoing analysis revealed recurrent themes and the first six chapters of this account reflect the themes identified in this way. Thus the final research report is constructed from field-notes, interviews, documents and diaries and yet a very small proportion of this data found its way into this account. Indeed, the common theme throughout the observation and writing periods is that very much more data is discarded, or ignored, than is used. Another researcher may have interpreted the data contained in my diaries, files and boxes in a different fashion, however, it is difficult to quantify the influence upon this research report of the unwritten data I am carrying around inside my head. The texture and tone of my experiences at Redland are
etched into my consciousness and complicate the scientific rehearsal of my research methodology and objective, dispassionate writing. Analysis did not begin at the end of the fieldwork, or even at the end of each day, but was ongoing and developmental and was part of a typical human desire to make sense of my social environment. The interviews conducted during the final part of the field-work period and available documentary evidence provided a means of checking the observational data generated in this way. As Woods\(^{45}\) indicates, it is important to consider what should be included in the report on the basis of four criteria: validity, typicality, relevance and clarity. I have quoted extensively from field notes, interviews and documents so that informants are allowed to speak for themselves, nevertheless, only a selection of my total stock of data can be employed in this way and sampling decisions are implicit in these selections. Furthermore, some contextual data informing the account cannot be presented for public scrutiny because of the ethical considerations involved.

Ethical concerns permeate the whole research process, from my selection of Redland School as an observational setting to the lodging of this completed account in the University Library. Several hundreds of actors were unwittingly involved in this project through my collusion with the Director of Education. Indeed, only a handful of participants realise that a research project focusing upon Redland School has been undertaken and many of the actors are still performing upon that same stage. The social, temporal and physical distance from which this report has been written has tempted me to be more straightforward than I might have been if I was still a participant, nevertheless, I have consistently erred on the side of caution in the description of sensitive events. Having approached the prey unobtrusively, it seems only fair to afford actors complete protection in subjecting them to the curious stare of the world at large. Pseudonyms have obviously been used, however, it would be relatively simple to identify particular actors in such a small institution and therefore I have been particularly circumspect. In this way the account is necessarily impoverished, but the influence and complexity of events barred from the account by their sensitivity still informs the contextual perspective of the writer. Clearly this statement could be employed as a "carte blanche" for the inclusion of unsubstantiated perspectives and the justification for apparently ungrounded theory. Notwithstanding, I do not propose to pursue the policy employed by some ethnographers, such as Ball\(^{19}\) and Willis\(^{18}\), of allowing participants to comment upon this manuscript, as I believe this action may generate more ethical problems than it solves.
In concluding this chapter, I intend to re-emphasise and restate the criteria which have underpinned my methodological approach and in so doing draw heavily upon "The Criteria for a Good Ethnography of Schooling" proposed by George Spindler.50

1. My observations were contextualised. The significance of events was seen within the framework of relationships inherent in Redland School and its supporting social world.

2. Hypotheses and questions emerged as the study progressed. Judgement on the precise focus of the study was deferred until the orientation phase of the observation had been completed.

3. Observation was prolonged and repetitive, stretching over a period of three whole years. Chains of events were observed more than once.

4. The native (any participant involved with Redland School) view of reality was inferred from observation and by other forms of ethnographic inquiry, notably semi-formal and informal interviews.

5. Sociocultural knowledge held by participants makes social behaviour and communication sensible to oneself and others. Therefore a major part of the ethnographic task was to understand the sociocultural knowledge participants brought to, and generated within, the setting of Redland School.

6. Instruments, observation schedules, agendas for interviews and so forth were generated in the field as a result of observation and ethnographic enquiry.

7. A transinstitutional perspective was always present, though frequently as an unstated assumption. Institutional variation was considered to be a natural concomitant of human existence and the culture of Redland was viewed as an adaptation to the particular exigencies of life. This culture exhibited common as well as distinguishing features in relation to other schools.

8. Some of the sociocultural knowledge affecting the behaviour and interaction of participants in the enterprise was implicit or tacit, not known to some actors and known only ambiguously to others. A significant task of this ethnography was, therefore, to make
explicit what was implicit and tacit to the actors involved in Redland School.

9. Inquiry and observation were designed in such a way as to disturb as little as possible the processes of social interaction under review. Indeed by operating undercover this concern was largely nullified immediately.

