Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - A Study of the Relationship between Foundational Values and Prevailing Practices.

Charles Francis Roy Justins

B.A. Dip.Ed. M.Ed. (Sydney), B.D. (Melbourne).

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Education

School of Educational Leadership
Faculty of Education

Statement of Sources

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics Committees (where required).

_____

Charles Justins

Tuesday, 2 April 2002

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to a number of people who have provided significant assistance in the preparation of this thesis:

> To the many pioneers and early leaders of Christian Parent Controlled Schools who willingly gave of their time for surveys, interviews and in other conversations. I have a profound respect and appreciation for the passion, strength and selflessness that you have applied in support of parent controlled Christian schooling in Australia.

> To the Principals, staff, senior students and parents of the 12 CPC schools across Australia who were willing to give of their time to share their perspectives through surveys and interviews.

> To Stuart Fowler for his time and hospitality (thank-you Joy) and for his willingness on many occasions to apply his deep insights and broad scholarship to issues that arose in this study.

> To my supervisors – Professor Tony d'Arbon for his warmth, humour and encouragement, for his generous ecumenical spirit and for his wise and penetrating critique and Dr Shukri Sanber for his availability, patience and his astute analysis and assessment.

> To my daughters, Alison, Naomi and Ellen and my other 'children' – Linda, Phil, Greer, and Daniel and (and the 'young adults'!) – thank-you for journeying with me.

> I reserve my greatest thanks for my wife Pam whose graciousness, generosity, love and support provided the framework without which I could not have embarked on, nor completed this project.

Dedication

Parents who ... are earnestly convinced that the tenor of education at existing schools is un-Christian must not be hindered, directly or indirectly, from providing their children with the kind of education they believe they can justify before God. ... the moment you provide education, there is rearing there, which is based on some moral doctrine, rooted in some religion or in none.

(Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer, 1801 - 1876)

There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: 'Mine!'

(Abraham Kuyper at the opening of the Free University of Amsterdam in October 1880)

It is for this and for no other purpose that we establish our Christian day school movement. Education ought to be Christian education, ought to acknowledge the Cross and the Crown of Jesus Christ, and ought to prepare for his return, so that generations come and go, but the church remains and Christian service and Christian life and Christian culture and Christian learning remain.

(Rev. J. Deenick - opening address at the inaugural meeting of the National Union of Parent Controlled Christian Schools at Blacktown, NSW, January, 1966)

As educators, consciously or unconsciously, we nurture children in a vision of life. Are we to lead children to a full and undiminished knowledge of God's creation, in all its many aspects, or will we be satisfied with a reduction of this experience?

(Doug Blomberg, 1980, p.50).

Christian educators ought to be trailblazers in tackling the issues thrown up by the changing social environment rather than mere modifiers of trails blazed by others. ... Our calling as Christian educators is to develop a Gospel-enlightened understanding of the issues that face all schools in today's changing societies, so that we may set educational directions that ensure a humanity-fulfilling experience for students in the schools of today and tomorrow.

(Stuart Fowler, 1998, p.183).

Abstract

Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) Schools, which commenced in the 1960s, are a relatively small, but growing component of the non-government schooling sector in Australia. In 2001, they enrolled over 22 000 students in 85 schools. Very little research has been conducted on the values and practices of CPC schools and while these schools frequently assert that they promote explicitly Christian values, their foundational values have not previously been identified or recorded.

This research identifies the key foundational values which are characteristic of these schools and examines the extent to which these values continue to influence the prevailing practices of these schools. Consideration is given to the implications of the relationship between foundational values and prevailing practices for the identity, development and leadership of CPC schools in Australia. The ability of these schools to articulate their foundational values and consider their prevailing practices in the light of these values should enhance their ability to understand their heritage, assess their current situation and plan their future.

The research found that in general, prevailing practices in these schools give faithful expression to the foundational values; however, the research also identified a number of areas where CPC schools struggle to engage consistently with these values.

As a result of this study, recommendations are proposed to assist national and school-based leadership in their strategic planning for the maintenance of these values and the future of these schools.

Glossary and Acronyms

➢ **ACE** schools – Accelerated Christian Education schools. These schools were based on an American system which employed an individualised classroom structure and programmed learning booklets. They commenced in Australia in 1976 and grew to as many as 120 schools in the early 1980s. Few of these schools now exist and in recent years, the ACE organisation, (under the auspices of Southern Cross Educational Enterprises in Australia since 1997) has tended to focus greater attention on the home schooling market. See also page 22.

➢ **Amillennial** – those Christians who do not believe that the Bible warrants the expectation of a millennium, either before or after, the advent of Christ and that the present age, or reality will be followed by the Kingdom of God in its eternal form.

➢ **Anglican** – In Australia, the 'Church of England' became the 'Church of England in Australia and Tasmania' in 1872, the 'Church of England in Australia' in 1962 and then the 'Anglican Church' in 1981. The term 'Anglican' was used in Australia as early as 1846 to describe those belonging to the Church of England. (Source: Librarian, Moore Theological College, Sydney, November 2001)

➢ **ARP** – The Anti-Revolutionary Party. A political party established in 19th Century Netherlands by Van Prinsterer (Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer) and subsequently led by Abraham Kuyper. With Kuyper as leader, the ARP formed government in coalition with the Catholics in 1902.

➢ **Board** – Most CPC schools have a school board, but some schools which are part of a network of CPC schools have a site-based council with a board that has overarching responsibility for the system of schools. For the purposes of this research, and in order to preserve anonymity, the term board will cover both school boards and school councils.

➢ **Calvinist** – An adherent of the Christian tradition founded by John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvinism currently finds expression in Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, both of which are found in many countries. Some Anglican (Church of England) churches have also been significantly influenced by Calvinism.

➢ **Christian** – See notes on 'CPCS Ltd'.

- **Church of England** – See 'Anglican'.

- **CCSL** – Christian Community Schools Limited. See page 24.

- **CPCS Ltd** – Christian Parent Controlled Schools Ltd. In 1988 the movement changed its name from Parent Controlled Christian Schools to Christian Parent Controlled Schools. Throughout the study, these schools will be described as CPC schools for the sake of simplicity. The importance of both 'parent' and 'control' in the title will be considered in Chapter 4 in particular. In the context of the constituencies that comprise these CPC school communities, it would be recognised that Christians come from many traditions and denominations, but when members of these communities talk of employing a 'Christian' teacher for example, it would generally be understood to mean a teacher who attended a Protestant church on a regular basis and believed that Jesus was the unique Son of God

- **CSAQ** – Christian Schools Association Queensland. In 2001, CSAQ had 42 affiliated schools with over 18 500 students.

- **CSI** – Christian Schools International. CSI is the North American equivalent of CPCS Ltd.

- **Evangelical** – an evangelical Christian gives concentrated attention to the Bible as a guide to conviction and behaviour (Fackre, 1983, pp. 191-192).

- **Focus** (or *Education in Focus*) **Conferences** – held particularly for teachers, generally biennially with an emphasis on educational philosophy from a Reformed perspective and organised by CPCS Ltd. The most recent conferences have been called *Transforming Education* rather than *Focus*.

- **NICE** – The National Institute for Christian Education is the tertiary institute for teacher training of CPCS Ltd. NICE offers external studies in education at Masters and Graduate Diploma level and is accredited through the Department of Education and Training of the NSW State Government.

- **NUPCCS** – National Union of Parent Controlled Christian Schools. (The name of the national organisation from 1966 to 1987).

- **Premillennial** – The view that Christ's return will be followed by a thousand years of various activities on the earth.

- **Protestant** – a term applied initially to Lutherans, but eventually to all adherents of the Reformation. Protestants are commonly regarded as all those Christians who are neither Roman Catholic nor Orthodox.

- **RCA** – Reformed Churches of Australia. The RCA was established by Dutch migrants and is therefore often incorrectly referred to as the 'Dutch Reformed Church'.

- **Reformed** – The term 'Reformed' is used nearly synonymously with 'Calvinist' in this study. In the Netherlands at the time of the large migration to Australia in the 1950s, the Hervormde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) was the state church and was regarded as more liberal than the Gereformeerde Kerken (Reformed Churches). 'Reformed' is preferred to 'reformed' throughout this study in order to avoid confusion with the more commonly used adjective.

- **Schools** – In Australia, a <u>public</u> school is the equivalent of a <u>government</u> or a <u>state</u> school. These schools are funded by government and therefore, essentially free to parents. <u>Private</u> schools are equivalent to <u>non-government</u> schools and are partially funded by both federal and state governments. Substantial amounts are also raised from parents through fees in most private schools.

- **Themelic** – A term devised by Long (1996), on the basis of the koine Greek, "themelios" which means "Christ-centred" and used to describe the new low-fee, conservative Protestant schools in Australia.

Contents

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

CHAPTER FOUR

Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values

CHAPTER FIVE

Christian Parent Controlled Schools - Prevailing Practices Of The Foundational Values.. 160

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion and Recommendations 244

Bibliography.. 266

Appendices

Tables

Graphs

Chapter One

Introduction and Research Context

Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a basis for the consideration of the foundational values of Christian parent Controlled Schools in Australia through a more general review of values in education and of Christian education in particular. It will be noted that the values of schools established by different Christian traditions will differ in accord with their particular beliefs and convictions. Evidence of this can be found in the different schooling systems established by different Christian groups in Australia since European settlement in the late 18th Century.

Education and Values

Regardless of culture, location, or era in history, education is a value-laden enterprise, deriving its structures, practices and demeanour from the society of which it is part. In addition, it is clear from the current debates and contests over educational priorities that these values are not monochrome for particular societies or even for particular schools. Modern societies are undergirded by a patchwork of values and beliefs which inform, often inconsistently, every aspect of a school's operation.

Values are not simply sentiments or inclinations. Because our values are connected to those things we regard as important and worthwhile, they are not held passively but find expression in behaviours, activities and lifestyle. Values can also be regarded as beliefs, codes or standards which persist through life and provide a constant motivation toward action (Flynn, 1993, p. 42; Hill, 1998, p. 5; Wallace, 1998, p. 20).

Values are held by communities and institutions in a similar manner to individuals, in the sense that the values of a community or an institution are revealed, not so much by public pronouncements or espoused ideals but by behaviours and activities, or in institutional terms, by practices and procedures. For example, a school that declares that it 'values' the contribution of parents but has poor mechanisms through which parents can actually offer their time or expertise, does not actually hold the importance of parental involvement as a value.

In the investigation of the foundational values of Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) schools which constitutes the first stage of this research project, Ormell's (1980) perspective is helpful:

> We use the terminology of values when we wish to convey that the institution in question has the sort of education it offers in its bones. … Values inform the life of an institution, not merely the verbalisations which its members interchange (pp. 73, 80).

Hence, in this study, values are regarded as beliefs or principles that are embraced strongly enough to result in behaviours or actions. The foundational values of CPC schools were those beliefs held by the founding communities which informed and shaped the character of these schools, from their establishment through to their early structures and practices.

Holmes and Wynne (1989) claimed that values pervade educational endeavours and impact directly on the lives of children:

> Education is a moral exercise; it is a set of activities steeped in values. We educate children because we wish to change them from what they would otherwise become. The attempt to change human beings is the application of moral choice. We want to make children better, not worse (p. 3).

While the language of 'changing' other human beings has an unfortunate ring of coercion and power, it is nevertheless the case that schools act with the intention of inculcating values - they influence and shape students' attitudes, behaviours and beliefs. Classroom etiquette and emphases, student welfare and bullying policies, assessment and reporting practices, the use of praise and rewards, prominence given to academic and or sporting success, the importance accorded students' matriculation results, school celebrations (such as prize-giving evenings, graduation ceremonies, Easter pageants and Anzac Day observances), parents' information evenings, management structures including gender balance amongst executive staff, and the myriad other elements and practices that constitute a school, all impact on the way students understand themselves and others, and on their behaviour and values.

The Catholic educator Thomas Groome (1996) argued that amongst "some of the most debilitating myths of western education … [is the myth] that all education, except what is clearly value laden, eg, teaching religion, is value free. Beyond being untrue, such myths impede good education" (p.

107). Peters (1970) had a similar view: "Education necessarily involves the initiation of children into what is thought to be valuable" (p. 75) and "Education … picks out a family of processes culminating in a person being better" (Peters, 1973, p. 15). Likewise Wilmot (1989): "Education and values are intrinsically and mysteriously connected" (p. 25).

Values are evident in the earliest discussions of the purposes of education. Plato, whose *Republic* is regarded as "the most impressive statement on education in the ancient world" (Castle, 1961, p. 80) and "the first and greatest work in the philosophy of education" (O'Hear, 1995, p. 213), advocated the careful selection and training of young men and women to be guardians of the city-state. This ruling elite would be educated to "despise all existing honours as mean and worthless, caring only for the right and the honours to be gained from that, and above all for justice as the one thing indispensable", (Republic, VII, 540, trans. Cornford, 1941, p. 256).

The connection between values and education is not superficial, but rather elicits deep questions of purpose and meaning. Every system of education is underpinned and preceded by a view of the nature and significance of humanity (Beck cited in McLaughlin, 2000, p. 141). Eliot maintained that it was not even possible to talk about education without some conception of education's purpose and that in turn was not possible without a consideration of the purpose of all things and of one's own, often concealed, philosophy or theology (cited in Garber, 1997, p. 82).

The character of a school is largely determined by the school community's corporate understanding of life's meaning and of its complex of values. This view is echoed by Flynn (1993), "The core beliefs and values of the school community are the primary determinants of its culture and represent the point at which the culture touches the lives of its members" (p. 40).

There is certainly no accord, however, particularly in a multi-racial, multi-faith nation such as Australia regarding the nature of the values or the processes by which students in schools ought to be introduced to these values. Beare and Slaughter (1993) make it clear that the task confronting schools in general, is complex and that the values underpinning education are critical. In a broad ranging discussion of the future of schooling in the western world, they reject the dominant western

worldview with its roots in the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the rise of modern science. They share their concerns that an economic framework has redefined our conception of education and that efficiency, effectiveness, equity and (market) excellence now dominate the purposes of education:

> The structures, the continuities, expectations, values and meanings which once sustained the cultural landscape have weakened or dissolved entirely. Far from there being a coherent and integrated rationale to guide education, there is instead something of a human and cultural vacuum. ... If schools are to play a more culturally constructive role than they are doing at present, their work requires some broadly defined social purpose, something that goes beyond purely personal, economic and short-term considerations which derive solely from what has gone before (p. 16).

The identification of values that would support schools in their pursuit of this "culturally constructive role" is problematic. Some argue that schools should have clearly acknowledged and maintained values:

> Schools with an articulated sense of purpose, a firm philosophy set on beliefs and values which underpin their every action, will be vital. … Schools should continue unashamedly to espouse some of the great moral and ethical virtues ... of human kind (Sharpe, 1989, pp. 35-36).

On the other hand, there are those such as Wardekker (2001) whose arguments are in tune with an increasingly postmodern and multicultural western world:

> Schools' moral truth is not to be the transmission of specific values or the development of moral reasoning or universal values but rather teaching students to handle plurality in an autonomous way (p. 101)

In recent years, a number of educational theorists have argued against the pervasive education agendas of governments in the western world, particularly the attitude that the role of a school is to increase a nation's economic productivity, with related emphases on vocational education in secondary schools and the encouragement of an educational market-place in which schools are pitted against one another as competitors. These theorists have advocated an alternate view, that schooling has a more fundamental, moral purpose in the education of young people.

Noddings (1992) argued that the main purpose of education should be moral, specifically the growth of caring and loving persons and that education should be organised around themes of care rather than the traditional disciplines. Beck (1994) from both a deontological and consequentialist perspective, also argued that an ethic of care is a proper foundation for schooling (p.20), and similarly, Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) maintained that a fundamental value for an educator is to care more deeply for those they teach (p.30). Sapon-Shevin (1991) advocated love and caring as more than merely acceptable behaviour, but rather the central organising values for schools (p. 300) and Starrat (1994) proposed ethics of care, justice, community and democracy in place of the pervasive moral problems of individualism, competition and conformity to authority that afflict schools. Ungoed-Thomas (1997) suggested that the vision of a school should comprise knowledge of the 'first virtues' - respect for persons, truth, fairness and responsibility, while Sergiovanni (1994) maintained that schools operate best as communities with the kind of shared values and ideals that lead to lives being more meaningful and significant.

Education of every type then, is imbued with values and is concerned with questions of meaning and purpose. Schooling as one form of education impacts on the way students understand life's purposes and principles. Values are practised and discerned by the behaviour of organisations, groups or individuals. To the extent that Christian traditions possess particular values, to that extent schools rooted in these traditions will also possess these values and will give expression to practices consistent with these values.

Christian Education - Christian Values.

Christians over the centuries have sought to ensure that the education received by their children would be informed by the values esteemed by their church or faith community, whether that education was conducted within the home, church, school or in some combination of these institutions. Westerhoff (1976) asserted: "It is a truism that Christian faith and education are inevitable companions. Wherever living faith exists, there is a community endeavouring to know, understand, live, and witness to that faith." (p. 1) and Wolterstorff (1980) stated:

> From the beginning of the Christian church, Christian parents have considered it desirable and even obligatory to educate their children so as to induct them into the vision and life of the Christian community ... most Christian parents have thought of their children not as outsiders to the community but as members of it already. They have accordingly sought to give them a Christian education (p. vi).

Christian parents and Christian communities have undertaken the task of Christian education in various ways over many centuries and as a result, the term 'Christian education' has no widely accepted specific definition, and needs to be used with care. This issue can be illustrated through a consideration of a definition such as De Ruyter's (1999) that Christian education is "the practice of assisting children to acquire and deepen Christian beliefs, attitudes, values and the dispositions to act in a Christian way" (p. 217). While De Ruyter's definition is quite broad, there would be many who would argue that it is inappropriate to confine the definition to children and others who would take issue with 'dispositions to act' given their emphasis on education as primarily cognitive. The expression 'Christian education' has many different connotations, and thus it is important to clearly define the particular meaning and context in which it is being used in order to avoid confusion. (Harkness, 2000a, p.3)

Another illustration of this is provided by Ryan (1997a) who asked if priority in Christian education should be given to the development of a life-style of discipleship or to a more cognitive approach to faith involving an emphasis on understanding and knowledge. He argued:

> The Christians [of the early church] were confronted with a fundamental educational dilemma that persists to the present day. … The dilemma faced by the disciples of Jesus after the resurrection concerned the most effective means of ensuring continuity with the life and teachings of Jesus. Was the most effective way to pass on the words, teachings, ideas, stories and directives articulated by Jesus and interpreted by those who heard them, or was it better to foster and nurture a particular way of life, a way of living for which Jesus provided the model and the boundaries? … Is the school meant to be a place of nurture for people in the Christian faith, or is it meant to teach an understanding of Christianity in particular and religion in general? (pp. 1-2)

The distinct values and priorities of particular Christian communities have resulted in different responses to this issue. Hughes (1997) for example, described the different emphases and practices

of various Christian traditions in higher education in the USA. He maintained that in some of the Mennonite educational institutions, there is an emphasis on radical discipleship, particularly in their combination of scholarship with intentional service to the poor and dispossessed. Students in these colleges must spend at least one semester overseas in a third-world country. By way of contrast, Reformed Christian scholars emphasised the development of a Christian worldview and placed scholarship under the sovereignty of God and in the service of Christ, seeking to approach every discipline from a distinctively Christian perspective. The Reformed model could be seen as seeking to transform living by thinking, while the Mennonite model reversed the process (pp. 5-6).