10. Since the informant was the person possessing the emic, native cultural knowledge (in varying degrees of self-conscious articulation), ethnographic interviews were open-ended so as not to predetermine responses by the kinds of questions posed. The conversational management of these interviews was structured to promote the unfolding of emic cultural knowledge in its most heuristic, "natural" form.
References


I used to wonder why so many of the 'successful' primary headteachers I knew took to one of several clearly defined courses three or four years into their headships. One course turned sharply sideways, taking the headteacher to another school, a decision rationalized as a desire for a new challenge. Another course began to slope downwards into complacency - slowly at first, but the gradient soon became steeper. A third veered away from schools altogether into the rarefied atmosphere of the advisory service, union politics or teaching training. The illusion was of an upwards slope, but in effect the track soon appeared to bog them down in muddy fields of bureaucracy.

Three years into my first headship, I understand what happens. The truth is that a headteacher can manage the superficial revamping of a school if he or she is sharp enough to define priorities at an early stage and pace the instigation of changes so that staff, children and the head's own health remain intact.

The race is run something like this. The environment is the first priority for changes - corridors are cleared of unsightly old furniture; next, and more daringly, the classrooms get the same treatment; tubs of flowers for the entrance hall are hired from the local parks department; cloakrooms are stripped of ancient coat hooks and transformed into libraries, craft areas, resource banks.

Ancient textbooks and contents of store cupboards - birds' nests, shells, oil-cloth maps of the British Empire, a thousand lined exercise books with musty yellow pages and all the paraphernalia reflecting your predecessor's siege mentality - all those are ruthlessly spirited away in black bags during half-term holidays when tetchy members of staff are not around to protest.

Meanwhile, curriculum guidelines are drawn up at endless staff meetings, the emphasis swinging wildly according to the strengths of the headteacher and staff and pressures from the local authority which is, in turn, under pressure from DES directives, and applied by the hapless advisory staff. The staff are 'democratically' involved in changes, even when they protest, because all the management and in-service courses tell us that this is the only way to effective change.
Willing and unwilling staff are despatched to observe good practice in other schools and coerced into attending workshops and courses and into experimenting with new resources. The parents are invited to evening meetings to approve changes already firmly instigated by the headteacher and staff in hollow gestures of consultation. Governing bodies too are informed retrospectively of fundamental changes in curriculum policy: a paragraph buried among the complaints about leaking roofs and broken boundary railings in the headteacher's report. It is all beginning to look pretty good.

The illusion is that at some point you will reach a finishing line and triumph. But three years on, the real problems loom large ahead and you suddenly realize that the Beecher's Brook of effecting change in the school is the area about which management courses tell you little or nothing - that is making real, rather than superficial, changes in classroom practice ....... Rather than sit back and wait passively for the next brickbat, teachers must be encouraged to study their own and colleagues' classrooms and think about how to improve inadequate practice. But it is at this crucial point that many head teachers lose their nerve, drop the reins and dismount.  

Angela Anning's provocative and sardonic article furnishes one possible interpretation of my three years at Redland School. I prefer to view my move to "the rarefied atmosphere of the advisory service" as a logical step forward in my career development rather than as an indication of loss of nerve. Notwithstanding, this change in my personal circumstances has fundamentally altered my perception of Redland School, as I am now socially, physically and mentally distanced from the field setting. The ramifications of this distancing effect are difficult to quantify, on the one hand the ethnography is the richer for my more detached and clearer perspective, while on the other, emerging themes and perceptions could not be followed up after the conclusion of the observation period. An additional benefit of my reincarnation as an adviser has been the opportunity to develop induction programmes for new headteachers and to closely monitor the progress of twenty such colleagues. Working vicariously in this way provides limitless possibilities for the triangulation of my own research and the commonality of recurring themes is extremely high. My changed role has allowed me to observe parallel social processes to those enacted at Redland from a different standpoint and has thereby broadened and refined my perspective.
My "view from the inside" has been rehearsed at length in the foregoing text and a summary of its construction should provide a useful starting point for a new primary headteacher. As Chapter One indicates every new headteacher is faced with the immediate problem of assessing the quality of his inheritance. Redland School was a unique aggregation of people, material provision and resources, reflecting particular historical, geographical, educational and social considerations. In this way I did not enter a neutral social arena, but rather an ongoing organisation whose dynamic it was my function to discover. The human and non-human resources inherent in the institution were to provide the building blocks for any future structures and the initial task was to discover their exact dimensions. Anning amusingly alludes to the clandestine activities taking place during half-terms involving black bags and I believe my emphasis on enhancing the material environment was critical to the quality of future developments. The appointment of an efficient caretaker and the collusion of chance circumstances were instrumental in conspiring to create a favourable environment for the management of change. For example, the long-awaited re-surfacing of the playground during my first year was perceived by a variety of actors as proof of my ability "to get things done". Clearly the importance of these image-creating phenomena should not be underestimated by a novitiate headteacher.

The modification of non-human resources is an obvious starting point for a new headteacher, the grand tidy-up, the purchase of plants and the redesignation of certain rooms should prove largely uncontentious provided it is handled in a sensitive fashion. As Chapter Two illustrates, however, as soon as the nettle of curriculum change and classroom practice is grasped, the social situation becomes more complicated. Curriculum development can best be understood in terms of a continuous process of bargaining and coalition among individuals. Some coalitions turn out to be viable, at least on a short term basis, and give members the power to dominate the development process. In fact, the resulting aims and objectives of Redland School could be viewed as a reflection of the identity of the dominant institutional coalition. Chapter Two documents the Headteacher's attempts to impose his definition of social reality upon other participants in the light of his legitimate claim to institutional power. Mrs Jordan and Mrs Jennings were willing conspirators in this process, as the Headteacher largely bolstered their view of social reality and implicitly offered the added incentive of future promotion. The instrumental orientation of all these three actors was reinforced by promotion during the three year period.
Conflict is an obvious concomitant of attempts to impose a particular view of social reality and Chapter Three rehearses the thorny problems of conflict management facing the headteacher. I commenced the observation period with a naive belief in social equilibrium and an overwhelming desire to avoid conflict at all costs. The case-studies graphically illustrate the headteacher's man-in-the-middle position and the almost unavoidable nature of conflict. Indeed, an element of conflict is positively desirable and can be employed creatively in the quest for institutional development. Furthermore, my personal view of conflict management underwent some radical changes during the three years. I abandoned the maximisation of individual happiness in favour of maximising relevance and ultimately maximising efficiency.

Notwithstanding I consider myself to be a disciple of the "human relations" school of management and consequently strove towards a dimly perceived Utopia involving institutional efficiency and participant satisfaction. Conflict biographies could never be completely eradicated from participants' memories and if they had been allowed to develop they could have led to a major disjuncture in social relationships. The caretaker's interaction with the teachers exemplified the destructive potential of unmanaged conflict and my intervention was calculated to prevent total polarisation and breakdown in working relationships.

Redland School is not an island, but is an interlocking part of a much broader supporting social system and as such is sensitive to the influence of extra-institutional personnel. This is the unifying theme explored in Chapter Four. Indeed this chapter locates Redland School within its broader social context in order to identify the external influences which impinge upon its internal operation. Clearly the supporting influence structure has dynamic and organic qualities and the degree of influence exerted by particular groups and individuals varied throughout the three years. Nevertheless, I have elaborated the influences the Headteacher perceived to be significant and have documented his reaction to them. Responsive accountability dictates that the headteacher carefully manages the impressions of the institution, and himself, available to the external audience of the school and this process is the substantive focus of the following chapter.

Chapter Five illustrates the strategies employed by the Headteacher to influence significant others within the broader social context in which Redland School is located. The construction of an institutional and personal image is a key feature in the interaction of the Headteacher...
with external actors interested in the enterprise. The Headteacher's performance was calculated to convey the impression that he was successfully discharging his duties and living up to the ideal fiction the audience conceived to be his role. Reputation is a key concept in shaping parents' views of the school and their reaction to its principal representatives - thus impression management is a critical concern for any headteacher. The interactive nature of personal and institutional reputation also has obvious instrumental ramifications for future promotion prospects and this was an additional motivation for projecting a positive image of Redland School to the widest possible audience. The impression management strategies employed cannot be represented as coherent or carefully planned, in fact, they were "ad hoc" and opportunistic. Notwithstanding, I believe for a headteacher to ignore a positive presentation of self would be perilous oversight.