In contrast to these approaches, Lutheran scholars insist that Christians live simultaneously in the kingdoms of nature and of grace and seek to bring their study of the world into dialogue with the Christian vision of redemption and grace. This enables them to take religious and cultural pluralism more seriously than many other Christian traditions. Roman Catholic institutions which possess a different theological background again, emphasise incarnational and sacramental aspects of their tradition in asking how Christian scholars and graduates of Catholic institutions can bring the presence of Christ into a world filled with suffering, poverty, and injustice (Hughes, 1997, pp. 6-7). Christian traditions then, with their various understandings of ultimate meaning and purpose understand the nature of education in different ways and therefore develop educational institutions with distinctive values, structures and practices.

Groome (1980) draws attention to the fact that the values informing Christian education are 'political' in nature, because they are embedded in Christian spirituality:

> Christian religious education is a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom…. Christian religious education participates in the political nature of education in general…. Christian religious education, precisely by proposing a spirituality which is Christian, is being political, that is, intervening in people's lives to influence them in how they live out their temporality in social relationships (p.25).

Groome's (1996) use of the word 'political' reinforces the perception that education is about values, in this case values that compete in the public square, intervening in people's lives and relationships. Koole (1996) who has had a long involvement with Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Victoria and the Northern Territory argues in a similar vein that Christian education is an intentional activity aimed at preserving and maintaining the Christian community through the education of young people:

> A community only remains viable if it is able to maintain its meaning system through effective discipling of its younger members. As a Christian educational community we endeavour, by God's grace, to educate students so that they are able to maintain the viability of their faith and understand how it affects and directs all aspects of their life in response to God's word (p. 57).

Christian education is in a sense then, a political activity which deliberately impacts on children. It intervenes, shapes, challenges and continually seeks to instil values which are deemed to be consistent with the faith tradition of the sponsoring community. In this respect it is no different to other types of education, all of which give expression to their values through their practices and procedures.

One schooling movement which has sought to challenge and shape the lives of young people within the Christian tradition is Christian Parent Controlled Schools Ltd. of Australia. In order to understand the context in which Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) schools commenced, it is important to consider the various expressions of Christian schooling that have existed in Australia since European settlement. It is also important to observe that while CPC schools have a unique story and a distinctive complex of foundational values, a number of their values and priorities are shared with the other Christian traditions which have established schools in Australia.

European Settlement in Australia and Christian Education

Christian education is not a recent phenomenon in Australia. It has existed in a variety of forms since the early days of the colony of NSW. "In the early settlement of Sydney, as the number of children on the loose in a mainly penal colony increased, Richard Johnson, the evangelical Anglican

chaplain who accompanied the first fleet, initiated Christian schooling for them" (Hill, 1997, p. 280). Shellard (1983) maintained, "The Christian contribution to the educational scene in the early colonial years was far from lightweight or lacking in social concern ... the first school-house in NSW was a church and the first superintendent was a clergyman" (p.61). (At the time of European settlement, the Anglican Church was known as the 'Church of England', and even though 'Anglican' became the official title in 1981, it was used to describe adherents of the Church of England at least as early as 1846. See Glossary.)

Johnson erected his dual-purpose church and school in 1793 and the majority of schools that followed in the infant colony were also started by clergymen and supported by small grants from religious bodies and missionary societies. In 1794 Johnson wrote regarding the new school to the secretary of one of the sponsoring religious bodies in England, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel: "If any hopes are to be formed of any reformation being affected in this Colony, I believe it must begin amongst those of the rising generation" (as cited in Roberts, 1980, p.3).

The values that these early church schools were seeking to instil in the children of the colony reflected the circumstances of this early society which included many convicts and ex-convicts and their children. As a result, the focus of these church-sponsored schools was largely on securing public order and advancing morality and diligence by improving students' behaviour and morals (Shellard, 1983). Clark (1989) commented:

> European education began in this country with the idea that the schoolmaster and the dame were God's moral policemen, to persuade men [sic] to turn from their wickedness and live. ... to teach children God's plan for their lives. … Education originally was a means to salvation but it was also very much a guide to behaviour (p. 18).

Until 1870 most pupils in Australia attended publicly-funded denominational schools, Church of England, Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist. This was not an unusual situation:

> The tradition of church control over schools was well entrenched in England by the time British colonies were established in Australia. Even the leaders of the Reformation in England accepted the notion that the Church was responsible for

schools. In 1788 then, British colonists brought to Australia a belief in schools as religious in character, controlled by clergymen and subject to the laws of the Church and the State. It is no surprise that the Christian Churches were influential in establishing the first schools in the new Australian colonies (Ryan, 1997b, p.1).

The history of education in Australia until the 1870s was largely a history of conflict between the different Christian denominations themselves and between the denominations and the government. In the 1820s under the leadership of Archdeacon Scott, the Church of England attempted to control education in New South Wales. Scott's plan involved the Church and School Corporation and depended on a substantial grant of land being given by the government to the Church of England to generate income for religious and educational facilities. Understandably, there was strong resistance from the other denominations, and strong opposition from the press which railed against 'sacerdotal dominancy' and the peril of an Anglican clergy who would be 'spiritual teachers, yet temporal tyrants' (Austin, 1972, p. 17). Scott achieved only limited success and the corporation was dissolved in 1830.

A combination of educational disputes (fuelled by sectarian bitterness) and a growing public agnosticism, eventually led to the introduction of a schooling system in Australia which was non-religious. Australian leaders were convinced for a variety of political, economic and moral reasons that a universal system of compulsory education was needed. They would have preferred the cooperation of the churches, but the churchmen were unable to resolve their suspicions and differences. As a result, the six Australian colonies passed Education Acts between 1872 and 1895 which committed them to the establishment of a national, largely secular system of education, and abolished state aid to denominational schools. (Austin, 1963, pp. 186-188; Austin, 1972; Barcan, 1980; Barcan, 1988; Shaw, 1978; Lambert, 1996, p.14)

One of the quarrels at this time involved colonial liberals who sought to end state aid to church schools and an increasingly resolute Catholic hierarchy, who vigorously encouraged Catholic parents to transfer their children from government to Catholic schools. The Catholic bishops stressed the sacred and inalienable right of parents and pastors to impart religious instruction to their children (Burnswoods and Fletcher, 1980, p. 46). For over seventy years, (along with a few financially

exclusive Protestant colleges), the Catholics ran their schools with no outside aid. Manning Clark considered the withdrawal of support from church schools to be "one of the most momentous decisions, and probably the most disastrous" in Australian history, because "it meant the neutrality of the teachers in the state schools on all questions touching personal faith … it meant the pauperisation of the Catholic schools, and left them as an aggrieved minority" (cited in Ryan, 1997a, p.20).

In addition to Catholic schools and the elite Protestant schools, the Lutherans have had schools in Australia since 1839 and the Seventh Day Adventists since 1892. Even without government assistance, and in the face of financial hardship, Christian education in Australia since European settlement has found expression in various forms under the sponsorship of different Christian traditions.

Christian Education in Australia - Different Traditions, Different Articulations.

This section will consider the values that a number of Christian traditions have brought to bear on their schooling systems. These cameos will provide a context within which to study and contrast the values of CPC schools.

Catholic Schools

The Catholic Church has been the most significant presence in Christian education in Australia since late in the 18th Century. It is currently involved in the education of 20% of all school students in Australia. One of the difficulties in describing Catholic education is that there is no such thing as a typical Catholic educational institution. This is primarily because the orders which founded them have different emphases. Flynn (1993) suggested:

> Catholic schools in Australia frequently reflect the charism and spirit of the Religious Congregation associated with their foundation. Schools such as those of the Jesuit, Presentation, Mercy, Brigidine, Josephite, Good Samaritan, Christian Brothers …

reflect unique differences of style in the ways in which they go about the education of the young (p. 47).

Nevertheless, there are some universally accepted values derived from Catholic theology which are shared by all Catholic schools. "The distinctiveness of Catholic education is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and these characteristics should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools." (Groome, 1996, p. 107).

Groome and Hellwig proposed similar inventories of the traits which inform Catholic education. In summary, they list:

- a positive anthropology of the person, resulting in a non-sectarian inclusiveness;
- the sacramental principle;
- a commitment to tradition, yielding a respect for the cumulative wisdom of previous generations;
- an appreciation of rationality and reasoning; and
- the communal nature of redemption (Groome 1996, p. 108 and Hellwig 1997, pp. 14-17. See also Flynn and Mok, 2002, pp. 84-86).

McBrien added to this list "mediation" and a "regard for authority and order as well as conscience and freedom" (cited in Flynn, 1993, p. 43). These traits find expression in Catholic schools in a variety of ways. Hellwig (1997) argued that because of the sacramental principle:

> The identity of the [Catholic] institution should be evident in the calendar of events, the central location of campus ministry and privileged placement of chapels, the privileged place given to library holdings in theology, religious studies, ethics, etc., the unashamed use of religious motifs and images in the adornment of buildings, and most of all in the easy inclusion of religious topics and themes in conversations of faculty and administrators on campus, allowing students to realise that this is the integrating factor of scholarship on the campus…. regular availability of Catholic worship, especially Eucharist, on campus in ways that give it pride of place (p. 22).

It is clear from the extensive literature on Catholic education in Australia and other places that Catholic schools seek to have a deep impact on the lives and spirituality of their students. Flynn (1993) considered that "The vision of the early founders of Catholic schools in Australia assumed that the schools would make a difference and that they would have an influence on students over and above that of the home" (p. 361). Groome (1996) similarly, remarked, "The Catholic school is to

educate the very 'being' of its students, to inform, form, and transform their identity and agency - who they are and how they live - with the meaning and ethic of Christian faith. Beyond knowing about Jesus, it intends that they become disciples of his 'way' (p. 118).

In a discussion of the personal and spiritual development of Catholic school staff, Keane and Keane (1997) gave a helpful depiction of the values of Catholic schooling:

> What teachers believe about the purpose of living, about how people learn and grow, about what's worth knowing, about the perceived relevance of Jesus and his life to us and our world, and how they demonstrate this in their lives and work, is crucial to the maintenance of the quality Catholic school. The authenticity of the individual teacher's living of the values and ideals of Catholic education is ultimately the glue which binds together all the aspirations of the school as it endeavours to hand on to its students the richness of heritage of Christian life and spirituality. Teachers, in their daily lives, play such an important role in providing the youth of the Catholic school with an appreciation of the Gospel message and its implications for stewardship of the planet (p. 5).

Schooling continues to be a significant aspect of the Catholic Church's mission and identity in Australia, attracting a significant amount of the church's resources and energy. Doyle (1992) suggested that "In Australia, the [Catholic] schools have been the chief strategy for initiating the young into the Church community" (p. vii) and Flynn and Mok (2002) that "Catholic schools in Australia today form an important dimension of the church's educational mission to people through their teaching (kerygma), the sense of Christian community they foster (koinonia) and the service (diakonia) that they provide to parents and the Australian community generally" (p. 20), and "In the building up of Christ's Kingdom and Australian society, Catholic schools play a deliberate and vital role" (p. 33).

While Catholic schools flourished numerically and are now the dominant sector in private schooling in Australia, the schools of the major Protestant denominations took a different direction. This study will consider the situation of the Anglican schools, because they were the foremost denomination involved in Protestant schooling.

Anglican (Church of England) Schools

As a result of the abolition of state aid to denominational schools between 1872 and 1895, the number of Church of England schools declined rapidly. In NSW in 1867 there were 161 Church of England schools with 13 400 pupils, but by 1879 there were only 71 schools with 11 200 pupils. At the time, many Anglicans believed that general or common Christianity could just as well be taught in the government schools and particular Christian beliefs and values could be taught in the home and in the churches, particularly by way of 'Sunday schools'. In addition, Anglican clergy regularly visited government schools and most Anglicans were supportive of the role of government schools in providing an education which would encourage and uphold public order and morality. As a result, there was not the same will amongst the Anglicans to maintain their schools as there was amongst the Catholics, and the Church of England schools that did survive tended to be elite English style grammar schools (Judd and Cable, 1987, pp. 99, 102). In 1998 only 97 800 or 3.1% of all students in Australia attended Anglican schools (Australian Bureau of Statistics, August 1998)**.**

Anglicans took the view that there was no need for their church to provide schooling for the general population largely because they believed that they had, and presumably would continue to have, a significant influence on the values of public schooling. They nevertheless took the view that the Church of England ought to be involved in providing education for the leaders of their society. After the withdrawal of government financial support:

> there remained one educational avenue along which the Church of England could profitably travel. The new state systems of schooling in every colony were chiefly concerned with the elementary aspect. 'Superior public schools' were set up to provide additional teaching facilities for older and more promising pupils (Judd and Cable, 1987, p.106).

Since the late 19th Century, Anglican schools have customarily offered a liberal Christian education, with an academic focus, provided largely for wealthier Australian families.

> Anglican liberalism, or a realisation that schools which depended largely on public support must be comprehensive in nature, meant that from the beginning, Anglican independent schools in Australia set out to cater for all who wished for a religious

education based only on those points of belief on which there is an accordance
throughout the greater portion of the Christian Church (Curry, 1978, p.48).

That traditional Anglican schools together with other financially exclusive church schools have offered education for the whole community, rather than focusing specifically on Christian families was evident as far back as 1968, when Mol (1968) demonstrated that those attending Protestant denominational schools, including Anglican schools, showed no differences to the general population in terms of regular church attendance, regular prayer habits, 'experiencing God's presence' or belief in God (pp. 18-35). These figures are in stark contrast to those for most other "Christian" schools which have as their constituency a much higher proportion of families belonging to their particular Christian tradition(s). This will be shown to be particularly the case for the constituency of CPC schools in Chapter Two.

While many Christian schools are keen to employ teachers from within their own tradition or at least from traditions similar to their own, Anglican schools with their more liberal Christian approach and academic focus, have not generally seen this as a priority. Curry (1978) suggested concerning the appointment of teachers in Anglican schools that:

> Many [Anglicans] would not now agree with … the idea that 'real practising membership of a Church' should be 'the main criterion of appointment', arguing instead that staff should reflect the plurality of opinion in the general community. Although a Christian emphasis might still be seen to be important, most headmasters would be more concerned with qualifications, experience and the ability to contribute to educational change (p.57).

This view was supported more recently by the (then) Anglican Archbishop Goodhew of Sydney, who asserted that schools need not employ only Christians: "having Christian teachers is essential, but they don't all have to be Christian. It's a matter of quality, not uniformity … even in a Christian school learning is learning" (Marr, 1998).

This traditional Anglican perspective has recently been challenged by other Sydney Anglicans such as Phillip Jensen who argued for a new standard of "Christian faith and character" for all the church's headmistresses and headmasters. They must be men and women "committed to and capable

of furthering allegiance to Christ as lord and the cause of Christian education in the school as a church school. … only Christian teachers can teach with a consistent Christian world view" (Marr, 1998).

As a result of his study of the founding of five Anglican schools in Sydney, from the Kings school in 1831 to the Macarthur Anglican school in 1984, Godden (1996) maintained that "In their own minds, the founders of these schools were establishing Christian schools" (p. 10). In his conclusion Godden (1996) remarked that during the course of his research, there was an increased awareness of Christian education within the Diocese of Sydney, resulting in a Synod plan "to establish 'low-fee, mission minded, Anglican schools in growth areas'" (p. 113). He suggested further that these schools would be different in three main ways to the schools which were the subjects of his study. "The schools will be established with fees set at what is believed to be the lowest possible level; they will have evangelism as a primary goal; and they will be entirely staffed by Christians." (p. 113).

Witham (1999) also pointed to conflicting values within Anglican schooling - "there is an ambivalence at the heart of Anglican schools. They are almost unable to bring together the twin aims of providing excellent education with the formation of students into Christianity." (p. 16). Witham suggested that critics of older Anglican schools in Perth see no difference in the education provided by the Anglican and state schools and that schools of the Perth diocese provide education as a service to the community rather than as an extension of the church's mission. Witham (1999) recalled that at the Anglican Christ Church Grammar school in Western Australia, where he was chaplain for seven years, that not all the staff were Christian and that the science staff responded with hostility to his suggestion that the relationship between science and Christianity be discussed. He argued that Anglican schools needed to incorporate "Christian values into each subject discipline ... [and allow] Christian beliefs to breathe life into school administration and pastoral care procedures" (pp. 16-18).

Hill (1997) also expressed a concern that traditional church schools, including Anglican schools have departed from their early desires to provide an evangelical Christian alternative to existing schools, and have instead become infected by a drive to reinforce social privilege (p. 283).

There does not appear to be a consensus regarding the values that Anglican schools espouse. Many traditional Anglican schools continue to provide a liberal education for the wider community emphasising Christian morality and ethics, academic achievement, sporting success and capable leadership. However there are those within the Anglican communion in Australia, who believe that Anglican schooling should be made more explicitly Christian and the establishment of a number of low-fee Anglican schools may be regarded as a response, at least in part, to this conviction.

Lutheran Schools

In contrast to traditional Anglican schools, Lutheran schools in Australia seek in the first place to employ practising Lutherans and then sincere Christians of other traditions. Most schools also seek to obtain as many Lutheran and then other Christian students as possible. Their policies indicate that no student will be excluded on financial grounds. At the beginning of 2001 there were 81 Lutheran schools and 28 early childhood centres in Australia, with 27 000 students. (M. Bartsch, personal communication, 8 February, 2001).

Bartsch (1998) whose research considered the relationship between Lutheran confessional theology and Australian Lutheran school education maintained that "Lutheran schools begin with theology as the starting point for their value base" (p. iv), but "that theology and education exist in a process of 'dialectic dialogue' with each other, 'listening to each other' but also retaining certain levels of dialectic tension as each side responds to the other" (p. v).

Lutherans understand that Christians live simultaneously in two kingdoms - the left hand kingdom, or the area of human reason and the right hand kingdom or the area of faith. Bartsch (1998) considered education to be essentially part of the left hand kingdom. He cited Siegfried Hebart, a former principal of Luther Seminary in Adelaide and Chair of the Education Desk of the Lutheran World Federation:

> From the angle of the Gospel, secular education, like the Law of God, belongs to the area of the preliminary, the preparatory, the antecedent; this is the area of sin and secularism, of estrangement from God and the fellowman … education as such,

belongs to the realm of the purely human. There is, therefore, no such thing as a specifically 'Christian' education, (pp. 127-128).

Nevertheless, Bartsch (1998) sees the right hand kingdom operating in the sense that:

> Christian parents also have the responsibility to ensure the nurture of their children in the faith. … the establishment of Lutheran schools was seen as an important way of helping Lutheran parents with the Christian nurture of their children. This means that the Lutheran school also has a role in respect to the 'right hand kingdom': in that sense, it straddles the two kingdoms (p. 132).

According to Bartsch (1998) while the values on which Lutheran schools are based find their origin and support in the Scripture, the application and use of the Bible is limited by this dialectical tension between the kingdoms of reason and faith (p.16). This approach has led to a conception of Christian curriculum which differs, at least in part, to other Christian schooling traditions. Bartsch noted and rejected for example, the view of the Adventist educator Knight, who argued that "all truth in the Christian curriculum, whether it deals with nature, mankind, society, or the arts, must be seen in proper relationship to Jesus Christ as Creator and Redeemer" (p.151), because for Bartsch, these areas are in the domain of reason, not faith.