The Headteacher's view from the inside provided in Chapter Six represents an attempt to monitor the efficacy of my self-presentation strategies. In short, how do other participants in the enterprise perceive me? It is axiomatic that there were as many views of the Headteacher as there were actors involved in the social drama. Notwithstanding, I may have responded on several occasions to what I mistakenly perceived to be a group view transmitted by an individual representative. In reality the identification of group views is scientifically complex and requires a more coherent and systematic approach than I was able to undertake. In this way I may have responded to group perceptions that did not actually exist apart from in my own mind. Nevertheless the headteacher is confronted by an amazing array of groups and individuals exerting conflicting and contradictory demands upon him. His existence is complicated and complex and therefore it is incredibly difficult to fully capture the quality and texture of how it feels to him on the inside.

In Chapter Seven I have addressed some of the methodological considerations inherent in my research undertaking. "The test of ethnography is whether it enables one to anticipate and interpret what goes on in a society or social group as appropriately as one of its members."² I have endeavoured to provide the reader with an automatic entree to the social life of Redland School, furnishing a wealth of cultural data which can be interpreted and reinterpreted. Nevertheless the human behaviour I have described represents my personal, selective record of events and cannot be represented as either objective or impartial. "The culture of any society is made up of the concepts,
beliefs, and principles of action and organization that an ethnographer
has found could be attributed successfully to the members of that society
in the context of his dealings with them.\textsuperscript{3} Though "successful
attribution" is hardly a rigorous criterion for separating thick
description from thin, Goodenough does remind us that the locus of
culture lies within ethnographic concerns: it is a construct of the
social scientist, not a directly observable phenomenon. The adequacy of
my resulting ethnographic account can be assessed at two levels; firstly
by the academic community in terms of its scientific credibility, and
secondly by other insiders to headteacher subculture in regard to whether
it actually does tell it like it really is.

In reviewing the scientific value of the total research undertaking and
its contribution to the corpus of educational knowledge, it could be
argued that from the outset the paradigmatic standpoint and
methodological strategy adopted cast doubt on the reliability, validity
and generalisability of any conclusions. Nevertheless the overriding aim
of the study was to tell it like it really is for the headteacher — the
view from the inside. The duality of the headteacher-researcher role
facilitated this aim, providing an almost unique opportunity for the
participant observer to walk in the headteacher's shoes and to "truly
enter the life, mind and definitions of the other."\textsuperscript{4} Thus the
researcher experienced the "reality" of being a headteacher in a total,
unmediated fashion. It is a central assumption of interactionism that
people actively make sense of their environment, it does not simply
impress itself upon them and this was true for both the headteacher and
the researcher. Indeed the term ethogenic is "an adjective which
expresses a view of a human being as a person, that is, a plan making,
self-monitoring agent, aware of goals and deliberately considering the
best ways to achieve them."\textsuperscript{5}

The strength of my participant observational approach resided in the fact
that my duality of function enabled me to become well acquainted with the
totality and minutiae of the school. I could legitimately and
unselfconsciously relate to the myriad of participants involved in the
enterprise and very significantly was able to "become familiar with the
undertow which is an important determinant of organisational
character."\textsuperscript{6} Furthermore, my headteacher-researcher roles were
mutually facilitating, each sharpening the perspective of the other. At
the commencement of the observation period I was a "stranger" and yet my
institutional status conferred instant access to a wealth of normative
data which may have been unavailable to any other researcher. This early "strangeness" facilitated the construction of detached, objective assessments of the establishment and its inhabitants, employing the criteria Waters has suggested. This data provided the substantive basis for Chapter One. As the months passed, however, the detachment and objectivity of the Headteacher were eroded by virtue of his increased involvement in "the action". The mechanisms involved are self-evident, the Headteacher initiates courses of action to which he has an obvious commitment and subsequent assessments of the efficacy of these schemes is necessarily biased and subjective. An interesting aspect of this study is the steady chronological progression of the participant observer's views across the objective-subjective continuum, as my familiarity with the school and particular individuals increased. The assessment of the relative validity of data generated at any particular point on this continuum is a vexed problem and ultimately, it becomes a function of the paradigmatic persuasion of the assessor. Notwithstanding, the aim of my interpretive methodological approach was not to generate broadly generalisable statements, but rather to illuminate the workings of one idiosyncratic educational establishment and the culture which supports it. "The goal of ethnography is to combine the view of an insider with that of an outsider to describe a social setting. The resulting description is expected to be deeper and fuller than that of the ordinary outsider, and broader and less culture-bound than that of the ordinary insider." The degree to which this goal has been achieved is for the reader to assess!

Professional, legal and ethical considerations have conspired to preclude the publication of certain contentious issues and therefore a slightly unbalanced picture may have been presented by excluding some of the more negative elements recorded in my field notes. In fact, it is noteworthy that in the main only one version of events is represented in this account - namely that of the Headteacher. No claims for the representativeness or generalisability of these views can be made, however, the intention from the outset was to present the Headteacher's view of the three years. Indeed these views could be criticised as subjective, biased, impressionistic and lacking in quantifiable scientific measures and the possibility of his false consciousness could reflect a manifest weakness in choosing myself as the research instrument. Nevertheless, these perspectives were very real and valid for me and it is axiomatic that I acted on the basis of these very perceptions. Harre supports this belief, asserting that "the ethogenic
approach is founded upon the belief that a human being tends to be the kind of person his language, his traditions, his tacit and explicit knowledge tell him he is. My explicit knowledge told me I was a headteacher first and a researcher second and I unashamedly operated on the basis that professional considerations always took precedence over research concerns. This operational rule could be viewed as contaminating the purity of the research.

One very obvious conclusion at this stage of the research undertaking is that the project has generated more questions than answers. A number of fruitful areas for future research emanate from the foregoing pages and a number of directions could be pursued in greater depth. The following suggestion are not intended to be exhaustive but are simply designed to flag my personal research interests.

1. Anning believes that the real challenge to the headteacher arrives at the end of the first three years. "Confronting classroom-based issues forces a thinking school to look beyond the cosmetic changes in the school environment, resources and content-based curriculum." What would have happened during the next three years at Redland? My views of individuals and groups had begun to harden, just as their views of me were progressively based upon proliferating case-law and increasing familiarity. Addressing the modification of classroom practice is a potentially costly business in emotional terms and would have proved an interesting case-study. Indeed a number of areas of interest could have been pursued in more depth by extending the observation period or by returning to the field setting after a specified time lag. The management of change is an issue which could be usefully explored over at least seven years, the period of time a pupil spends in the school.

Clearly none of these possibilities are any longer available to me at Redland School and the investment of a researcher's time necessary to replicate and extend the project in the above ways would be prohibitive. It would, however, be possible for new headteachers to develop an action research project which could be sustained beyond a three year period. The justification for action research can be stated briefly. By investigating and reflecting upon their own practice, headteachers can increase their understanding of the school. Understanding derived from action research can inform future decision making and be acted upon. In
f) Life on the inside. The role of the headteacher is extensively researched, documented with the exception of Wolcott and tell it like it really is. In a school environment, the headteacher may be required to be a builder, a public relations officer, a teacher, an evangelist, a conflict management counsellor, a performer, a negotiator, a speaker - the list is endless. Making in persona requires flexibility, energy and research actually extremely helpful in encouraging other staff feelings, in order to enhance and strengthen.

9) Managing change. Managing change and experienced headteachers. Ultimately altering the classroom practice of primary education are conspicuously few research along the lines explored by the primary education would be of inestimable value to newly-arrived headteachers.

These seven themes could be researched in a setting, or they could be pursued in another setting in order to establish commonality. I have two further pilot research studies deriving from these themes. The first one involves a group of management trainees working with a group of management trainers in a management development programme design and research. A second group of ten headteachers and myself upon the management of change in primary education projects will generate data with which to inform practice.

3. The original conception of my research project involved an external other in order to establish broader perspectives. The action research strategy be elaborated by involving an adviser or the process. This technique has been used by Armstrong and Rowland and the dialogue of the participant observer and the detached researcher.

addition to increasing understanding and informing decision making, action research may also bring about a modification or elaboration of management theory. Research, in this respect at least, may be seen as an ongoing professional duty. In short, "action research is nothing if not eclectic."10

My current professional role offers ample opportunities to encourage people to take up this research challenge.