The Australian Catholic Dwyer's 'evangelising curriculum' is also rejected by Bartsch, (1998) on the basis that evangelism is a responsibility of the church, not the school (pp. 151 & 152). It appears that Bartsch regarded Knight's and Dwyer's positions on Christian curriculum to be similar to that of the American Rathmann, whose examples of Christian mathematics he cited. Rathmann's approach, however, is superficial and not a credible example of Christian curriculum. Bartsch (1998) made it clear that for Lutheran schools, the Bible is not a text-book of educational theory or practice but that it is important in the school's public worship, class devotions and religious education program. He wrote:

> Since the Lutheran Confessions see the Bible as one of 'the means of grace' through which the Holy Spirit operates in the world, the use of the Bible in worship in the school community is essential …. The use of the Bible in this way in worship also provides a strong witness to the key place of the Bible in the total life and work of the Lutheran school (p.163).

Lutheran educational institutions consider the Bible to be essential in specifically 'religious' activities such as communal worship, class devotions or religious studies courses but are less confident that it is appropriate to apply the Bible to more traditional curriculum areas. The tensions resulting from this dialectic are also apparent in Solberg's (1997) remark that it should fall to members of the Lutheran college's religion faculty to interpret the relationship between Lutheran theology and the remainder of the curriculum, suggesting that the educators in other faculties are not equipped to relate Lutheran theology to their particular discipline (p. 81).

The Lutheran dialectic makes description of the Christian nature of Lutheran education quite difficult. Granquist (1997) suggested that "there is in Lutheranism a paradoxical relationship between the worlds of faith and reason. ... Lutheran educational institutions have lived with a tension between these two elements, trying to resist a reductionism that pushes entirely towards either the sacred or the secular" (p. 96).

Lutheran schooling shares many values with other Christian traditions particularly in their affirmation of the centrality and significance of Christ and the Bible, however, they possess a distinctive view of curriculum which arises from their theology of the two kingdoms which does not recognise a specifically 'Christian' form of education.

Adventist Schooling

Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived in Australia in 1885 and established their first school in Melbourne in 1892, but financial difficulties and dissatisfaction with the city location led to its closure in 1894. The Avondale school for Christian workers commenced in Cooranbong, New South Wales in 1897 (Standish, 1978, p. 165) and by May 2000 there were 58 Seventh Day Adventist schools (primary and secondary) in Australia with 7897 pupils (M. De Berg, Librarian, Ellen G. White Research Centre, Avondale College, Cooranbong - Personal communication, 26 May 2000).

One of the distinctive features of Adventist education is the influence of Ellen Gould White (1827-1915) who spent nine years in Australia (1891-1900) and was instrumental in the establishment of the Avondale School, which she saw as a model for all Seventh Day Adventist schools. Her

"extensive writings provide the inspiration, direction and philosophy of education that have guided the operation of the Church's schools since 1872, not only in Australia, but throughout the world" (Lindsay, 1978, p.4). The principal of Mountain View Adventist School in Sydney, Darko, agreed that White remains the inspiration behind Adventist education: "Yes, she is the founding person for Adventists; she is regarded as a prophet" (L. Darko, personal communication, 25 January, 2001).

Adventist schools share with other Christian traditions an emphasis on the primacy of the Christian Scriptures. According to Lindsay (1978) White held that "The Holy Scriptures … should hold the first place in every educational system; for the foundation of all right education is a knowledge of God" and that "Education was not only for this world, but also for the worlds to come". She emphasised the importance of practical subjects, of service to God and man, and regarded true education to be God-centred and based on the Bible. White also envisaged that Adventist schools would provide the Adventist church with evangelists that would proclaim a message to all nations that the end of the world was at hand and that Christ would soon return in person. It was hoped that the Avondale School in particular, would provide many who would go forth to share their faith in different parts of the world (pp. 20, 23, 26, 73).

Regarding the outworking of Adventist values in their schools and the integration of faith perspectives in the classroom, Darko commented:

> We attempt to integrate faith and learning. The Adventist education department produces documents that integrate faith and learning - by rewriting Board of Studies [NSW Government] documents. The church also sponsors in-services or case meetings for teachers to work on those documents. … We could do more work on the place of the Bible. … We do have Bible subjects - theory and doctrine and applications. We have chapel each week and 80% of these are religious. We often use youth pastors to run these. The chapel service is our vehicle for evangelism (L. Darko, personal communication, 25 January, 2001).

In order to maintain Adventist values and culture, these schools seek to employ Adventist teachers wherever possible, and also to maintain a significant majority of students from Adventist families:

> Schools generally chase around in order to get Adventists teachers. It is rare to have a non-Adventist teacher. …Enrolment policies are not prescribed, but in the past there has been an informal limit of no more than 10 to 20% non-Adventist students, however this proportion is increasing. There has been a concern amongst Adventists that non-Adventist kids could have a significant and negative impact on Adventist kids - Sabbath keeping for example. So we need to keep monitoring this… if we had more Christian non-Adventists, we would lose our special character (L. Darko, personal communication, 25 January, 2001).

The Adventist educator Knight (1989) has written a text on a Christian philosophy of education which is referred to by Christian educators of various traditions including CPC teachers in Australia. He writes that the function of the Christian school, in the context of a protected and nurturing atmosphere is to help young people from Christian homes to meet Jesus Christ and surrender to him, become evangelistic workers, prepare for the service of God and their neighbours and prepare for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven (pp. 234-238).

Adventist schools share many values with Christian schools of other traditions including a focus on Jesus and the Bible, an emphasis on the importance of encouraging young people to continue in their faith tradition and the use of enrolment and employment policies to support and protect these values.

In addition to Catholic, Anglican (and other financially exclusive Protestant schools), Lutheran and Adventist schools, the second half of the twentieth century has witnessed a number of attempts to establish Christian schools in Australia from the perspective of evangelical Protestantism. These have included Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) schools, Christian Community Schools and the schools which are the subject of this study, Christian Parent Controlled Schools.

Accelerated Christian Education

Schools associated with the American Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) system commenced in Australia in 1976 and grew rapidly for a time, with as many as 120 schools in the early 1980s. They achieved a high profile as they allowed churches without expertise or experience to start schools through the provision of programmed learning booklets. The popularity of ACE schools waned in the early 1990s, due to their unconventional individualised classroom structure and the

difficulties they faced in some states in meeting registration requirements. In recent years, the ACE organisation, (under the auspices of Southern Cross Educational Enterprises in Australia since 1997) has tended to focus greater attention on the home schooling market (Frisken, 2000; Lambert, 1997).

The CEO of Southern Cross Educational Enterprises, Gregory, indicated that in a modified form, ACE schooling was still a viable venture in Christian education:

> Overall, our aim is to educate young people from a biblical world view, training them in the application of biblical principles to their daily lives as well as in academics, and keeping them shielded from the confusing influences of humanism until they are sufficiently mature to handle those influences in a biblical manner. … Southern Cross Educational Enterprises has been operating for four years and took over the ministry of ACE Australia which existed for some 20 years. We service 135 schools, 55 of which are in Australia, and some 3,000 home schools around the South Pacific, making a total of some 13,000 students (B. Gregory, personal communication, Wednesday, 4 July 2001).

There has been some controversy surrounding the ACE approach to education, particularly in the 1980s. Lambert (1997) for example, commented "Their curriculum is based on creation science beliefs and is centred around a system of programmed learning booklets called PACEs. The ACE belief system is extremely conservative in regard to political, religious and ethical issues, and has been vigorously criticised in Britain, America and Australia" (p. 275).

The Chairman of Southern Cross Educational Enterprises, Crooks (2001) communicated his view of the basic philosophy of the company:

> With Christian education we have to ensure we are not teaching our children to walk in the counsel of the ungodly. ... The challenge we face today is to examine the teaching we provide our children to ensure that it meets the biblical standards. We must strive to combine in our biblical curricula the highest academic standards. Whenever there appears to be a conflict between true biblical teaching (as opposed to dogma) and science we must exercise our faith in the Bible and stand firm for biblical truth (pp. 2-3).

ACE schools hold a number of values in common with other Christian schools, particularly their emphasis on the importance and relevance of the Bible. Their most distinctive features are their

insistence on a literal interpretation of Scripture and their emphasis on shielding students until they reach maturity from a culture that is regarded as essentially unbiblical and therefore perilous.

Christian Community Schools

Not many years after the commencement of CPC schools in Australia, a movement of church based Christian schools, called "Christian Community Schools" was started. Their first school, a secondary school, was established in Regents Park, Sydney in 1976 and was sponsored by two local Baptist churches. This was followed by a primary school, also Baptist, sponsored in St Marys, Sydney in 1978. Christian Community Schools Limited (CCSL) schools were established in all states of Australia and had affiliated schools in a number of countries including New Zealand, India, Papua New Guinea, Russia and a number of Pacific Islands. These schools were broadly similar to CPC schools, given their conservative Protestant background, the main differences arising from their evangelical as opposed to Reformed theological tradition and their governance structure which is church based rather than parent association based. Frisken (2000) then President of Christian Community Schools Ltd and one of the two pastors involved in the first school wrote:

> The motivation for commencing this school came from an awareness that there was much amiss with what was happening in many state schools and a conviction that God was leading [us] to start a school which would be a ministry of the local church, and in which Christian relationships would be a central part of education. The school … was founded as a Bible-based and Christ focussed school in 1976. Though the school had no direct or indirect links with the Parent Controlled Schools, there were many similarities in its approach to teaching and to curriculum. Over the next decade and a half, from this school an association of over 75 schools developed. Most schools in the association are conducted by a local church (pp. 4-5).

A CCSL booklet, *What is Christian Community Schooling?: Effective Christian Education* maintained that Christian Community Schools:
- were part of the equipping ministry of the Church
- were a response to the secularisation of education
- prepared students for life in the world and protected them from evil
- worked in partnership with the home
- had a Bible-based and Christ focused curriculum and

- sought to be Christian in every facet of their curriculum. (CCSL, 1995).

A Combined Association of Christian Schools in Australia

In contrast to Christian Community Schools, Christian Parent Controlled Schools made a deliberate decision not to be a direct part of the ministry of particular churches. The other five features of CCSL listed above, however, are very similar to a number of the foundational values of CPC schools (to be outlined later). In 1997, discussions involving Mechielsen of CPCS Ltd and Frisken of CCSL resulted in the suggestion that a combined association of Christian schools might be formed, called 'Christian Schools Australia' (CSA). Over the next few years other independent Christian schools, particularly CSAQ (Christian Schools Association of Queensland), indicated an interest in becoming involved in such an association. (In 2001, CSAQ had 42 affiliated schools with over 18500 students.) CSA commenced in late 2000 when it was incorporated with eight member schools. CCSL ceased operating on 31 December 2001 and have encouraged all their schools to join CSA.

The reasons that CPC schools decided not to join CSA *en masse* will be discussed later, nevertheless, the fact that discussions took place regarding a possible merger indicates that CCSL and CPCS Ltd shared many values.

Christian Parent Controlled Schools

This section gives a brief overview of the history and the theological – educational imperatives of the schools which are the focus of this research, CPC schools in Australia. It is included at the end of this chapter in order to set CPC schools in the broader context of Christian schooling in Australia. The cultural and theological background of these schools will be developed more fully in Chapter Two.

The efforts of the Reformed Dutch migrants, under difficult financial and social circumstances to establish Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) schools, can appropriately be regarded as pioneering, however, as the previous sections indicated, theirs was not the first attempt to wed a strong commitment to the Christian faith to the task of educating children.

The first CPC school was Calvin Parent Controlled Christian School which commenced in Hobart in 1962 with 77 students and three teachers. Tyndale CPC School in Blacktown, NSW, and Rehoboth CPC School in Perth, both started in 1966. By 1975 there were just six schools in the movement, but this had increased to 46 in 1986. In 2002, CPCS Ltd. had 58 member associations operating 84 schools with 23 000 students.

The distinctive educational philosophy, particularly of the early CPC schools was shaped by the deeply held religious beliefs and convictions of the founding communities. These communities were connected with the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA) which were established as a result of the arrival in the 1950s and 1960s of Dutch migrants. These migrants had left behind them a schooling system in which parents had great freedom of choice. Parents in the Netherlands were able to choose from government, Catholic, or Protestant (Calvinist) schools and were able to take responsibility for the education of their children. These schools had reflected their own "religious" perspectives and value systems.

In the 1950s and 1960s, when these migrants were arriving in Australia, about 80% of all the schools in the Netherlands were privately run. (Lambert 1996, pp. 16-17; VanderStelt 1972, pp. 61-62). Hoekzema (1983) maintained that not long after their arrival, due to their negative experiences of Australian state schools, these Calvinist migrants decided that an alternate form of education was needed for their children (pp. 75-76).

Duyker (1987) in his wide ranging consideration of Dutch migration to Australia, not only regarded the parent controlled Christian schools as having made a significant contribution to Australia in their own right, but also to have been an important model for the emerging schools of other conservative Christian groups:

> From a broadly cultural perspective, sponsorship by members of the Reformed Churches of parent controlled schools … is likely to have an enduring impact. Like the Catholic Church in Australia, the Reformed Churches have sought to direct the hearts and minds of its young by controlling the schools in which they are taught. The parent controlled John [sic] Calvin Christian School in Kingston, Tasmania, has served as a

pioneering model - not only for Australian Calvinists, but also for other conservative Christian denominations in Australia (pp. 114-115).

This view is supported by Bouma (1997) who argued that even though:

> the Reformed Churches of Australia [is] … a small denomination … it has had a significant impact on the religious scene in Australia. It has been active in promoting reformed theology beyond the borders of its own denomination. Its most notable contribution has been in the model of parent-controlled schools (p. 41).

In spite of this contribution, it will become increasingly evident in subsequent chapters that CPC schools share many of the values of schools established by other Christian traditions. CPC schools share with the Catholics for example, the view that Christianity ought to impinge on every aspect of schooling. They would give whole-hearted assent to Catholic schooling's priority, "to educate the very 'being' of its students ... with the meaning and ethic of Christian faith" and that this "should be reflected in the whole curriculum" (Groome, 1996, pp. 107, 118).

The desire of CPC schools to give central place to Christ and to accord authority to the Bible is characteristic of most Christian groups involved in education. Long (1996) noted that the new Protestant schools or themelic ('Christ-centred') schools as he described them, which included CPCS Ltd, CCSL and ACE schools shared the general Protestant fixation on theology and understood their own identity essentially on a theological basis - "theology is the basic building block which themelic schools use to shape their expectations and calculate the benefits and costs of their actions" (p. 60).

From the outset, CPC schools have also shared with the ACE and CCSL schools in particular, a deep disquiet with the 'religious' nature of existing schooling options. It will become obvious, however, that CPC schools were more than the product of a desire by a particular group of Dutch migrants to protect their young and were more than merely a reaction to secularisation, rather they were motivated to a significant extent by the theological perspective and cultural heritage of the founding communities which were supportive of Christian schooling.

The extent to which CPC schools share many values with other low-fee Protestant Christian schools in Australia and yet also hold a number of distinctive values was evident in the discussions and the resolution that attended the proposal that CPC schools join a unified, but larger and more diverse organisation of Christian schools, CSA. In July 2001, at their national annual general meeting, the motion "That member associations, as a national community, join CSA, and that CPCS in its present form be dissolved" was defeated by member associations.

According to the Executive Director of CPCS Ltd, the reasons the motion was defeated were two-fold. Firstly, the member associations of CPCS Ltd understood that CSA didn't actively support the concept of parent control, and even though parent controlled schools would have been able to keep their management structures as members of CSA, they would not, however, have been able to stay as a distinct entity within CSA. Secondly, the member associations of CPCS Ltd did not believe that CSA as an organisation would have actively supported Christian teacher education. (J. Metcalfe, personal communication, 6 September, 2001).

This situation highlighted both the shared values that CPC schools hold with other Christian schools in Australia, but also CPC schools' distinct values which eventually led to the decision to remain as a separate organisation. A taskforce report subsequent to the AGM suggested that "Members expressed a strong desire to preserve the unique perspective of CPCS while looking to the future of Christian education rather than retreating into the past." (CPCS Ltd, Taskforce Report, 2001, p.1).

The Purpose and Significance of this Study

In review then, this study is concerned with values, in particular the foundational values of CPC schools and the extent to which these values continue to sustain their current educational practices and programs. The values of a school or a schooling system are critical elements in shaping the character and quality of the education provided:

> It is evident that different conceptions of education as interpreted at different times, and
> by different cultures, embody different values. These values are near the heart of the
> educational enterprise. Change the values a little and the education which emerges (ie

the kind of qualities and capacities the children possess when they leave school) changes a lot (Ormell, 1980, p.71).

The proposed research will seek to identify the foundational values of CPC schools and the extent to which they are realised in schools, or in Harney's (1997) words, "the level of values integration" (p.5). Very little research has been conducted in this area in Australia. Concerning the new wave of Christian schools in Australia about one third of which are CPC schools, Lambert (1997) commented:

> While alternative Christian schools have been operating in Australia for over three decades, a clearly defined history and explanation of the character of these schools is yet to emerge. The inability of contemporary Australian scholars to clarify the nature and motivations of these schools demonstrates a general lack of theological / educative analysis in the wider research community. … A sufficiently balanced understanding of the growth of these schools has, generally, been clouded by a lack of scholarly research and writing. Consequently, numerous misconceptions exist (pp. 269-270).

Mechielsen, the Executive Director of CPC schools (1986 - 2000) commented on this study at proposal stage:

> It will be enormously valuable to Christian Parent Controlled Schools Ltd for its foundations to be examined and articulated. Research at this level, into the extent to which these foundational beliefs and aims continue to underpin current practice will help provide an empirical basis for further development of Christian Parent Controlled schooling. The research you are proposing is particularly relevant at this time when member associations are reviewing their national organisational structure. As far as I am aware, no research has been done at doctoral level specifically focussing on Christian Parent Controlled schooling. Your work will certainly meet an important need and should fill a substantial gap (J. Mechielsen, personal communication, 1 December, 1997).

It is the objective of the researcher that some of the 'misconceptions' that Lambert mentions will be dispelled and that a greater understanding of the foundational values and prevailing practices of CPC schools in Australia will provide the 'empirical basis for further development of Christian Parent Controlled schooling' that Mechielsen anticipates.

The researcher has had a long-standing interest in the publicly articulated objectives and values of CPC schools and the ways these objectives and values find expression in the everyday life of these schools. This has led to an interest in CPC schools' foundational values and their relationship to prevailing practices. Few, if any, of these schools have clearly recorded or identified their foundational values. Certainly, Christian Parent Controlled Schools Limited, the organisational body with responsibility for the guidance and support of these schools, has not undertaken this task and there has not to this point, been a comprehensive examination of the prevailing practices of CPC schools.

It has been the researcher's experience that teachers and school leaders in CPC schools in Australia can articulate their school's foundational values in broad terms, but their identification, recording and exposition, and their relationship with current practices is seen by leaders and others involved in the CPC school system as an area that requires attention. It is difficult and arguably impossible for these schools to consider their identity without a precise understanding of their foundational values and without a careful consideration of the relationship between these values and their prevailing practices.

The purpose of this research then, is:

1. To develop a greater understanding of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia, through an identification of their foundational values. This phase of the research will rely on documents and the perspectives of CPC school pioneers and early leaders.