2. A number of clearly defined themes have emerged from my research project. The following list provides starting points for further study in a range of other settings.

a) Assessing the headteacher's inheritance. The development of a framework, or universally applicable template, designed to reveal the "state of play" in a school, as precursor to future action, would be of inestimable value to newly-arrived headteachers.

b) Curriculum review, school-based INSET and staff development. The focus of Chapter Two provides a fertile area for further research and development, with a heavy emphasis on "process" as well as content.

c) Managing conflict. The value and dangers of conflict merit close scrutiny and elaboration. Guidelines for handling conflict and the coherent development of conflict management skills would be particularly pertinent for newly appointed headteachers.

d) The responsive school. How responsive is the school to the influences of its supporting social network? How responsive should it be? The mechanisms involved in answering these questions have obvious ramifications for all those involved with education.

e) Constructing an institutional and a self image. Is it amoral to consciously construct a personal and institutional image? Is it sensible not to? The headteacher is the public relations representative of the school and his performances advertise the professional achievements of the human resources placed in his charge. Generating confidence is a valuable attribute for any leader. How is a positive image successfully created?
refining instrument. A modified version of this approach could involve the headteacher and a member of the teaching staff. Indeed I would have been eager to involve Mrs Jennings in any extension to my research at Redland School.

4. "This current debate over qualitative and quantitative methods as it is coming more and more to be carried out, is obscuring issues and unnecessarily creating schisms between the two method types, when it should be building bridges and clarifying the genuine disagreements that deserve attention." Ethnographers have traditionally differentiated their methods from those of quantitative researchers and yet there is massive scope for the triangulation of research findings generated by the two traditions. I have little personal interest in generating theory which can be empirically tested by large scale questionnaires or similarly objective instruments. My excitement lies in employing the techniques used by quantitative researchers to enhance internal validity, external validity and construct validity in an ethnographic context. Notwithstanding my personal research prejudices, quantitative techniques could be employed to test the broad applicability of my grounded theory.

My present role as an adviser responsible for a large number of primary schools confers both the opportunity and the imperative to pursue at least some of these directions for future research, using my view from the inside of Redland as the embarkation point.

In seeking to draw together the disparate threads of this whole research project, the common factor running through the observation period, the identification of themes, the writing of the research report and the follow up of future lines of investigation, is myself. As the research instrument and the researcher, my presence pervades every page of this study. In the light of the massive amounts of time and energy I have invested in this project, what conclusions can I draw about myself as the headteacher of Redland School? As Wolcott suggested, I was a man who was obliged "to wear many masks". The masks included those donned as part of my impression management strategy and those forced upon me by the expectations of others. Each of the groups identified in Chapter One required a particular mask and sometimes a variety of masks were useful in dealing with different members of the same group. The variety act involving the impressionist in changing hats at a frantic pace is
analogous with the way in which I perceived my frequent changes of persona - in a few hours I might be called upon to be a strict disciplinarian to pupils, a charming welcomer of new parents, a counsellor to staff, a competent administrator and so on. Inevitably the impressionist might have some difficulty in identifying which part of his act reflects his true self and I experienced some real problems in deciding who I was. The N.A.H.T. Survey reflects the lack of clarity about the headteachers' existence and the hidden agenda of almost every headteachers' meeting and seminar I attended during the three years involved the search for an identity. Clearly the stage of the headteacher's career in a particular school may influence his view of himself and the autonomy conferred upon him in Leicestershire largely allowed him to define his own role. In this way I had to create "the headteacher" for both personal and public consumption. "There is the expectation that he will be a leader ...... and he is able to personalize his leadership role and adopt a style which suits both his personality and situation." I began with some hazy notion of developing a participative management style, shades of Anning's article, and a strong child-centred view of primary education. The "wait and see" strategy during the early weeks, counselled by experienced colleagues, could not be fully operationalised as an array of varying characters sought to probe my long-term intentions and short-term responses to their actions. From day one, I had to reveal my educational philosophy and the kind of headteacher I intended to be, otherwise as Barry and Tye suggest, conclusions would have been inferred by case-law and default. Initially I saw myself as a leader rather than a manager and Wallace's distincction between the two seems useful in this context - "a manager is distinct from a leader: the manager's word is backed by force; the leader's by the willingness of persons to follow." My view of leadership was predicated upon the belief that I could win all the other participants in the enterprise over to my way of thinking about education. I visualised a situation in which I would behave in the style Wragg recommends, "it is like the traditional way Viennese conductors have of standing before their orchestra, violin in hand, joining in the playing and occasionally waving their bow in time to the music." In practice I believe I was progressively forced to reveal more of the iron fist in the velvet glove as the months and years passed. This was particularly true in my dealings with certain members of the non-teaching staff and parent groups. In short I became more of a manager than a leader in certain situations.
In reflecting upon my headmastership it is apparent that I was called upon to operationalise a variety of management styles depending upon the particular circumstances under consideration. The underlying philosophical basis of my approach was McGregor's Theory Y\textsuperscript{20}, that the expenditure of physical and mental effort is natural, especially in attaining objectives to which a person is committed. McGregor also suggests that people will not only accept responsibility but will actually seek it. The behaviour of Mrs Jordan, Mrs Jennings, Reverend Rivers and hundreds of children to name some examples, illustrated the validity of this contention. Indeed my view of child-centred education somewhat laboriously translated itself into a universal person centred approach, predicated upon the notion that each actor had the resources inside himself for personal growth and development. My preferred management style could thus be broadly characterised as a "human relations" approach, which focusses upon people rather than processes and "is concerned with the complex of human relationships, particularly interpersonal relationships in an organisation."\textsuperscript{21} In consequence I sought to create the right conditions for the realisation of Theory Y.

Another powerful theoretical influence upon my educational thinking was Greenfield's "radical alternative."\textsuperscript{22} He views organisations "not as structures subject to universal laws, but as cultural artefacts dependent upon the scientific meaning and intention of people within them."\textsuperscript{22}

The fundamental contention of phenomenology is that there are no fixed ways of construing the social world around us and this whole text is littered with examples which graphically illustrate this belief. In applying this perspective my first task involved mapping individual versions of reality and thereafter enhancing their awareness of what could be achieved through concerted social action. This approach was very successful with the teaching staff, children and governors, but somewhat less efficacious with sections of the non-teaching staff and parents. Redland School involved a continuous process of bargaining and coalition among individuals, an organisation incorporating a multiplicity of ends and uncertain means of achieving them. To improve the effectiveness of the organisation, the Headteacher had to make "his own synthesis of theory pragmatically, giving priority to the determination of needs he defined within a particular situation."\textsuperscript{23}

During the three years I developed into the headteacher I wanted to be and other people allowed me to be. Clearly every headteacher's existence includes a number of common core elements but these are prioritised by the individual in relation to his own criteria of relevance. The role I
developed at Redland was at one level particularistic and idiosyncratic, a function of the ongoing interaction and negotiation between myself and the social setting. The autonomy and role-breadth I enjoyed reflected the Authority's ethos and the fact that "there is no agreed body of knowledge, no blue-print for success or manual which can be thumbed through to discover a useful panacea." A valid question at this point is, "How well prepared was I to take on a headteacher's role and how much on the job training did I receive?" Presumably I was appointed on the basis of teaching qualifications, experience and personality. I had been very fortunate in being the deputy of a luminary headteacher who had initiated me into the mystique of running a primary school. Notwithstanding, most of the headteacher's complex role still had to be learned on the job, tempering my knowledge of management theory with pragmatism and common sense. I was probably better prepared than most new headteachers! My induction to headship reinforced my belief in experiential learning; a "learning process in which the pupil reflects on his or her learning." The vital factors in my experiential learning were:

1. The learning was self-initiated and therefore the sense of discovery came from within.

2. I was totally involved in the learning event and could exercise some control over it.

3. Experiential learning was pervasive, affecting my behaviour, attitudes and even my personality.

4. It was self-evaluated.

This research project exercised a self-discipline and academic rigour in this process which otherwise might not have been present.

In essence my headship skills were self-taught, although the two day induction conference during my second term did provide a mechanism for the transmission of "conventional wisdom" by senior colleagues. Conventional wisdom "is transmitted verbally, and for the most part, informally to succeeding generations. It is an oral literature." This conference and other seminars may not have provided training in a range of appropriate skills or "know how" but they did furnish the opportunity to increase my "know who". In management parlance this
"networking" involves individuals in building up a range of useful contacts and for a new headteacher it is vital to know who to ring when the roof is leaking. More importantly my success in generating contacts had very important ramifications for the school and myself.