2. To examine, on the basis of the experiences and reflections of a broad cross-section of parents, teachers, principals, senior students and graduates, the extent to which these foundational values continue to shape and influence the prevailing practices of CPC schools.

3. To consider the implications arising from this research for the identity, development, continuing operation and leadership of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia.

Research Questions.

The research questions addressed in this study are:

1. What are the foundational values of Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) Schools in Australia?

2. To what extent are these foundational values given expression in the prevailing practices of CPC schools?

3. What are the implications for leadership that arise from the research findings?

A summary overview of this dissertation is provided in Table 1:1 below. This is followed by a glossary of the terms and expressions used in the dissertation which may need explanation.

Table 1:1 - Content Overview		
Chapter	**Title**	**Purpose**
One	*Introduction and Research Context*	This chapter presents a basis for the review of the foundational values of CPC schools through a more general review of values in education and of Christian education in particular.
Two	*Christian Parent Controlled Schools – Theological Influences and Cultural Context*	This chapter considers the theological and cultural background of the Dutch, Reformed migrants and thus provides a basis for the identification of the foundational values of CPC schools. Research and literature devoted to the new Protestant Christian schools in Australia, particularly CPC schools is also considered together with research and literature concerned with similar Christian schools in North America. This chapter also considers the context in which non-government schools in Australia primarily low-fee Protestant Christian schools, have grown.
Three	*Research Design and Methodology*	A rationale for and an outline of the research method and design used to address the research questions are provided in this chapter.
Four	*Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values*	The foundational values are identified in this chapter on the basis of document analysis and of surveys and interviews with pioneers and early leaders.
Five	*Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Prevailing Practices of the Foundational Values*	The foundational values are used in this chapter as a touch-stone to examine the prevailing practices of CPC schools, with the focus on the extent to which the foundational values continue to find expression in these schools. Documents, together with surveys and interviews with members of constituent groups are used to consider prevailing practices.
Six	*Conclusion and Recommendations*	This chapter contains concluding comments regarding the relationship between the foundational values of CPC schools and their prevailing practices and makes a number of recommendations for the consideration of school-based and national leadership.

Chapter Two

Christian Parent Controlled Schools - Theological Influences and Cultural Context

Chapter Overview

This chapter considers the antecedents of the worldview of the Dutch migrants of the Reformed Churches of Australia who founded CPC schools, in particular the influence of the Dutch statesmen, Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer and Abraham Kuyper. The influence of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper on Christian schools in other countries, particularly the USA and Canada is briefly examined, along with the importance of the relationship between North American Calvinist schools and CPC schools in Australia.

In addition to the importance of theological beliefs in the establishment of CPC schools, this chapter examines the situation in Australia in the second half of the twentieth century, in which the absence of schooling alternatives for the average Protestant family, together with increasing concerns that traditional 'Christian' values were being undermined, resulted in the establishment of a number of Protestant schooling endeavours.

The early days of the Dutch migrants in Australia and their attitudes to schooling, together with the important contributions made by a number of 'non-Dutch' Australians to the development of these schools is considered. Studies devoted to Christian schooling in Australia and similar Christian schools in other countries, particularly North America are reviewed.

Origins of the Worldview of the CPC Pioneers

Groen Van Prinsterer

In order to understand the worldview of the CPC pioneers and their determination to establish their own schools in Australia, it is important to consider the significant contributions made to Dutch society and education and to the thinking of Dutch Reformed-Christians by the Calvinist philosopher-politicians, Groen Van Prinsterer and Abraham Kuyper, from the middle of the 19th to early in the 20th century.

Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer was born in 1801 of wealthy, aristocratic parents and became an historian, politician, and strong advocate for Christian schools. As a young man, he was appointed to the Protestant House of Orange as archivist, and while there was converted through the ministry of one of the court chaplains to an uncompromising Reformed faith that acknowledged the lordship of Christ, not only over the individual, but also over politics and society as well. (Kalsbeek, 1975, p. 16)

The two major ideologies that Van Prinsterer observed at work in Western Civilisation were the principles of the Revolution and the principles of the Reformation. By the "Revolutionary Principles", he referred not so much to the political beliefs that led to the French Revolution of 1789, but rather to the accompanying ideology which undergirded and inspired it, an ideology which had held sway throughout Europe since the 18th century. In 1847, Van Prinsterer published "Apostasy and Revolution", a Christian critique of the ideals of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment and a manifesto for Christian political and social action. Van Prinsterer saw the essence of the French Revolution in the notion that humankind could independently restructure society according to the dictates of reason alone. This system of thought Van Prinsterer regarded as atheistic and opposed to God's sovereignty in every sphere of life, including politics. He argued that revolutionary philosophy and Christian principles were antithetical, demonstrated clearly by the revolutionary cry, "No God, No Master!". Van Prinsterer devoted his political life to the cause of reviving public Christianity in the wake of the impact of the French Revolution, with the intention of enabling

Christianity to have a salutary effect on the heart and mind of western culture (Kalsbeek, 1975, pp. 16-17 & 145-147; Skillen, 1974, pp. 7-9; Heslam, 1998, pp. 97-98).

Van Prinsterer held that Christianity was antithetical to any kind of humanism, conservative, liberal or radical, because he regarded humanism itself as a new kind of religion. In opposition to the idea of state sovereignty, he posed the thesis of God's sovereignty and the biblical view of the limited nature of state authority in societal life. His political antithesis between the Christian faith and the unbelief of the Revolutionary principles was a new position in Dutch political life and he established the Anti-Revolutionary Party (A.R.P.) in order to contend with the Dutch liberals who endorsed the ideals of the French revolution (Van Essen and Morton, p. 28). Van Prinsterer maintained:

> Where no supreme lawgiver is recognised, where no moral authority governs man, there is no sanctity of office, no independence of government, no support save in the will of the people, no inviolability of property. Liberalism gives way to radicalism and is genealogically related to communism and socialism. Authority in the state and every relationship, has a source higher than the human will. The moment this divine right of government is denied and sovereignty by the grace of God repudiated - that moment there is no legitimacy, no justice based on unshakeable foundations, but instead legality, a justice based only on the inconstancy of man-made law - at that moment there is no barrier against the Revolution (as cited in Kalsbeek, 1975, pp. 32-33).

Although his battle with liberalism touched every major political question of parliamentary discussion, the issue came to a head in connection with the religio-cultural direction of the public school system, in which Van Prinsterer saw himself battling to break the monopoly of liberal educators. In the 17th Century, the perspectives of Reformed Christians had heavily influenced public elementary education in the Netherlands and at that time church, state and education were closely associated. However, as a consequence of the influence of the French Revolution and of rationalistic deism, the ties between church and state were broken, and education in the Netherlands became entirely the responsibility of the state.

Van Prinsterer's opposition to government control of education was unequivocal. He asserted that in the public school, "so-called neutrality grows into the most pernicious partiality favouring unbelief and ends in proselytism for the religion of reason and nature" (as cited in Van Brummelen, 1986, p.

22). As influential as they were, Van Prinsterer and his friends lobbied from 1843 to 1849 before receiving permission to start a school in The Hague and it was not until the new Dutch constitution of 1848 guaranteed freedom of education that a number of Christian schools were established. By 1864, 267 'free' schools had been established throughout the Netherlands (Kalsbeek, 1975, pp. 16-17; Van Brummelen, 1986, p. 28).

In parliament, Van Prinsterer insisted:

> Parents who, with or without sufficient grounds, are convinced that the direction of education in existing schools is unchristian, must not be prevented from giving their children such education, directly or indirectly, for which they believe they can give account to God. Coercion - I say it openly - is unbearable and ought to be ended. It is a presumption originating with theories of the revolution that holds that children are considered to be the property of the state, disregarding the rights of parents (as cited in Van Brummelen, 1986, p. 23).

Van Prinsterer argued that the notion that the state, separated from the church, had the right and the duty to govern education according to its own discretion and insight was destructive. While he wanted public schools to be adequately equipped he also wanted separate, government-sponsored schools for Protestants and Catholics. Van Prinsterer maintained that where public schools were imposed on the people without regard to their beliefs or needs, then the people were being oppressed. Freedom of education would be limited to those who had enough money to establish a free (*bijzondere*) school. While supportive of public schools for those who wanted them, he was not convinced that these schools could support children from Christian families as they could not be strictly neutral (Van Essen and Morton, 1990, pp. 60&81).

The neutral public school remained an incongruity as far as Van Prinsterer was concerned:

> The moment you provide education, there is rearing there, which is based on some moral doctrine rooted in some religion or in none. And where the nature of your school excludes positive religion, people fall into the generalities of rationalistic deism and sentimentality. What is intolerable in this is that the state school is made compulsory, that this religionless education is forced upon a Christian nation (as cited in Van Essen and Morton, 1990, p. 84).

The basis of Van Prinsterer's struggle was his belief that a Christian nation, or at least the Christian part of the nation, had the right to access an education for their children which thoroughly and openly espoused values consistent with their Christian beliefs.

Abraham Kuyper

The Calvinistic Christian school movement of the Netherlands had its own nation wide association, the 'Society for Christian National Education' and at their national convention in Utrecht in May 1869 Abraham Kuyper, a local pastor, first met Groen Van Prinsterer, the society's honorary chair. Kuyper delivered the pre-convention address and said later of his meeting with Van Prinsterer, "From that hour I became his spiritual associate, no, more his spiritual son" (as cited in Vanden Berg, 1960, p.52.). A few months later, Van Prinsterer pointed in a public meeting to Kuyper as the future leader of the A.R.P. Kuyper shared Van Prinsterer's opposition to revolutionary philosophy and revolutionary principles and also his strong support for a schooling system which was able to support the beliefs of Christians. Ultimately, it was the school issue that led Kuyper into politics as only parliament possessed the constitutional power to legislate on education.

A crucial element in Kuyper's outlook was his view that Christians are called to participate with others in humanity's common endeavours while remaining unequivocally Christian. He believed that this was different to traditional Christian approaches, the most common being that in which Christians blend into their society with a faith that is essentially privatised, displaying values that are indistinguishable from those of their surrounding culture. The other major approach involves Christians maintaining their primary identity and loyalty to Christ by withdrawing from the wider society, rather than participating in it and sometimes forming separate communities.

Kuyper argued, however, that Christians should be involved in their culture without shedding their primary identity and loyalty as followers of Christ. His vision was of a pluralistic society, in which Christians would participate in society without seeking hegemony over it (Heslam, 1998, pp. 120-123). Kuyper's argument that schools ought to serve the needs of particular religious and non-

religious sections of Dutch society, in cooperation with and supported by the government, was consistent with this perspective.

It has been argued that the pattern of social organisation which characterised the Netherlands for the greater part of the 20th century, pillarisation (*verzuiling*) resulted largely from Kuyper's efforts to establish social, educational and political institutions based on Reformed principles. Kuyper also argued that each ideological group in Dutch society - Catholic, Protestant, Liberal and Socialist; had the right to organise their own institutions and that no one group should presume to represent the interests of the whole nation. Thus, Dutch society was divided into pillars (*zuilen*) based on ideology rather than class.

In 1874, Kuyper entered parliament and delivered his first major speech on the question of grade schools. He argued that education should be given autonomous status, free of parliamentary control, with local, provincial and national boards to direct the whole school system. At the same time, Kuyper recognised the rights of the state regarding education, arguing that the state should legislate on such things as general instructional standards, teacher certification, and school attendance. In turn, he felt that the state had an obligation to ensure that all parents including the poorer, would be able to send their children to schools of their choice and as one aspect of this, he maintained that the state should reimburse the non-government schools for the money they saved the government (Heslam, 1998, pp. 39-40).

In 1878, the Dutch Prime Minister, Kappeyne, introduced an educational bill aimed at destroying the non-government schools by imposing on them massive, additional financial burdens. In response to this, Kuyper and his associates petitioned the King opposing Kappeyne's bill with 305 000 signatures. The Catholics presented a similar petition with 164 000 signatures. Although the petitions failed and the King gave the legislation his approval, there emerged a great reservoir of potential voters who were now alert to the schooling issue and were willing to support Kuyper and other political leaders in their fight to obtain parental choice in schooling (Heslam, 1998, pp. 44-45).

In 1889, the ARP under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper led a coalition with the Catholics to defeat the liberals and form a government which legislated the first subsidies for non-government

schools. Kuyper himself became Dutch Prime Minister in 1901, however progress was slow and it was not until 1917 that parliament decided to completely finance both public and private education from the public treasury and give 'free' schools the independence to choose their own teachers and teaching materials.

While Kuyper further developed the thinking of Van Prinsterer and as Prime-minister actually orchestrated the fulfilment of many of their schooling aspirations, it is nevertheless the case that Kuyper saw himself as Van Prinsterer's spiritual son. Even though many single out Kuyper, it is reasonable to argue that the schooling situation that was established in the Netherlands in the first half of the twentieth century and the Calvinist schooling movement of North America (considered later in this chapter) and CPC schooling in Australia was a result of the thinking and activities of both men. In the remainder of this study, the terms "Kuyperian" or 'Kuyperian thought' will be understood to include the ideas of both Kuyper and Van Prinsterer.

The Values of the Dutch Migrants

The values and attitudes that the Reformed Dutch migrants in Australia held toward schooling were shaped not only by the struggle and eventual success of Christian schooling in the Netherlands, but also by the Reformed or Calvinist worldview which had promoted and sustained this struggle, particularly in the form developed by Kuyper and Van Prinsterer. A complex of theological beliefs and philosophical concepts such as 'antithesis', 'common grace', 'covenant', 'cultural mandate', 'sphere sovereignty' and the 'sovereignty of God' shaped their worldview, not necessarily in a uniform way, as some of the concepts were overlapping and complementary while others appeared to be incompatible.

Fowler (1976b) suggested that the worldview of the Reformed migrants from the Netherlands was a critical factor in the establishment of CPC schools:

> Perhaps the most valuable of all gifts that Reformed Christians from the Netherlands brought with them is their world and life view. It seems that some were not aware that they brought this in their baggage with them when they landed in Australia. … This world and life view that was brought here from the Netherlands has succeeded in

enriching our Australian way of life in some measure, most notably in the development of parent-controlled Christian schools. The impetus and initiative for these schools arose from the world and life view that Dutch Reformed Christians brought with them, but it is no longer possible to regard these as "Dutch" schools. Increasingly, they are becoming part of our common Australian way of life, supported by Christians from many traditions. Our Australian way of life is immeasurably richer as a result. If Dutch Reformed Christians had contributed nothing else to the development of the new Australia in these last twenty five years we all would have much to be grateful to the Lord for (pp. 8-10).

Long (1996) also maintained that "Kuyper's influence upon Dutch Reformed Christian schooling is foundational to an understanding of Christian Parent Controlled schools" (p. 124). Weeks, one of the non-Dutch Australians who was attracted quite early both to the Reformed Churches and to the parent controlled Christian school movement, observed "There is no question that the migrants were on the whole 'Kuyperians' .… and that some had caught his [Kuyper's] view that Christians should "claim every square inch of the universe for Christ" (Pioneer Interview 1). Rev. J. Deenick also agreed that Kuyper's influence was significant:

Kuyper's perspective was part and parcel of your whole being …. the worldview was Kuyperian, and you never questioned that - the Christian newspaper, the Christian trade-union, the Christian political party etc, you never questioned that that was the way it should be, … The issue straight away was how to bring faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the teachings of the Word of God to permeate through the whole of the curriculum (Pioneer Interview 6).

Deenick alluded to an aspect of the Reformed worldview that these migrants had brought with them which was slightly different to the focus on piety of many Australian evangelical Christians of the time. Alcohol and tobacco, for example, were much more widely accepted by these Dutch Christians and while personal piety was regarded as important, it was not their primary focus. In the tradition of Kuyper, they believed that Christians should be concerned with and involved in all aspects of life, including politics, trade-unions and newspapers. Nyhouse, for example, contrasted the Australian "evangelicals' emphasis on personal devotions and making a commitment to Christ" with the emphasis in the Reformed Churches on "the transforming power of the gospel in a cultural sense" (Pioneer Survey 14).

A number of years earlier Nyhouse (1980) wrote concerning the implications of this worldview for Christian schools:

> A school is not necessarily Christian if swearing, theories of evolution or lewd literature are banned. The children will be taught about the effects of sin, the misery and suffering it causes in our countries and throughout the world, and the task of the body of Christ in bringing redemption to bear on all of life. The Christian school is a place where children are prepared to be the salt of the earth, to bring renewal and reformation to the world (p.83).

Hoekzema also commented on the connection between the values of these Reformed Christian migrants and their support for Christian education:

> 'Reformedness' is an ingrained thing, it has been raised in you from childhood. Not the word but the context has been inculcated into you by way of values - what Reformed values stand for. So too the Christian school movement in Holland was based on Kuyper's ideas, and it was just part and parcel of our mindset (Pioneer Interview 3).

There were a number of theological motifs with strong links to Kuyper and Van Prinsterer that contributed to the worldview of the migrants and which in turn, had a major impact on the establishment of CPC schools. These motifs had a wider scope than the foundational values, which were focused specifically on schooling but these motifs, nevertheless, informed and helped shape the foundational values. One of the more significant of these theological motifs was 'antithesis'.

Theological Motifs that Informed the Foundational Values

Antithesis

Van Prinsterer and Kuyper, and then from the 1920s, Dooyeweerd, argued that a thoroughly Christian philosophy was grounded in the antitheses between God and creation, between Christian and non-Christian, and between the Word of God and all forms of idolatry. Every non-Christian, non-Calvinist religion or philosophy was opposed (Dooyeweerd, 1979, pp. 8-13; Kalsbeek 1975, pp. 45 ff.). This concept of antithesis was not confined to discussions in churches and seminaries, but was so pervasive in the thinking and the political life of the Dutch people that in May 1945 as the

Netherlands was seeking to overcome the ravages and dislocation of WWII, the Dutch National Movement (*Nederlandse Volksbeweging*) saw fit to appeal to their nation to reject it:

> The greatest possible consensus among the various religious and political groups is necessary at this time, in order to alleviate our desperate needs, to repair what was laid waste, to stamp out all corruption .... Specifically, the Christian antithesis and the Marxist class struggle are no longer fruitful principles for the solution of today's social problems (Dooyeweerd 1979, p.2).

Dooyeweerd (1979) a Dutch 'Kuyperian' scholar, argued in support of the notion of Christian antithesis and maintained that the Christian religion drew an absolute dividing line of fundamental significance for both the personal faith of a Christian and for their understanding of every aspect of life. He rejected the possibility of a synthesis between a Christian worldview and any other.

This approach is evident in the comments of Patterson (1967), the first principal of Rehoboth CPC School, "A secular method of teaching is the exact antithesis [to Christian teaching] - God is forgotten, sin becomes a human weakness, science becomes the saviour of man" (p.3). Fowler (1980a) placed antithesis at the heart of CPC educational philosophy in the edited collection of essays on CPC schooling, *No Icing on the Cake*:

> We can expect to develop an educational practice in which the gospel principle functions as the yeast only as we take seriously the religious antithesis that divides human life at the deepest level ... every human thought and action in relation to the creation, is directed by one of two religious principles that can never be reconciled. We either respond in faith with wholehearted love for God or we respond in unbelief in the service of a creaturely substitute for God. There is no middle, religiously neutral ground for any kind of human thought or action (pp. 11-12).

This notion of antithesis goes some way towards explaining why so many Dutch migrants of Reformed background, most of whom were struggling financially, not only to purchase their own homes but also to establish churches, were unwilling to compromise their beliefs regarding schooling or to find a degree of consensus with those involved in secular education or even with other Christians of different theological perspectives. This view of antithesis was also an important element in the general context out of which CPC schools resolved that their approach to curriculum

would be explicitly and distinctively Christian, an approach that will be examined further when considering Foundational Value III.

Sphere Sovereignty

Another concept central to an understanding of the establishment of CPC schools was 'sphere sovereignty'. Van Prinsterer was the first person to use the phrase 'sovereignty within its own sphere' (*souvereiniteit in eigen sfeer*), recognising the fundamental differences between the state, the church and the family but it was Kuyper who developed and promoted the notion that sphere sovereignty was a principle that God had set into creation. He argued:

> Among the means that God has granted nobler peoples to defend their liberties, scholarship often stands at the forefront … In its authentic form God sent it to us as an angel of light …. provided that scholarship remains 'Sovereign in its own sphere' and does not degenerate under the guardianship of Church or State (cited in Bratt, 1998, pp. 475-476).

Kuyper maintained that there were different spheres of reality, each autonomous and sovereign, including the state, the church, the family, art, science and economic enterprise. He argued that because the state and the family were independent sovereign spheres of reality, and because children were born into families, it was the responsibility of parents, not the state, to care for and to educate children. The role of the state was to govern, so schools should be left to the jurisdiction of parents. Kuyper maintained that parents, rather than government bureaucrats or teachers who have different educational philosophies and responsibilities should set educational priorities, monitor educational practices and hire staff. (Dooyeweerd 1979, pp. 40-60; Kalsbeek 1975, pp. 91-94; Heslam 1998, pp. 154 - 160).

The following impression of this concept of sphere sovereignty comes from a study-book used by youth groups of the Reformed Churches in Australia in the 1960s:

> The school is a sphere of life which has for its purpose the bringing to development of all the functions of the child. … No school ought to be ecclesiastical. The Church does not have as its task the developing of all the functions of a child by means of generally formative instruction. ... We decidedly reject a church-school … but urge a broad basis

of cooperation among all who recognise Christ as King. … The State can never act as educator because it must be neutral … The State may not play the schoolmaster any more than the Church (De Jongste and Krimpen, n.d.).

There was a direct relationship then, between this concept of sphere sovereignty and the perspective of the Dutch migrants that education was a responsibility given to parents by God and should not therefore, be left to other agencies, such as the government or the church. The concept of 'parent control' drew much of its inspiration from this theological concept of sphere sovereignty.

Covenant

The Calvinist concept of covenant was also part of the conceptual structure that the CPC school pioneers brought with them. Speaking of the situation in sister schools in North America, De Boer and Oppewal (1997) suggested:

> Another doctrine especially relevant to parental control of schools is that of the covenant. The effect of [this doctrine] on the conception of schooling is that God uses the institution of the family to carry forward the Kingdom of God. 'Family' here refers … to the total spiritual community of adults who provide funds and support for education (p. 281).

This view of covenant carries with it a conviction that the children of Christians enjoy a special bond with God through their baptism as infants. As a consequence of this baptism, the infants receive the promise that God will transform them into believers, ie, into conscious and intentional members of this covenant (cf. Berkhof, 1958, pp. 287-288). The power of this belief for schooling lies in the responsibility it places on parents to ensure that children are provided with a framework within which they can respond to God. For these parents the framework included a Christian school with an unmistakably Christian curriculum, instruction by Christian teachers and governance by Christian parents.

Weeks commented on the importance of the covenant for CPC schools:

> The early schools grew out of the Reformed Church community with their strong covenant theology. Some schools made it explicit in their constitution that students had to have at least one Christian parent…. In the early days many believed that only Christians and possibly only Reformed Church Christians would be interested in parent controlled Christian education (Pioneer Interview 1).

This view of the covenant was an important element in the development of the foundational value that maintained that CPC schools were established primarily to support Christian families in the task of educating their children.

Common Grace and the Cultural Mandate

Common grace was another principle held by Reformed Christians that influenced the development of CPC schools. Berkhof (1958) argued that the concept of common grace resulted from the observation that "there is in the world … a natural course of life, which is not redemptive and yet exhibits many traces of the true, the good, and the beautiful … [it explains] the special gifts and talents with which natural man [sic] is endowed, and of the development of science and art by those who are entirely devoid of the new life that is in Christ Jesus" (p. 432). On the basis of this belief, Reformed Christians believe that true knowledge and understanding of creation is not confined to Christians and that the work of a non-Christian artist, mathematician or scientist can be valid and can accurately reflect God's purposes in creation. "Owing to God's common grace, real virtue and knowledge live on. … All people have a 'relic' of the original image of God that gives them a sense of justice and rectitude" (Hughes and Adrian, 1997, pp. 128-129).

Closely related to this understanding of common grace is the view that Christians can and ought to be involved in their culture:

> The school, through Christian teachers trained in the investigations of history, science, and psychology, among others, aims at cultural involvement and transformation … Rooted in the Genesis command to till the soil, exercise dominion over creation, and to shape society, the cultural mandate gives the school an aim which distinguishes it from the merely secular goals of the public school and the denominational goals of parochial schools. This aim is to be a Christian citizen, a worker in the world of politics, business, and art … This school task of helping young Christians to exercise cultural dominion, rather than seeking cultural isolation, has important consequences for the curriculum (De Boer and Oppewal, 1997, p. 282).

The cultural mandate gained great vigour under Kuyper's leadership of the Neo-Calvinist movement in the Netherlands after 1870.

> The mission he gave his followers [was] to renew Dutch society and culture by dint of their Calvinistic critique and constructions. Indeed, Kuyper opened the whole world for Christian participation; as his most famous dictum puts it: "There is not a square inch on the whole plain of human existence over which Christ, who is Lord of all, does not proclaim: This is mine!". … 'Kuyperianism', then, meant broad and fresh cultural engagement … He demanded that Christians build a comprehensive worldview and pit it in full against those of secularism, humanism, and naturalism. … Some of his followers … listened most to his lessons on 'common grace', the heritage of divine blessing that allowed people of all faiths and none to achieve moral and intellectual good. … But others - we might call them 'Antithetical' Calvinists - harkened more to Kuyper's insistence that an 'antithesis' lay between the fundamental commitments of the regenerate and worldly, that Christians ought therefore to go their own way in all things and stay critical of opposing systems (Bratt and Wells, 1997, p. 143).

This interplay of the concepts of antithesis and cultural mandate has led in most CPC schools to a situation where structures and academic disciplines are comparable to most other Australian schools but within these structures, a critical stance is adopted to subject content. Thus, CPC schools generally teach the syllabuses prescribed by government education departments such as history, mathematics, commercial studies or art, but attempt to infuse the teaching of these subjects with Christian perspectives. This interplay could lie behind a number of the frustrations and concerns evident in the studies of North American Calvinist schools which will be considered later in this chapter.

Sovereignty of God

For the Calvinist, all aspects of creation, all knowledge, and therefore all subjects are under the authority of God and therefore worthy of consideration and study in a Christian school. Because God is sovereign and Christ is King, the Christian school has legitimacy and Christian curriculum is a necessity ie a curriculum that reflects the view that this world belongs to God.

> If one wishes to go to the heart of the Reformed heritage, one must recall that this tradition has exalted the sovereignty of God over all creation for more than 450 years, ever since John Calvin sought to transform the city of Geneva into a model kingdom of Christ. It is little wonder then, that Calvinist scholars … speak often of developing within the academy a 'Christian world-view'. By this they mean that Christian scholars must place their scholarship squarely under the sovereignty of God and in the

service of Christ and approach every discipline from a distinctly Christian perspective (Hughes, 1997, p. 5).

De Boer and Oppewal (1997) emphasised the essential importance of the conception of the sovereignty of God for the Calvinist Christian School:

> Of the theological concepts which support these educational positions [of Calvinist schools] the most pervasive, but also most abstract, is the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Perhaps it is the tap root among other roots. … For education and the schools it has meant that schools express not merely a secular concern. Calvinists see … education as embraced in the Christian's calling to apply this understanding to all areas of life. Thus, educational policy and practice are derived from this worldview, in which the sovereignty of God is the fundamental principle (p. 281).

It is clear from the preceding discussion, that the sovereignty of God was an important theological principle for the Calvinist founders of CPC schools, providing a rationale for approaching the whole enterprise of schooling from a Christian standpoint. All these theological motifs are significant components of the network of beliefs and values that formed the worldviews of the Dutch migrants and contributed to the development of the foundational values of CPC schools.

The thinking of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper has not only been influential in the Netherlands and more recently in Australia, but has also had an impact on Christian education in the UK, Canada and the USA.

The Influence of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper

The United Kingdom

Deakin (1989) commented that the emergence of the "new Christian schools" in Britain, was due to the "secularisation of [government] schools" and the resulting concern on the part of "Christian parents [who] want to see Judaeo-Christian values and principles and a Christian philosophical framework imparted to their children in school as well as in the home" (p. 5).

Even though the UK has not experienced significant numbers of Dutch migrants, Kuyperian thought has made an impression on these new Protestant Christian schools. Lambert (1993) in his doctoral research on the 'The New Christian Schools' Movement in Britain' found that the greatest influence on these schools was the "theory and practice of similar types of schools established some years earlier by Dutch Reformed Christians in a number of Commonwealth countries, particularly Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa" (p.11).

South Africa

Given the Dutch heritage of many of the Afrikaaners of South Africa, it is not surprising that the thinking of Kuyper has also had an influence there. However, because much of the material referring to Kuyper is written in Afrikaans, the researcher has not been able to access it. The following information was forwarded by an educator familiar with the thinking of Kuyper and the situation in South Africa:

> Kuyperian influence can be discerned in the Afrikaans section of the South African population, … 'Christian National Education' was a direct result of Kuyperian thought. It places great emphasis on the validity of the Christian lifeview, which is seen as all embracing. … Although the Potchefstroom University in South Africa was established before (1869) the Free University in Amsterdam (1888), the latter under the inspiring hand of Kuyper, Kuyperian thinking had much influence in the thinking of Potchefstroom scholars in the period between 1880 and 1960. Especially educationists like J Chr Coetzee of Potchefstroom were profoundly influenced by Kuyperian thinking (Prof. J. L. van der Walt, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, personal communication, 17 May 2001).

The perceptions and teachings of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper have had some influence in South Africa, however, it has not had the same impact as in Canada, the US or Australia. While these countries have schooling systems whose values and impetus were derived from the thinking of these men, this has not been the case in South Africa. 'Christian National Education' bears little resemblance to CPC schools in Australia or to the Dutch Calvinist schools of North America. Fowler, whose own doctoral work was undertaken at Potchefstroom in South Africa, commented on this issue:

"Christian National Education" as developed by Afrikaaner academics in South Africa
… meant a rigid system of strict segregation of ethnic groups in education. It meant
that each ethnic group was to have its own system of education which was exclusively
for the members of that ethnic group. "Christian National Education" was the
cornerstone of the apartheid system of education. Though it was claimed that it was
based on Kuyperian sphere sovereignty, the use of state power to enforce such a
segregated system of education on everyone within the borders of the state was clearly
a violation of Kuyperian sphere sovereignty and certainly far removed from Kuyper's
vision of freedom of educational choice with the state facilitating that freedom of
choice (Fowler, personal communication, 7 October 2001).

Lederle suggested similarly that the Christian National Education of the Afrikaaners was developed
largely in opposition to the control of the English and was concerned with "the attaining of doctrinal
religious instruction, mother tongue as medium and the inclusion of South African history in the
syllabus" and that Christian education of the Kuyperian kind has had little impact on South African
schooling (n.d., p. 34).

Canada and the USA

Christian schools with a Dutch Calvinist heritage have existed in North America since the 19th
century and many belong to Christian Schools International (CSI), an organisation which is
comparable to CPCS. CSI and CPCS have a close relationship, with many of the keynote speakers
at the biennial CPC schools 'Focus' conferences coming from schools or colleges associated with
CSI. A number of Australians have also contributed to CSI conferences and in addition, many CSI
publications have been particularly influential in Australian CPC schools.

Concerning their own heritage and distinctive approach, the Canadian Calvinist educator, Van
Brummelen (1986) maintained:

More than anyone else in modern times, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) put his stamp
on Dutch Calvinism, including its North American branch. ... two themes in Kuyper's
thinking especially affected North American schools. The first were his notions of
antithesis and common grace. … the second was sphere sovereignty … Kuyper's most
visible influence on [Dutch Calvinist] Christian schools in the United States was that
between 1891 and 1911 all but one changed from being church schools to ones

operated by independent associations of parents. … What Kuyper did help to instil in the Christian school movement was a faith that God guided the destiny of those holding onto and applying Calvinistic principles to areas such as education (pp. 77-81).

In a review of a collection of essays concerning Calvin College of Michigan, Akers (1997) wrote:

Bratt and Wells make it abundantly clear that Kuyper is the founding father of Dutch Reformed education and that the transit of the [Calvin] college through the 20th century cannot be properly understood without recognising the towering vision and educational philosophy of that seminal thinker." (p. 283).

There are a number of younger tertiary colleges in North America with close connections to the Christian Reformed Church such as Dordt College in Iowa, Trinity Christian College in Illinois, Kings College in Edmonton, Redeemer College in Ontario and the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto that have been similarly influenced by Kuyper.

In a study of Dutch Calvinist education in Alberta, Canada, Prinsen (2000) acknowledged the role of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper in the values and basic principles of this schooling system and maintained that the move in American Calvinist schools from church control to control by societies of parents was due to the influence of Kuyper. Significantly, he wrote, "Kuyper, it can be argued, is the father of Alberta's Calvinists school community." (p. 87).

It is clear from these observations that in a manner similar to Australia, the perspectives of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper have been influential in determining the nature and values of a number of Christian schools in Canada and the USA. It is also clear however, that there are differences. That a more direct 'Dutch' influence in these North American schools continued beyond the establishment period and continues to be more pervasive than in Australia, is evidenced by the prevalence of 'Dutch' names amongst teachers and leaders in CSI (Christian Schools International) schools. Prinsen (2000) described a situation in Alberta, Canada which highlights this difference:

Alberta's 'Dutch' Calvinist Christian schools are a manifestation of the desire of orthodox Dutch Calvinists to maintain their identity. This identity is defined by, and rooted in, orthodox Dutch Calvinism. ... While on one hand Calvinist Christian schools

have welcomed and even encouraged families from many different Christian backgrounds, on the other hand, the founding Calvinist communities have erected barriers around themselves. These barriers, though subtle, ensure school control remains with orthodox Calvinists and help Dutch Calvinists retain their identity by excluding non-Dutch, or those who dissent from a particular interpretation, from their inner circles (pp. 273-274).

This study does not have the scope to pursue these differences in detail, but it is clear that the different cultural and political context in Australia, which included parents' concerns with the educational values of government schools and significant government financial support for private schools from the 1970s contributed to the ready acceptance by many non-Dutch Australians of CPC schools. This context will be considered in more detail in the next section.

The Australian Context

The Growth in Non-Government Schools in Australia

The factors that led to the establishment and rapid growth of CPC schools were not solely confined to worldviews and values. Over the past forty years, the number and variety of non-government schools in Australia in general, has increased substantially. In 1958, the proportion of students attending non-government schools was 24%, but by 2000 this figure had grown to 31%. In this period, the "other" sector (non-government, non-Catholic and non-Anglican) grew from 2.7% to 7.8% of all students. In the period from 1986 to 2000, while there was an increase of 8.2% in school enrolments overall, the increase in students attending in the non-government, 'other' category was 79.7%. Commenting in 1997, Bentley suggested regarding this 'other' category, "The majority of this increase can be attributed to the rise of the alternative Christian school movement" (1997, p.4). See Tables 2:1 and 2:2 (below) for these figures.

Table 2:1 - _Percentage_ of Australian Students Attending Schools: _1958 to 2000_				
Year	**Government Schools**	**Non - Government Schools**		
		Catholic	**Anglican**	_Other_ **Non-Gov't**
1958	*76.0%*	*19.4%*	*1.9%*	**2.7%**
1986	*73.6%*	*19.3%*	*2.4%*	**4.7%**
1996	*70.7%*	*19.6%*	*2.9%*	**6.8%**
2000	*69.2%*	*19.8%*	*3.2%*	**7.8%**

(Sources: Bentley, 1997, p. 5; Australian Bureau of Statistics Bulletin 4221.0 - Schools, Australia; Official Yearbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, No. 46, 1960, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra.)

Table 2:2 - _Increases_ in the Number of Students Attending Schools - _1986 to 2000_					
	All Schools	**Government**	**Non-Government**		
			Catholic	**Anglican**	**"Other"**
Students attending Australian schools in 1986	3001389	*2207801*	*581023*	*71624*	*140941*
Students attending Australian schools in 2000	3247425	*2248287*	*641631*	*104241*	*253266*
Increase in no. of students from 1986 to 2000	246036	*40487*	*60608*	*32617*	*112325*
Increase in % of students from 1986 to 2000	*8.2%*	*1.8%*	*10.4%*	*45.5%*	*79.7%*

(Source: Bentley, 1997, p. 5; Australian Bureau of Statistics Bulletin 4221.0 - Schools, Australia.)

One of the reasons proposed for this drift of students from government to non-government schools, particularly the 'other' non-government category, was the perception by parents that non-government schools have a greater commitment to traditional values. In the *Bulletin* magazine's lead article of 24 August 1999, Bagnall commented:

> Who would have thought that value-laden education would be the hottest item in the educational market-place in resolutely secular modern Australia? In one of the paradoxes of our age, tens of thousands of parents, many of them not card-carrying churchgoers, are choosing to entrust their children's education to organised religion at a time when Christian adherence is in long-term decline. … Other new independent schools that fall outside the fast-growing Christian sector are big on the "V" word too (1999, p. 20).

While parents' perceptions that government schools lacked traditional values was noteworthy enough to become a feature story in a leading magazine in the late 1990s, it was nevertheless also an issue for a number of parents in the 1950s and 1960s when CPC schools commenced. If there had been schooling alternatives for the Reformed Dutch migrants which were both religiously and financially viable, CPC schools may not have been established. This view is supported in a letter to the CPC journal, the *Christian School Reporter* in 1968 by a Reformed Church minister, Van Brussel, who suggested that the reasons that South Australia had not established a CPC school was due to the quality and values of Lutheran schooling which were consistent with the worldview of these Dutch migrant families:

> There exist fine possibilities for our [RCA] people to have their children trained in Christian schools. … A number of parents have been sending their children to the St John's Lutheran Dayschool at Highgate and to Concordia College. …the quality of this education of our Lutheran brethren is excellent, especially the Christian character of it. Our experience over 13 years is that these schools are a blessing for our children (1968, p. 11).

The following section explores further the paucity of schooling options supportive of the values of Protestant families, which faced the Reformed Dutch migrants on their arrival in Australia.

The Absence of an Affordable Protestant Alternative in Education

After the Protestant churches in Australia withdrew from general schooling in the late nineteenth century, their involvement in education was restricted to weekly Scripture classes in public schools, "Sunday schools" and the provision of schools for the wealthier sections of society. This withdrawal left a gap that was evident to the Dutch Calvinist migrants, who began planning CPC schools soon after their arrival in the 1950s and 1960s.

This lack of an affordable Protestant Christian schooling alternative was also a factor in the establishment of Christian Community Schools, in the popularity of Accelerated Christian Education, and more recently in the establishment of a number of low-fee Anglican schools (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2000, p.20).