The appointment system and induction programme I was involved in, suggest that the whole exercise is predicated upon a great act of faith and a measure of calculated risk. There was no formal preparation-for-headship programme or ongoing monitoring of my performance. County Hall and the Governors relied on negative parental or staff feedback to alert them to any underperformance and as none was forthcoming, I was assumed to be "doing a good job". In general terms I was presumed to be well prepared for the post by my successful deputy-headship in an excellent school and by my academic studies. Indeed the official DES view is that "it is no longer possible to master the skills of headship only through day-to-day experience of schools, indispensable though this is. The findings of modern research and the changes that are taking place in educational thought and practice demand consideration, and require of the headteacher a willingness to learn through determined study." My theoretical background was sound, but I lacked specific training in pragmatic management skills, the translation of theory into practice. Clearly this is an area of headship training I can address in my present post.

Undoubtedly my academic background did increase my professional competence, develop my capacity for analytical thought and improve my interpersonal awareness, but most importantly it enhanced my general confidence and self-image. "A strong and positive self-concept is conducive to healthy growth and necessary if satisfying relationships are to be formed." Furthermore my academic repertoire furnished a valuable tool in my dealings with other actors, for when in difficulty I could always resort to "blinding people with science". Obviously this on-going research project helped to refine my clarity of purpose, while at the same time broadening my perspective. It made the taken-for-granted problematic and sought to disentangle why issues were problematic. The study also made me more sensitive to the minutiae of institutional life and led me to discoveries about myself. I was amazed when I finally realised the magnitude of my authority and institutional power. "While others seem aware of the status, rights and privileges of the headteacher, he may be quite unconscious of their full import." I was surprised to realise that I consciously manipulated people in quite a Machiavellian fashion and participation sometimes degenerated into
getting other actors to agree to my pre-determined conclusions. Indeed my management style on occasions veered wildly into a very despotic mode and I was capable of being much more forceful and demanding than I had hitherto believed.

An objective appraisal of my personal and the institution's performance over the three years is an immensely complex exercise and largely beyond the scope of this study. Notwithstanding, my view of my personal effectiveness is within the parameters of the project and germane to this section of the text. My implicit success criterion from the outset was to use my career at Redland as a springboard to future promotion — in these terms the three years spent as a headteacher were extremely effective. I wanted to modify the learning experiences of the children in my charge and the curriculum was substantially modified to this end. The teachers responded to my leadership with varying degrees of commitment and all of them to a greater or lesser extent modified their classroom practice. The ethos and atmosphere of the school became more child-centred and the institution generally became more responsive to external influences. I was fortunate to inherit some very capable, and in two cases, quite outstanding, teachers. The governors, parents and advisory service were all very supportive in their own way and furnished me with encouragement and support. The modified particulars for applicants issued upon my resignation revealed the positive County Hall view of my headmastership, elaborated in Chapter Six. Pupils did comparatively well upon transfer to High School and the incidence of parental dissatisfaction was low. In fact, I received very little negative feedback during the three years and a variety of positive comments bolstered my self-image. My sternest critic was myself. I became frustrated by my inability to modify classroom practice as quickly as I would have liked and to find permanent solutions to recurring problems. I also had a very uneasy feeling that someday, somebody would discover I was not actually doing such a good job as I had hitherto managed to suggest. This slight insecurity spurred me on to greater efforts. Indeed my wife frequently asserts that headship irreparably altered my carefree nature and turned me into a person constantly thinking about school. Undoubtedly I over-identified with the school, it became an extension of myself and dominated my waking, and sometimes my sleeping hours. My "role set" was enormous and I visualised my position as being "at the centre of a web of relationships." This role set included all the groups identified in Chapter One and my "basic problem was one of integrating the role expectations of all the
The overriding aim for my headmasterhip was to create the conditions for self development in others, with a strong emphasis on a person-centred approach. Thus my management objective was to nurture "the development of a facilitative role and the creation of a climate which allows others to develop - teachers, pupils, and those who wish to be involved." 28

The research project is finished, five years have elapsed since its inception, the report has been written and my view from the inside expressed in full. These five years can best be summarised by the title of an otherwise unhelpful article by Louis M Smith, "accidents, anomalies, serendipity, and making the common place problematic." 29 I have lived this project for a sizeable chunk of my life and my feelings are encapsulated in this unsettling but nonetheless consoling quotation from Clifford Geertz, concerning the challenge of the genuine ethnographic venture:

"Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere with the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right." 30
References


BIBLIOGRAPHY


-324-


Kirkman S "A never-ending struggle to keep up appearances" *Times Educational Supplement* 7.12.84.


Wragg T "Resort to the desperate" The Headteachers' Review. Summer 1981.