Rev Alexander Barkley, a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and first lecturer and principal of the Reformed Theological College which was independent of, but sponsored by, the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA) wrote the following:

> [The Victorian Education Bill of 1872] provided for an education that would be free, secular and compulsory. ... The introduction of secular education must also be regarded as an indictment of denominationalism. ... The weakness of the Protestant Churches in the whole controversy was, in no small measure, due to their adherence to the principle of the parochial school. ... [which] works very well in an area where a sufficient percentage of the population belongs to the church concerned. In a vast country with a widely scattered population, a tremendous strain is laid upon the Church if an adequate education is to be provided for all her children.
>
> If the parochial system is not effective and since the secular is not acceptable to the Christian parent, the question arises - what is there left? The answer surely lies in the principle of the Christian school. Fundamental to this concept is the fact that the education of the child is the responsibility of the parent. We believe this is a covenant obligation which no Christian parent can lightly esteem (Deuteronomy 6:1-7).
>
> ... Instead of surrendering their children to the State controlled secular education it would have been a different picture if Christian parents had taken their stand for Christian education. Instead of having an Anglican school in one street and a Presbyterian in the next it would have meant one school standing for a system of

education that glorifies God and brings the school and the parents into a relationship that is conducive for the best interests of the child (1972, pp. 21-23).

The present constituency of CPC schools comprises families from all the major denominations, and these schools, which commenced largely as 'Dutch schools', now include only a small percentage of families from the RCA (estimated at between 5% and 15% by the CPCS Ltd. national office). This broad support for CPC schooling supports the contention that the wider Protestant Christian community was aware at the time CPC schools were being established that there was a gap in schooling alternatives.

The absence of a Protestant Christian schooling alternative became increasingly significant as parents' concerns grew that the values of government schools were increasingly in conflict with traditional Christian values. In the *Bulletin* article cited earlier, Bagnall (1999) suggested that "the growing popularity of this type of education [Christian schooling] since the late '70s", could be due to "a rejection of what appears to be failing - that is, the secular humanist values that are the baseline of public education" (p. 21).

In her study of the leadership of the new wave of Australian Christian schools, Collins also maintained that "one of the salient reasons for the emergence of Christian schools has been the desire of parents to procure for their children an education that actively teaches Judeo-Christian values" (1997, p. 6). Lambert reported similar reasons for the growth of these new Christian schools in Australia:

> The reasons commonly given for the emergence of these relatively new alternative Christian schools centre on what their supporters perceive to be the failure of the multi-faith approach in many state schools which they argue has led to chaos in the area of personal values and morality, and a devaluation and/or marginalisation of Christian perspectives in the curriculum in many state and traditional church schools (1997, p. 275).

It was in this context that CPC schools commenced. Dutch parents of Reformed persuasion who wanted Christian education for their children, had only expensive church schools, Catholic schools

or a limited number of Lutheran or Adventist schools from which to choose. Most of these were ruled out because they were too expensive, or on the basis of theological differences.

Maguire (1975) argued that the motivation of the Reformed Christian migrants to found their own schools in Australia went beyond a desire to establish schools with traditional Dutch values: "The intellectual roots and development of the Dutch Reformed migrants' movement for Parent-Controlled Christian day schools … was basically inspired by the Calvinistic worldview rather than the desire to transplant a feature of Dutch life to Australian soil" (p.3).

The advent of state aid in the 1960s undoubtedly assisted in the growth of the non-government schooling sector, but this was not a sufficient explanation for, or even a significant factor in the establishment and development of (at least) the earliest CPC schools. Many of these schools had commenced or were being planned before state aid was an issue of any consequence. Hoekzema (1979) remarked that at a planning meeting in 1961, five years before Tyndale CPC School started:

> There was also a report from a board member who had inquired with the NSW Department of Education as to the regulations governing the setting up of schools and the assistance available. Sad to say, about the only thing free at the time was the milk supplied in quarter pint bottles to the children (p.2).

As this group in Blacktown continued to plan with no expectation of government assistance, it was clear that state aid was not a critical factor in its establishment. It would be reasonable to contend, however, that increasing government assistance to private schools, particularly as a result of the election of a federal labor government in 1972 contributed to the burgeoning growth of CPC schools in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The Early Days of CPC Schools in Australia

As a result of the difficult economic situation that the Netherlands found itself in after World War II, there was a mass emigration to countries such as Australia which received 30% of all post-war Dutch migrants. During the 1950s the Dutch were the second largest group to settle in Australia, representing 10% of its migrant intake. When Dutch Calvinists began to arrive in Australia, they initially sought out churches with which they had the closest affinity, so many of the members of the

Dutch Reformed Church (*Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*) joined the Presbyterian church and many from the more theologically conservative Reformed Churches (*Gereformeerde Kerken*) joined the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (or the 'Free Presbyterians'). However, for some of the migrants, aspects of Presbyterianism were doctrinally unacceptable and the instrument-free style of worship of the Free Presbyterians was awkward and unfamiliar, so these largely Calvinist, Dutch migrants decided to establish their own church. As a result, the Reformed Churches of Australia was established in 1952. (Jupp, 1988 and Van Zetten & Deenick, 1991). This 'go it alone' attitude for doctrinal and other reasons had overtones of their commitment to the concept of antithesis which also informed their approach to schooling.

While CPC schools welcomed Christian families of other denominations from the outset, particularly those of mainstream Protestant background, it was nevertheless the case that in the early years, enrolments were primarily from families attending the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA). In 1967, of the 221 students attending Calvin (128 students), Tyndale (48 students) and Rehoboth (45 students), 210 or 95% were classified as Dutch - Australians and only 11 as Australians. Of the 210 Dutch-Australians, 204 belonged to families who attended the RCA. Four of the eight teachers attended the RCA (De Ruiter and Hoekzema, 1967, p. 18). Clearly, the influence of the Reformed Churches, at least numerically, was pervasive in the beginning.

Another indication of the importance of the schools to the RCA was the recommendation by the RCA Synod in 1967 that the churches take two offerings each year to aid the NUPCCS (National Union of associations of Parent Controlled Christian Schools) to give assistance to needy schools and associations.

In the very first issue of the RCA magazine, *Trowel and Sword* of October 1954, an article '*Van Vrouw Tot Vrouw*' (From Woman to Woman) was written which gives a glimpse of the perspectives of the Dutch migrants. The article also draws attention to the involvement of many of the migrant women who rarely filled leadership positions in CPC schooling:

> On Empire day, ... I was invited to participate in the celebrations with the class. The
> children recited their poems very nicely and the principal of the school spoke. The

children were above all asked to be friendly and helpful, especially towards children from other countries. They should be courteous towards older people and do many good deeds. In the end, it culminated in this: that they should make the world a better place to live in. How? Beginning the fight in their young lives with the help of God? O no, not necessary at all. Goodness, friendliness, politeness. Our children, who are, just like us, prone by nature to hate God and their neighbour - and they are supposed to, through their virtues, make this world of murder and violence into a better place. My thoughts went out to all our children, who are under this influence for so many years. In Holland I had never felt so closely tied to my ancestors as that morning in that classroom, and I understood anew that the fight [for Christian schooling] was worth fighting. ...

You all remember the almost super-human things which women have done during and after the war? The same women are still alive and can still do great things in God's strength. Shall we, immigrant wives, together fight the fight for the Christian school? For our children and our grand-children? The saying of Kuyper 'Hold on to the child and hold on to the cross' has lost nothing of its power. May God give us all [we need] to be faithful and prepared (Translation cited by Maguire, 1975, pp. 19-20).

Hoekzema (1990) one of the pioneers himself, recalled the climate in which CPC schools commenced.

Some Dutch migrants of Reformed persuasion arrived in this country in the early fifties and woke to the fact that something they had always taken for granted, a Christian school, was not available, non-existent. This was quite baffling for a supposedly Christian country and mind you, these migrants' grandparents had won the battle for equality of education only forty years before. … They realised they would need to establish Christian schools because on arrival, choosing a school for their children was taken right out of their hands. There was only the state school and from the reactions of the children, it was soon evident there was conflict between the home and the school. … At home they spoke of God the creator, at school it was the Darwinian theory. Sure there were some lovely Scripture lessons, but this very method would lead the children to believe that God and religion was something separate and had little or nothing to do with real life. After all, are we not to acknowledge God in all things? … Frustrated by the lack of control over the education of their children and the means to effect any change, they started doing something. It is worthwhile to note, that the whole [RCA] community was behind it, not just the parents of school-going children.

The anonymous writer of *Van Vrouw Tot Vrouw* and Hoekzema provide a good overview of the issues that were critical to those who first established CPC schools in Australia. These Dutch migrants longed for the Christian schools of their homeland, had a heritage which included a struggle to achieve choice and religious freedom in education, were concerned that the ideology of state schools was not in line with their religious beliefs, regarded weekly Scripture lessons as insufficient because they implied a dualism between religion and other parts of life, and felt keenly their lack of control over their children's education.

The Earliest CPC Schools.

The following reflection conveys values that were evident at the commencement of the first CPC school in Australia, Calvin CPC School in Hobart. These values, including the fundamental importance of Christian education and the antithetical nature of their contrast to the humanistic education provided by state schools, were typical of all the early CPC schools:

> Calvin Christian School was first an idea in the minds of a group of Dutch immigrants who wanted their children to attend a school that gave them a God-centred, Christian education in preference to the man-centred, humanistic education they were receiving in government schools. They brought this idea with them from the Netherlands where Christian schools were numerous and an accepted part of that country's education system. … the 25th July 1954 was the date of the first meeting which was held to establish the 'Christian Parent-Controlled School Association' (Dean, 1987, p.1).

In January of 1966, the same year that the next two CPC schools Tyndale and Rehoboth commenced, a meeting of representatives from the three schools and other associations which had not yet started their schools was held to form the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian Schools (NUPCCS). A national, collaborative approach has been evident from the beginning.

The Involvement of Non-Dutch Australians

While the earliest initiatives toward parent controlled Christian schooling clearly arose from within the Dutch migrant community that constituted the Reformed Churches, there was early and significant input from a number of young Australians who had been attracted to the Reformed Christian world-view. These Australian academics, including Fowler, Fackerell, Weeks and a little later Blomberg, made an important contribution to the early debates and scholarly reflections on the nature of Christian curriculum and the philosophy of Christian education. This phenomenon stands in sharp contrast to the situation in North America where the Kuyperian influence was nearly exclusively confined to the Dutch immigrant community and their progeny.

Van Zetten & Deenick (1991) suggested that Dutch emigration patterns to Australia were dominated by the lower middle classes and the upper lower classes. This may help explain the early welcome extended to Australians who were needed to assist with the leadership required by the fledgling schooling movement. A number of the pioneers gave support to this view, for example, Hoekzema (1988) who wrote, "There were very few educators among the early settlers. Inexperience showed up in all areas, for example, boards, school administration, specialist committees and teachers. It was fairly common for carpenters to become treasurers and accountants to become builders" (p.7). The bi-annual report of the NUPCCS in 1966 suggested "most of our people are factory workers. Quite a few are self-employed, very few are in 'career employment', eg, only 19 school teachers in the whole of Australia" (as cited in Maguire, 1975, p.28). Weeks suggested that "The Dutch migrants who were involved in the Reformed Churches were largely artisans. There were not many professionals and therefore they were not able to clearly articulate their philosophy of Christian education." (Pioneer Interview 1). Fowler had a similar view:

> While I think people who started Christian Parent Controlled Schools were people of great vision and great faith, they had no idea about how they could really implement that faith in schools but they were aware of that. So they looked for people who could help them do it. As it happened, they found it in people who were not Dutch. Neither Ted [Fackerell] nor I have an ounce of Dutch blood. ... However, we had both been significantly influenced by Dutch Reformed thought … by that I mean the Kuyperian

tradition generally, I guess. We had both read work from Kuyper, from Dooyeweerd
and others (Pioneer Interview 9).

Miller expanded on this:

> Some of those [Dutch migrants] involved in the early days of Parent Controlled
> Christian Schools were very knowledgeable about Kuyper, Dooyeweerd, the Free
> University, the roots of the Christian school movement, a reformational view, Christ in
> culture, Christ reforming culture through his people and the concept of always
> reforming, but they were a minority, … people like Arent De Graaf, Bill [J.] Deenick,
> old Nyhouse. The other group that became passionate were the young Australian
> people who had come into the Reformed Churches, I guess seeking out its theological
> position, and then discovering its deeper roots, … young non-Dutch people who had
> been attracted to the Reformed Church because of its Reformed theology … and they
> are the people who really got CPC schools going - the older educated Dutch people
> and the younger Australian people like Ted Fackerell and Stuart Fowler - they helped
> the young non-Dutch Australians who came into the Reformed Church to get the
> picture (Pioneer Interview 5).

The very first Focus Conference, held in 1973 was led largely by Fowler and Fackerell, at the
invitation of Reformed (Dutch-migrant) Christians. The significance of their leadership should not
be underestimated. The early Focus conferences were important meetings for the CPC school
movement, important because they allowed teachers and CPC school leaders to meet and exchange
ideas, but even more so because they provided opportunities to develop Kuyperian thinking for CPC
schooling in Australia. In addition, it was Fowler who drafted the educational creed accepted by the
national organisation and adopted by most CPC schools.

It is clear from this that a number of the significant pioneers were not Dutch, but more significantly,
the invitation extended to Fowler and Fackerell indicated that the Reformed Dutch migrants had a
passion for the success of Christian parent controlled education in Australia that transcended
national, cultural or even personal pride. These recently arrived Dutch migrants exhibited a
willingness to give up leadership to Australians who they regarded as better equipped to lead a
conference concerned with the philosophy and practices of Christian education. This openness

towards other Australians has characterised much of the development of CPC schooling and is one of the reasons that these schools were often quickly accepted by non-Dutch Australians.

The Journal of Christian Education - Values Challenged

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was a lively debate conducted in the pages of the *Journal for Christian Education* between supporters of Christian schools, chiefly CPC schools and other Christian educators, particularly Hill (1978) an evangelical Protestant Christian who is currently Emeritus Professor of Education at Murdoch University. In an article entitled "Is It Time We De-schooled Christianity?" he described Christian schools as "garrisons" and argued that because Christian schools have no clear biblical mandate, cultural conditions are the most important criteria in the Christian's choice of a school. He also expressed the concern that the compulsory and institutionalised nature of schooling in a Christian school would lead to indoctrination and coercion towards faith, which could result in a loss of the freedom necessary for the gospel to prosper:

> He who chooses the Christian school must struggle to avoid indoctrination and cultural isolation … In the longer term, institutionalism takes its toll, as the older wave of Australian Christian schools testifies. … There is research evidence from Australia as well as from other countries that the church school may inoculate many students against truly personal faith by wrongly equating it with conformity to the rules of a Christian school (pp. 15&19).

Weeks (1980) one of the pioneers of Sutherland Christian School in Sydney, responded to Hill in an article entitled "In Defence of Christian Schools". He argued that there was an illusion of neutrality in state schools and that while Christian schools were seeking to shape critical minds, they were at the same time providing a Christian reference point for making judgements. He rejected Hill's claim that Christian schools claimed divine sanction arguing rather that "What is normative is the responsibility the Scriptures places upon parents. ... My claim for the Christian parent-controlled Christian school is that it gives the parent a better opportunity to fulfil that responsibility than the state school." (Weeks, 1980, p. 28).

In the same journal, Blomberg (1980c) also responded to Hill, in an article "Can Schools Be Neutral?" His argument revolved around the thesis that all of life has a religious direction, including

education - "education, in its basis, direction and structure, is ultimately religious, an expression of a vision of life, a view of what things are most meaningful ... Above all, it is a nurturing in a view of life" (pp. 11-12). Blomberg (1980c) continued that because of this religious orientation in education, parents could not give up their children "to this [non-Christian] religious vision, hoping to counteract it with doses of doctrine and devotions. They are responsible to ensure that the religious direction of the school is consonant with that of the home" (p. 12).

Hogg (1980) also joined this debate, with an article, "Christians and Schools", essentially supportive of Hill. She argued on the basis of texts of Scripture often used by supporters of Christian schooling such as Exodus 13:3-9, Deuteronomy 4:9 and 6:6-9, Ephesians 6:4 and I Timothy 1:5 that the responsibility that God enjoins on parents:

> to teach their children the things of God [says nothing about formal schooling, but that] it does preclude the use of any school as a substitute for 'religious and moral' instruction by the parents. If parent-controlled schools are desirable, therefore, it is not because they meet God's demands of parents that they themselves teach their children (pp. 47-48).

She argued further on the basis of the "Great Commission" of Matthew 28:18 and 19 that it is the responsibility of Christians to teach other people's children about the things of God (p. 51) and that "faithful discipleship requires getting one's priorities right. ... [and] for Christians, the nation's public schools must be high on the list of these priorities" (p. 56).

Long (1996) suggested that:

> Hill's criticism of the inwardness of themelic schoolers in the pages of the *Journal of Christian Education* in 1978 ended up as a costly experiment for both Hill and themelic schools. Themelic schools had cut themselves off from a Christian of immense ability in the field of education. Hill had to bear the hurt of misunderstanding and could contribute to themelic concerns only as an outsider (p. 37)

Harkness (2000b) recently took up a number of Hill's themes in the *Journal of Christian Education* under the title "De-Schooling Christianity in the New Millennium". He suggested that Hill's challenges "can be addressed to education in Christian faith communities as much as Christian schools." (p. 51). He identified three concerns with schooling, the "sense of alienation experienced

by some students. ... the universal transmissive model, in which the teacher is the controller of the educational interactions. ... [and] the extent to which the school can transmit values" (p. 53). Harkness (2000b) argued on the basis of these concerns and because Christian faith education in the New Testament focuses on edification in the setting of a household or family, that the schooling model is inappropriate for Christian faith communities (pp. 54-57).

It is evident that amongst evangelical Protestant Christians in Australia, there are a number of perspectives regarding the merits and efficacy of Christian schooling. This lack of consensus and on occasion even discord, will be even more apparent in the consideration of the research of Long (1996) later in this chapter.

The 'Word of God' in CPC schools - Values Debated

Within the ranks of CPC schools, there has also been energetic debate over the authority of the Bible and its relationship to Christian educational philosophy. Many of the early leaders of CPC schools were influenced not only by the perspectives of Kuyper and Groen Van Prinsterer, but also by some of their followers, such as Hermann Dooyeweerd (1894-1977), D.H.T. Vollenhoven (1892 - 1978) and the North American, H. Evan Runner. The debates were mostly confined to the floor of early Focus conferences, and largely involved the leadership of the movement rather than classroom teachers. Weeks (circa 1975), one of the pioneers of Sutherland CPC school, was critical of the philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea, commonly called Dooyeweerdianism, largely because of its approach to the Bible. He wrote that in this philosophy:

> The Word of God is seen primarily as a power which opens the eyes of man to see the world in the right way. … Man's insight into the structure of the world is the real authority. Hence, the specific content of Scripture is seen as having little or no relevance for education. … This philosophy removes the teaching of Scripture as the basis by which everything is judged (p. 1).

Blomberg also recalled that the debate revolved around an understanding of the nature of the Word of God:

> The central issue was the Word of God. When Scripture talks about the Word of God, it is either talking about God's active structuring power in creation - God's word to creation, or it is talking about Jesus. The label 'Word of God', used to describe what

others call God's general revelation, was the basis of the controversy, and in some respects it was unfortunate to speak in a way that was almost certain to be misunderstood. We were felt to hold the view that the Word of God, in Christ and creation, was given authority equal to Scripture. We certainly maintained the integral unity of God's revelation in creation, Christ and Scripture, but affirmed just as strongly that Scripture was the ultimate authority for faith and life (Blomberg, personal communication, 15 May, 2001).

The strength of the dispute at the time was another indication of the significance for the CPC schools' pioneers and early leaders, of theological perspective and in particular, of the critical importance of the Bible. However, the debate has now abated to the extent that very few teachers working in CPC schools would be aware of the work of Dooyeweerd, or of the early debate and controversy. In addition, there was negligible acknowledgement of the debate in the literature and it elicited little interest in the interviews with pioneers and early leaders.

The Influence of the Netherlands Today

The pioneers of CPC schools had their cultural and religious roots in the Netherlands, but after their migration, apart from financial support, there was very little further influence from their home of origin. The conservative Calvinist churches in the Netherlands which many of the CPC pioneers had attended, became less theologically conservative in the second half of the twentieth century and the Dutch Christian schools were similarly less concerned with retaining a distinctively Christian profile. As a consequence, and apart from the heritage that the pioneers brought with them, the Christian schooling movement in the Netherlands has had very little impact on CPC schools in Australia.

Somewhat ironically, there are a number of schools in the Netherlands which now consider that their own lost heritage needs to be regained and are looking to Calvinist schools in the USA, Canada and Australia for guidance. For example, a group of Dutch educators involved in the school, 'De Morgensterer' recently spent five weeks in Australia in order to observe how Australian Christian Parent Controlled schools were maintaining a distinctively Christian profile. Marc van de Geer, one of the school's directors, commented that their visit to Australia had resulted from an earlier

excursion to the Netherlands from American teacher trainees under the leadership of Gloria Stronks of Calvin College. In an informal briefing paper prepared for the Australian visit ('Study Trip Australia'), he maintained that his school had:

> learned about the developments that are going on, especially in Australia, when it comes to the development of Christian education. … It is important to see which tested, educational applications exist in Australia that are based on a biblical-Christian worldview. From this we will be able to give new impulses to Christian education in the Netherlands. This needs to start at our school and from there, can be used for the development of Christian education (M. van de Geer, personal communication, 16 October 2001).

The Influence of North American Calvinist Schools

The Dutch Calvinist schooling movements of the USA and Canada, which were inspired by the thinking of Van Prinsterer and Kuyper and conveyed by their own Dutch migrant populations have had an influence on CPC schools in Australia. In the last two decades, Contant (on three occasions), Haan, Hulst (twice), Seerveld, Stronks (twice), Struik, Van Brummelen (twice), Van der Hoek, Van Dyk, Walsh (twice), Wolterstorff (twice) and Zylstra have been amongst those associated with CSI in Canada or the USA who have visited Australia to speak at CPC school conferences. The CPC school academics, Blomberg and Fowler have also spent time in North America, teaching in CSI colleges and White who was assistant director of CPCS Ltd, spent six months in British Columbia on an exchange arrangement with Van der Hoek. A number of publications produced by Calvinist educators from North America have also been influential in CPC schools. Details of these publications will be considered later in this chapter.

Given the strong and mutually supportive relationship that exists between CPC schools and North American Calvinist schools, the issues and problems that have arisen from the studies and publications of North American Calvinist schools were regarded as germane to this study.

Studies of North American Calvinist Schools

A number of studies have been conducted in the USA and Canada focused on schools which share a heritage similar to CPC schools in Australia. Hoeksema (1991) undertook research that examined

the distinctiveness of Dutch Calvinist schooling in the USA through his study of two CSI schools. He found that "the philosophical rhetoric of Christian school curricular distinctiveness found little support in the reality of actual practice" (p. 124), and asked whether it was time to be more realistic about the aims of these Christian schools, not convinced that their stated goal of transforming the world for the sake of Christ was a realistic aspiration for Christian schools.

In the absence of their traditional goals of preparing students to transform the world on the basis of a Calvinist worldview, Hoeksema (1991) argued that the most impressive features of these schools were the signs of enormous affection felt by students for teachers, the deep and positive relationships between students and staff and the remarkable sense of community. "They [students] spoke of the positive Christian witness of their teachers ('they care about me as a person' and 'they are interested in my problems'), and their unabashed affection for teachers ('I really love my teachers', 'there isn't anything I wouldn't do for them', 'they are some of my best friends')." (pp. 142-143).

Hoeksema (1991) also observed however, that these schools lacked clear statements of objectives, and cited Wolterstorff, "a leading spokesman for the schools", who said, "It is to me both perplexing and alarming that after a century of Christian day schools on this continent, there is no solid material expressing the goals of the movement" (p.5).

In his study of Reformed Christian schooling in America, Vryhof (1994) expressed similar concerns at the ability of these schools to achieve their purposes. He cited Van Dyk:

> I am convinced that one reason why increasing numbers of Christian school graduates do not send their own children to the Christian school is that they have intuitively recognised - through their own experiences as students in our schools - that the curriculum in many instances is not sufficiently different from that of the secular public school to warrant the great financial sacrifice involved (p. 114).

Vryhof (1994) also noted some of Wolterstorff's disquiet about the effectiveness of these schools: "How can the Christian school possibly succeed, when not even its supporting constituency is consistently presenting the child with a model of the new life in Jesus Christ?" (p. 119). Vryhof was not altogether pessimistic about these schools. He suggested that there were lessons to be learned

from Reformed Christian schools because they gave evidence of the three features needed by all schools to secure functional community, the features being a common mission, parental control, and a reinforcing network:

> In addition to having strong parental involvement, a potent educational vision, and supportive relationships with the rest of the community, we discovered [in the three Reformed Christian schools] broader educational benefits as well: a safe school climate, high achievement, and amelioration of the effects of socio-economic status (p. 268).

Hull (1993) currently of Kings University College Edmonton, carried out doctoral research on the Dutch Calvinist schools of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) in Canada, in a study called *Christian Education and the Deep Structure of Schooling*. While positive about many aspects of these schools, Hull concluded that:

> On the whole there is nothing distinctively Christian in OACS schools in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation procedure, the system of schooling, or the outward lifestyle it promotes, for example ... the compulsion to grade student achievement with a percentage-based mark snuffs out ... goals that are consistent with Christian education. Students readily confess that they study to pass tests and to graduate rather than to pursue more noble goals (p. 58).

He also argued that "Unless academic study is fully integrated into Christian living, ... education as preparation for later personal achievement will continue to take precedence over placing oneself at the service of God and others in the here and now" (p. 60). Hull (1993) was concerned that OACS educators had not translated the shared beliefs of their worldview into a clear educational philosophy for adolescents. He felt that they had allowed the hidden values associated with the deep structures of traditional schooling to quietly erode their distinctiveness as Christian schools and therefore also their ability to have a significant impact on their students' lives: "Regrettably, a distinctively Christian education which integrates faith, learning, and life, is not materializing. ... [There is] a visible gap between espoused philosophy and actual practice" (p. 71).

Reviewing some of the research on Reformed Christian schooling in North America, the Canadian Boerema (2000) wrote of the "crisis in effectiveness in carrying out the mission of Christian

schools" (p.1) and commented on the gap between the distinctive purpose and direction espoused by schools with a Reformed Christian heritage and their actual practices. He suggested that one of the problems may have been that many schools have a greater commitment to tradition than Christian conviction and that these schools needed to look not only at curriculum and pedagogy but also at school structures, recommending that the metaphor of the family was worthy of consideration. "The curriculum of a reformulated educational program needs to be smaller, more in-depth, and have greater flexibility to reflect the gifts of the students" (p.18).

It is clear that Dutch Calvinist schools in the USA and Canada are grappling with issues of purpose, direction and identity. Stronks (1995) considered the questions that many of these North American Calvinist schools are asking about their effectiveness and their influence in the lives of their graduates in an article which addressed the *Myths and Realities in Christian Education*. She suggested that the fundamental question for Christian schools was "To what extent does going to our Christian schools really have an effect on students' learning, development and faith?" (p.10).

Many of the issues raised by these studies are relevant to the sister school movement in Australia and will be considered later in this chapter.

Publications Associated with North American Calvinist Schooling

A number of publications have emerged from this Dutch Calvinist schooling movement in North America. Authors such as Wolterstorff (1980), Van Brummelen (1988 and 1994), Van Dyk (1997) and Vryhof (in conjunction with Brouwer, Ulstein and Vander Ark, 1989) are well known to many CPC teachers through their involvement in, and leadership of conferences in Australia.

Wolterstorff (1980) maintained that:

> It used to be said, particularly in the Calvinist tradition, that the goal of Christian education is to impart to the student the Christian 'world and life view'. The intent behind putting it this way was to affirm that the gospel pertains to all of life and not just to some 'religious' part. But this formulation is inadequate, for it puts too much emphasis on a 'view'. ... it requires more than that. It requires the Christian way of life. Christian education is education aimed at training for the Christian way of life, not just education aimed at inculcating the Christian world and life view. ... The ultimate goal

of all education, as Christians see it, is that those who are taught shall live in such a way as to carry out their responsibilities to God and find joy and delight in so doing (pp. 13-14).

Walking with God in the Classroom by Van Brummelen (1988) has been widely used by CPC schools as the basis for in-servicing teachers in approaches to teaching in a Christian school. He argues that "the Bible is not a sourcebook for specific teaching methods or discipline procedures, and we should not use it as such. This book shows how some of the underlying Scriptural guidelines can be applied to contemporary classrooms" (p. ix). Van Brummelen considers the purposes of schooling, ways of 'teaching Christianly', the metaphors of teaching (such as 'religious craft' and 'ministry'), curriculum areas, evaluation and assessment, the vocation of teaching and the concept of a school community. An approach that has gained currency in many CPC schools is his suggestion that effective Christian teaching:

> requires diverse competencies that can be classified under guiding, unfolding, structuring, and enabling. ... The teachers' insight and ability to guide students, unfold content, structure classroom learning, and enable students to develop and exercise their gifts. ... [will enable the teacher to] provide a classroom structure that lets students experience the meaning of living out of a Christian worldview (p. 29).

Van Brummelen (1994) has also written *Steppingstones to Curriculum: A Biblical Path*, a text dealing with curriculum for Christian schools that has been readily accepted in many CPC schools in Australia.

In 1989, Vryhof together with Brouwer, Ulstein and Vander Ark, produced *12 Affirmations*, a book which raised issues similar to those identified in the research of Hoeksema (1991), Hull (1993) and Vryhof (1994) which were discussed earlier. The *12 Affirmations* was based on discussions and ideas generated at three conferences of North American Reformed Christian educators held in Chicago in 1986, 1987 and 1988. The book arose as a result of "a shared restlessness. ... essentially, the Chicago conferees sensed three gaps in Christian schooling" (p.15). The 12 affirmations themselves were identified by the authors as constructive and effective responses to these three gaps:

> 1. The gap between our rich Reformed philosophy of Christian education and our actual practice. ...

2. The gap between research results and our present methods. ...

3. The gap between the needs of the twenty-first century and the traditional aims and goals of schooling (pp. 15-18).

The *12 Affirmations* was an attempt to generate further discussion in Reformed Christian school communities in North America in order to establish a clearer vision and a re-statement of their purposes, to consciously assume a more open approach to the best innovations in education, and to prepare students to be authentic, informed followers of Jesus Christ in the twenty-first century (pp. 16-18).

Using the format of correspondence between an inexperienced teacher and her father (an experienced practitioner), Van Dyk (1997) wrote *Letters to Lisa: Conversations with a Christian Teacher*, a book intended primarily for classroom teachers. It "addresses twenty-two common educational classroom issues" and, as such, it is deliberately "not at all a philosophical treatise. It is a practical book intended to stimulate Christian teachers to reflect on their practice" (p. xiii). This book has also found wide acceptance and circulation amongst teachers in CPC schools.

The Calvinist schools in North America have produced a significant amount of material and its widespread use in CPC schools in Australia indicates that the shared heritage in the Dutch Calvinism of Kuyper and Van Prinsterer continues to inform the relationship between CPC schools and their North American counterparts.

The relevance for this study of the issues arising from the research and publications associated with Calvinist schools in North America will be considered later in this chapter. In addition to these influences, this chapter considers the research and publications arising out of, or closely connected to, the CPC school movement in Australia.

Studies Related to Parent Controlled Christian Schooling in Australia

There has been little scholarly research focused specifically on CPC schools, particularly of the kind from which foundational values or prevailing practices could be inferred. Gordon (1988) however,

carried out doctoral study on an unidentified CPC school and Sheerman (1989) and Hewitt (1994) completed Master's dissertations on different aspects of particular CPC schools. There have also been studies which have included CPC schools in their consideration of the new Christian school movement in Australia. Long's (1996) thesis "investigates a new kind of conservative Protestant schooling that emerged in Australia after 1962" and Collins (1997) set out "to capture and describe what it means to be a principal in a Christian school."

Research Associated with CPC schools

Gordon

Gordon (1988) maintained as a result of his study of HLCS (pseudonym used by Gordon for a particular CPC school), that the authority of the Bible and the protection of children of Christian families were central themes. He argued that HLCS was established because other schools exposed children to:

> anti-Christian notions of social and epistemological relativism, evolutionism, socialism, feminism and other 'modern evils'. ... [and failed to acknowledge] the absolutely relevant and inerrant truth of the Bible (p. 324).

He found further that curriculum approaches were traditional rather than exhibiting a distinctively Christian foundation:

> the entrenched conservatism of the parents who established the school and of the teachers they have employed has however lent sacred legitimacy to highly traditional definitions of schooling rather than the implementation of 'alternative' ways to accomplish schooling as, arguably, some 'progressive' schools have attempted to do (p. 325).

Sheerman

In his consideration of "the extent to which a distinctive Christian perspective can be presented in a curriculum designed by a secular system" (p. vi), Sheerman (1989) reached somewhat different conclusions to Gordon. His study of a single CPC school in conjunction with documents of the NSW State Curriculum for Secondary Schools pointed to the importance for CPC schools of implementing explicitly Christian curricula and alluded to the danger for Christian schools of allowing financial impediments to restrict clientele to those who are wealthier. He maintained that if:

Christian schools are not able to present a distinctively Christian perspective, then they are no more than a duplicate of existing systems perhaps encapsulated in a particular language or characterised by some form of elitism, by virtue of the fact that they charge fees and therefore possibly limit their clientele according to economic status. They are according to their own statements of intent, a 'phoney' (p. 11).

Sheerman also contrasted the common, secular view that regarded religion as an aspect of existence with the view of 'Keswick' CPC school that viewed religion as applying to the whole of life. As a result, the curriculum approach of Keswick recognised religion as being central to every subject rather than recognising it as a separate subject (pp. 38-40). In the conclusion to his study, Sheerman (1989) suggested that:

The Keswick school is trying to, and is achieving the presentation of a distinctive Christian perspective, ... [but that] further research is needed into the operational and especially the experiential curriculums of schools such as Keswick, which want to present a distinctive perspective" (p. 84).

Hewitt

Hewitt (1994) examined the application of Trinity (Canberra) Christian school's vision statement in the classrooms of secondary teachers. He found evidence to demonstrate that teachers included Christian perspectives in their classrooms, but that this perspective varied with individual teachers, with subjects and even with particular units. In suggesting that further study could focus on the lives of graduate students, he raised an issue which was found in a number of the American studies: "If there is no difference between the students of a Christian school and those of a non-Christian school what is the purpose of a Christian school?" (p. 110).

Related Research

Riding

In his consideration of low-fee Protestant Christian schools in South Australia, Riding (1996) considered the ways that these schools were seeking to maintain their desired ethos. He did not indicate whether his particular study of two of these schools included Parent Controlled Christian schools. He approached his study from the perspective of Christian fundamentalism, basing much of

his understanding of the ethos of these schools on a study of American fundamentalism, citing Marty and Appleby who argue that:

> Most Christian fundamentalists are Premillennialists and Dispensationalists - which involves the belief that the world is getting worse, and their only hope is to be 'raptured' out of it. Therefore, any political involvement is seen as rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic as it sank. ... I am fairly sure that all those I interviewed could be regarded as dispensationalist premillennialists (p. 63).

If this perception is accurate, then his study is unlikely to have been of CPC school communities which often have strong elements of amillennial (in contrast to premillennial) theology amongst constituent families and also have a heritage which includes for many a concern to transform culture rather than wait to be transported out of it (cf. Wolterstorff, 1983, chap. 1).

Long

Long (1996) who taught for a number of years at Trinity CPC school in Canberra, conducted research on schools he labelled "themelic", a term he developed on the basis of the koine Greek, "themelios" which means "Christ-centred" (pp. 13 & 99). He referred to these schools as "a new kind of conservative Protestant collaboration that has emerged as Christians of many Protestant theological traditions have begun to establish low fee schools in Australia in a common system" (p. 13). CPC schools and Christian Community schools each contributed about one third of the students to his category of themelic schools.

Critical to an understanding of Long's position is the contrast he drew between the position of themelic schooling and the position of the Australian Christian educators, Andersen and Hill. In an interview with Long (1996), Andersen stated:

> We didn't ever conceive Christian education as being exclusively that education which is given in a Christian school but rather, how education might be conceived from a Christian point of view and therefore how some of that might be achieved in state schools, how some of it might be achieved in Christian schools and so on (p. 40).

Arguing that themelic schools regard themselves as distinct or separate from other schools, (but without noting the Reformed motif of antithesis), Long (1996) continued:

> Themelic people in Australia tend to think of Christian education as the setting up of an alternative. … themelic schoolers use the same terms as Andersen and Hill but interpret them to mean separation, not integration. … To make a distinction between the two views of what 'thinking Christianly' is, the perspective of Hill, Andersen and the *Journal of Christian Education* may be defined as 'Christian integrated holism' (p. 40).

One of Long's criticisms of themelic schools concerned the general lack of clarity and understanding by teachers of core issues such as Christian curriculum or Christian perspectives. "It is confusing to use central motifs such as 'Christ-centred' and 'educating Christianly' without clarification. Too much communication in themelic schools is left blurred and unchallenged" (p. 431). Long (1996) found support for these contentions in the research of Gordon (1988), Barnett (1990) and Hewitt (1994) which examined themelic schools, including two CPC schools:

> The work of Gordon, Barnett and Hewitt is important because their studies make it clear that staff at themelic schools are unable to establish what a 'Christian perspective' is. Their studies show that the notions of competency, care, moral value, excellence and individual attention are touted as being distinctively Christian... apart from the overt use of the Bible and prayer in the classroom or discussion about creationism, there is no really distinctive curriculum in themelic schools. The fact that each researcher assumes but does not explain what a 'Christian perspective' or 'teaching Christianly' is reflects the depth of the problem in establishing an understanding of these schools. Hewitt makes it clear that whilst teachers were able to articulate what was not Christian about other models of schooling they were not able to articulate or work out how to teach their own particular idea of the Christian perspective (p. 31).

Long's analysis pointed to the need for themelic schools including CPC schools to clarify their core values and objectives and their communication of commonly used central motifs. While much of what Long suggested is pertinent, and is echoed by a number of the North American studies, the polemical nature of some of his discussion has weakened his assessment of themelic schools. He suggested for example, that there are parallels between themelic school leadership and those authoritarian personality types which have inspired fascist ideology, anti-Semitism, the Spanish Inquisition and sadomasochism. He also linked Adolf Eichmann with themelic school management who are responsible for "lesser acts of victimisation and oppression ... in the name of Christ" (1996,

p. 354) and suggested that there may be in the authoritarianism of the Dutch national disposition (as evidenced in a 1980 study of Dutch support for neo-Nazism) reasons to "help explain why themelic people of Dutch Reformed background are significantly more authoritarian than other theological traditions" (p. 351). Long's description of themelic schools above is not supported by the views and attitudes expressed by constituent groups in Stage 2 of this research and bears little relation to the researcher's experiences of CPC schools.

In spite of this, Long's contribution to the research on the recently established Christian schools in Australia is significant and for the schools themselves the value of his study lies in his assertion that core values and aims are only loosely understood by members of these school communities, particularly teachers. It is obvious as a result that these core values need to be clarified.

Collins

In her study of Australian Christian school leadership Collins (1997) suggested that:

> These Christian schools are a substantial movement, with the potential to exercise a considerable voice in education. … This rapidly expanding sector of schools claims to be offering an education that seeks to rectify the move away from traditional Judeo-Christian values in state and secular schools. The principals of these Christian schools hold firmly to the belief that Christian values provide the impetus for Christian school life, and they see themselves as being among the main proponents for the perpetuation of these Judeo-Christian values (p. 2).

Collin's (1997) research highlighted the ability of schools with shared Christian values to enjoy an enhanced sense of community, but raised concerns with the parent control mode in those situations where parents sought to exercise their control individually and injudiciously. She found:

> both positive and negative outcomes of community involvement in the management of Christian schools. … Christian schools with their emphasis on parental and community involvement are in a unique position to offer a close knit community … united with common values and purposes. ... [However] adverse parent control is where parents believe that their control entitles them to manipulate the educational processes to indulge their individual desires for control and power. It would seem that some Christian schools need to define what they mean by parent control and have clear guidelines to facilitate parental involvement - an involvement that seeks to serve the collective interests of the community (pp. 290-291).

She commented further, "Christian schools need to become less parochial and expand their governing boards to include professionals who have expertise *inter alia* to successfully control a multi-million dollar business in education" (p. 292). The issues raised here by Collins - the importance of defining and setting boundaries for parent control and the matter of school boards possessing appropriate expertise are important for CPC schools and will be addressed in Chapter Six. In addition to the research involving CPC and related schools, there have been a number of publications by CPC school personnel which give further insight into the nature of these schools.

Recent Publications Related to the Prevailing Practices of CPC Schooling in Australia

Blomberg, who has had a long involvement in CPC schools as a teacher, school executive and former principal of NICE (National Institute for Christian Education), the teacher training division of CPCS, edited a text, *A Vision with a Task: Christian Schooling for Responsive Discipleship*, with Gloria Stronks of Calvin College, Michigan, which addressed a number of concerns arising out of the Reformed Christian schooling movement of North America. The book has also enjoyed wide readership in Australian CPC schools. Using an approach in which topics are introduced by a case study, followed by discussion and interpretation, Stronks and Blomberg (1993) consider issues ranging from school vision and mission, to curriculum, pedagogy, student evaluation and staff development. Their basic thesis, that all aspects of school life ought to be subject to the school's explicitly Christian values, is made clear:

> Because we believe Christian schools are places where teachers and students should live and learn to live as responsive disciples of Jesus Christ, Christian schools must be unique. The vision that drives these schools must affect the structure of the school, the length of the school year, the planning of the program, designing of units, instruction, and all other aspects of the school. We have attempted to describe these aspects of schools in which students will learn responsive discipleship (p. 12).

The Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, in conjunction with CPC schools produced three books from 1996 to 1998 that focused on Christian schooling. *Reclaiming the Future: Australian Perspectives on Christian Schooling* (Lambert and Mitchell, 1996) was released to coincide with the International Christian education conference held in Sydney in 1996 and included essays by

Australian educators on Christian school leadership, the partnership between teachers and parents, vocational education, gifted and talented students, student welfare, theological influences on Christian schooling in Australia and the importance of teacher professional development.

The Crumbling Walls of Certainty: Towards a Christian Critique of Postmodernity and Education was an edited collection of essays based on papers actually delivered at the International Conference. Wolterstorff suggests in the Preface, that the writers, who addressed the relationship between Christian schooling and 'postmodernity':

> share the conviction that if Christian schooling is not rethought and reconfigured in this new situation, it will die. Schooling which is shaped by allegiance to God in Jesus Christ, by commitment to the Christian church, by formation in the Christian tradition, is as necessary as ever. But if it is to be relevant to these new times, it must be rethought and reconfigured (1997, pp. 6-7).

Wolterstorff's theme that Christian schooling must be self-aware and responsive to a changing context is an important one for this study and is found in various forms in many of the studies of Christian schooling in North America and Australia.

An academic conference was held immediately preceding and in conjunction with the International Conference in 1996 and culminated in another edited book, *Reminding: Renewing the Mind in Learning* (Blomberg and Lambert, 1998). Essays were contributed on topics such as postmodernity and theological reflection, the 'modern' presuppositions of much Christian thinking, a Christian philosophy of education, adolescents' concepts of truth, and the use of 'cases' in a teacher education program.

These three books give some indication of the weight given by CPC schools to serious reflection on the task confronting Christian educators of approaching their task in a manner which is distinctively Christian and to develop practices which would address the types of concerns raised by Gordon (1988) and Long (1996). Edlin (1998) the principal of NICE, the teacher training section of CPCS Ltd, also indicates a keen appreciation of the importance for Christian schools of a clear understanding and articulation of the Christian nature of the school:

If we are going to maintain the biblical integrity of our Christian schools, then our school communities must have a precisely articulated and broadly shared vision of what they are about. ... In much of the Western world today, the Christian school is seen as an escape from falling academic standards or a refuge from the alarming increase in drugs and violence in public schools. The one thing that has been notable by its absence in many cases is any real understanding not just of what the Christian school is against, but of what it stands for. ... Christian schools risk quickly losing their integrity and running off the rails when there is this lack of an articulated vision (pp. 76-77).

Recurring Themes in the Research and Publications of North American Calvinist Schools and CPC Schools

In conclusion, in much of the research and the publications considered in this chapter, two related themes emerged. Firstly, many of the writers in North America and Australia expressed a concern that Christian schools lack a clear articulation of their values, goals and purposes and the ability to convey what is meant by some of their key features such as 'parent control' or 'teaching Christianly'. Secondly, a number of these writers suggested that these schools lacked both curricula and practices which were consistent with their espoused philosophies, and they therefore questioned the effectiveness of these schools in general.

It is clear that the issue of the values and practices of Christian schooling with which this study is engaged, (in particular, CPC schools in Australia), is also an area of interest for others, evidenced by the emphases of the studies of North American Calvinist schools and Australian Christian schools noted above. This research proposes to give CPC schools a clearer articulation of their foundational values and to consider the extent to which these values are being given genuine expression in CPC schools today.

Identification of the Foundational Values from the Themes in Early Publications

The other facet of the literature research conducted for this study focused on the documents written in, or about, the early days of CPC schools in Australia. These were examined with a view to identifying, at least provisionally, the foundational values and emphases of these schools. The following section will consider the foundational values, or at least allusions to foundational values

found in three books written by authors involved in CPC schooling in Australia. A consideration of these texts will reveal the themes that formed the basis of the survey of foundational values administered to CPC school pioneers and early leaders. A number of other early CPC school papers, texts and documents will be considered in Chapter Four.

Possibly the most significant document concerned with the foundational values of CPC schools is *No Icing on the Cake - Christian Foundations for Education* (Mechielsen, 1980). This seminal book was edited by Mechielsen, (then principal of Mt Evelyn CPC School in Victoria) with contributions from a range of people involved in CPC education, including academics, school executives, teachers and parents, notably Blomberg, Fowler, Mechielsen, Miller, Nyhouse and Wilson. This book made an important contribution to the thinking of teachers in CPC schools around Australia and continues to be utilised because of its formative influence. It included in one form or another, a discussion of all the themes that constituted CPC schools' foundational values.

In Chapters 1 to 5 and 15, of *No Icing on the Cake*, Fowler (1980) considered a number of the foundational issues of Christian education including the importance and centrality of Scripture, the religious nature of all knowledge and therefore of education, the view that there is no religiously neutral aspect of life, an interpretation of reality that involved God's creative activity, humanity's fall into sin, and the redemption and restoration of the whole universe in Christ. Fowler also discussed the importance of community, of students serving each other and of the necessity of Christian education being fundamentally different to other forms of education.

Also in *No Icing on the Cake,* Blomberg (1980a) suggested that a Christian view of knowledge and education is anchored in a knowledge of Christ:

> We can know the world because we know ourselves in Christ; we can trust our knowledge because we trust the Lord who has created and redeemed us and the world. All our knowing is transformed by this central religious relation of the self to God (p.43).

In other chapters of this book, Nyhouse (1980) suggested that Christian parents need Christian schools and that such an education should be made economically and legally possible for all parents.

Maguire argued for the necessity of a biblical framework in education, and in a number of other chapters, Christian perspectives are suggested for the curriculum in general and for specific curriculum areas such as English, Reading, Aesthetics and Art.

A number of themes were raised regularly throughout this book, including the responsibility of Christian parents for the education of their children, the centrality of Christ, the authority of the Bible, the value-laden and religious nature of all knowledge and the importance of a Christian curriculum. All of these themes provided valuable data in the process of establishing the foundational values of CPC schools.

Another important contribution to an understanding of the early values of CPC schools is found in *A Church En Route – 40 Years Reformed Churches of Australia*, edited by Rev. J. Deenick (1991) which is a collection of essays that outline various aspects of the history of the RCA in Australia. One of those essays, 'Church and School', was written by A. Deenick (Principal of Covenant Christian and involved in CPC schools since 1976), and focused on the relationship between the RCA and CPC schools.

A. Deenick (1991) noted that the responsibility of parents to fulfil their baptismal promises to their children, 'to teach and have them taught' (p. 240) was frequently used to encourage RCA parents to support Christian schooling. He also maintained that it was the members of the fledgling RCA (established in 1951) who were largely responsible for translating the creed of parent control into reality:

> The formation of a number of Reformed Churches in the early 1950s provided forums within which parents could discuss their concerns about public education. Each church became a potential nucleus for parents committed to the commencement of Christian schools. … From the very beginning the church and the parents adopted the 'parent controlled' model, based on their understanding of parental responsibility and Kuyper's view of sphere sovereignty rather than the more common Australian model of church schools (pp. 240-241).

The support given to Christian schooling by RCA ministers was also emphasized by A. Deenick (1991). He noted for example, DeGraaf's comment from an RCA minister's conference in 1958 that

in these schools (which were still only in the planning stage), the Christian faith would be fundamental to any approach to Curriculum:

> We all agreed, there was no need to argue the principles, everyone was convinced that such schools had to come, where our children, not just during some religious hours per week, but in the course of all subjects, also science, biology, history and social studies, could be impressed with the Kingship of Christ and the Sovereignty of God in all spheres of life, this God being our children's covenant God! … One thing stood out, Christian education all day long is one of the most important pillars of the Christian church! (p. 241).

A. Deenick (1991) observed further that in 1962, the RCA synod appointed a committee with the task of promoting Christian education and advised members of RCA congregations to establish 'parent controlled schools on a Calvinistic basis', but if that were not possible to 'cooperate with fellow-believers to establish a parent controlled school on an evangelical basis' (p.244).

Evidence that it was critically important to the pioneers that CPC schools should be established with a theological foundation can be found in the debates that occurred in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, regarding the type of creeds that CPC schools should adopt. Initially Reformational church creeds were used, but eventually educational creeds were developed and adopted by most schools. Unanimous agreement was never reached, however, and some schools still use assent to church creeds as the basis for association membership (A. Deenick, 1991, p.247).

The final significant early publication to be considered here is *The Christian School: An Introduction* by Weeks (1988a). Weeks is a pioneer and academic who was involved in establishing Sutherland CPC School and was a contributor to the early CPC Focus Conferences. His book:

> grew out of the establishment and operation of a Parent-Controlled Christian School in the southern suburbs of Sydney, NSW, Australia. ... Initially the book was conceived as an outline of Christian school curriculum, [but developed into a text which explained] the difference between a biblical position and the philosophical movements that influence modern education (pp. ix-x).

In this introductory text, Weeks (1988a) critiqued the influences of rationalism and romanticism on modern educational practices, rejecting romanticism on the basis that the curriculum of a Christian school should be determined by the purposes of the school community, rather than the allegedly autonomous child. He also rejected rationalism as a foundation for educational practice on the basis that the human mind is not capable of encompassing all aspects of a world which is both order and mystery, or of a creator who can never be known entirely.

The themes that emerged from Weeks' book included the role and importance of Christian parents (pp. 1-15 and throughout); the importance of the Bible (throughout, but particularly chapter one), the necessity of employing Christian teachers (pp. 61-76) and the importance of a distinctively Christian curriculum (p. 97, and chapters 8-13). Weeks acknowledged that for many parents, a desire to shelter children, together with an emphasis on evangelism, were important elements of education in a Christian school, and while he did not reject them altogether, he argued that they should not be regarded as central elements of a school's practice (pp. 95-105). Weeks' book has been read extensively in CPC schooling circles and is considered to be a thorough, but somewhat conservative, approach to Christian schooling.

A number of broad themes related to foundational values were derived from these books. In addition, a number of other document sources, such as speeches, early conference papers and promotional brochures were examined for foundational values and are discussed in Chapter Four. The examination of the three major books in this section identifies the initial broad themes which were used to construct the 'foundational values' survey administered to the CPC school pioneers and early leaders. These broad themes were:

1. *The centrality and authority of the Bible*
2. *The centrality of Christ in the school*
3. *The responsibility of Christian parents for their children's education*
4. *The presentation by schools of a genuinely Christian curriculum*
5. *The implementation of schooling practices based on a Reformed Christian worldview.*
6. *Students' acquisition of a Christian world-view*
7. *Students' involvement as genuine Christians in their culture*

8. *Students' commitment to lives of service*

9. *The employment by schools of Christian teachers*

10. *The protection of children against the perceived problems and negative influences of state schools.*

The responses of the pioneers to these themes will be described in Chapter Four.

This chapter has explored the theological and cultural background of the pioneers of CPC schools in Australia together with research on CPC schools and similar Christian schools in North America and Australia and provides the background and basis for a determination of the foundational values of CPC schools, which will be considered in Chapter 4. The methodology and design used to engage with the research questions will be considered in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used to address the research questions:

1. *What were the foundational values of Christian Parent Controlled (CPC) Schools in Australia?*

2. *To what extent are these foundational values given expression in the prevailing practices of CPC schools?*

3. *What are the implications for leadership that arise from the research findings?*

Aspects of the design and methodology contained in this chapter include the implications for the study of the researcher's insider status, the reasons for the use of qualitative and quantitative procedures, the sources of data and data collection methods, the time period relevant to the foundational values and the strategies undertaken to ensure that the data collected was both reliable and valid.

Research Design

This study sought to establish the foundational values of CPC schools and identify the prevailing practices of these foundational values in CPC schools. To achieve this, a research design was constructed which involved a mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative procedures. Kumar (1996) suggested "In many studies you need to combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches" (p.12) and Cresswell (1994) cited five purposes for the combination of methods in one study, particularly "triangulation in the classic sense of seeking convergence of results" (p. 175). Krathwohl (1998) suggested that "by combining methods not only can we compensate for the flaws of one method with the strengths of another, but we can obtain different perspectives, 'depth of field', and detail" (p. 627).

The intent of qualitative research is to understand a particular social situation, event, role, group or interaction. A qualitative methodology is used where the focus is on participants' perceptions and experiences, where meanings and interpretations are negotiated with human data sources because the

subjects' realities are being reconstructed, and where the researcher seeks 'believability' and 'trustworthiness' (Creswell, 1994, pp.161-162). Qualitative procedures then, are appropriate instruments for the process of identifying foundational values and prevailing practices which involve the perceptions, experiences and 'reconstructed realities' of pioneers, early leaders and current members of CPC school communities.

The use of quantitative procedures was also an important feature of this study. In Stage One, a quantitative method (the first section of a survey) was used to test the validity of a provisional set of foundational values (composed on the basis of the document study) and in Stage 2 a quantitative survey was used to evaluate the perceptions of members of school communities regarding the relationship between foundational values (identified in Stage One) and prevailing practices. In both stages, numeric results were calculated on the basis of respondents' replies to survey items (Likert scale), and were reported in the form of percentage agreement or disagreement. The quantitative survey made it possible to collect larger amounts of data from a broad cross-section of respondents than would otherwise have been possible.

Methodology Used in Similar Studies

Together with other studies and documents, a number of doctoral studies devoted to Christian schooling were examined as part of this research. The studies, three Australian, one British and four North American which were considered in Chapter Two, primarily used qualitative methodologies to collect data.

Gordon's (1988) ethnographic research involved document studies, non-participant observations and semi-structured interviews. Collins (1997) and Long's (1996) studies were also predominantly qualitative, utilising interviews and document analysis, however, Collins also used a quantitative leadership inventory instrument. Lambert's (1993) study used semi-structured interviews, participant and non-participant observation, archive search and participant questionnaires. In the North American studies of Calvinist Christian schools, Vryhof (1994) used a quantitative assessment of Year 8 students and case-studies of 3 Christian schools, Hoeksema (1991) and Hull (1993) used

case-studies involving observations, document studies, interviews and qualitative surveys and Prinsen (2000) used documentary research and interviews.

These studies, although addressing different issues, were concerned with the ideas, motives, philosophies and values of those involved in Christian schooling and used a variety of data collection techniques, predominantly qualitative, in order to address their research questions. The present study was similarly concerned with the values of a particular group of Christian schools in Australia and also relied heavily on qualitative instruments, particularly document studies and interviews. Surveys with both quantitative and qualitative components were also used to support the qualitative instruments. The quantitative survey instruments in this study allowed for the collection of data from a greater number of respondents and in a number of matters, allowed for sharper comparisons between constituent groups and between items.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics clearance was obtained for the surveys and interviews conducted in Stages 1 and 2 from the Australian Catholic University Research Projects Ethics Committee. Each of the pioneers interviewed has given written permission to be cited. This has enhanced the credibility and value of the study within the CPC school community due to the degree of respect for the pioneers and the level of interest in their memories of the early days of the movement. For the other surveys and interviews, the identities of both schools and individuals within those schools will remain confidential. (See Appendices 5 and 6 for consent forms).

'Pre-existing' Stage - The Researcher's Role and Possible Limitations

Because this research focuses on Christian Parent Controlled schools in which the researcher has worked for over 20 years, the researcher's background is an important consideration.

With the exception of 1986, which was spent at Marrara CPC school in Darwin, the researcher has been involved in Tyndale Christian School in Blacktown since 1976, firstly as a non-parent member of the school association, as a teacher from 1978 to the present (deputy principal since 1991) and as

a parent member from 1983 to 1997. For over 20 years, the researcher has been involved in the development of school-based curriculum with a particular emphasis on Christian perspectives in the teaching of mathematics, economics and commerce and in numerous in-services involving colleagues from other CPC schools including 8 national CPC teacher education conferences, 2 international conferences, 3 'academic' conferences and over 20 NSW state conferences.

In addition, the researcher was a member of the Reformed Church of Blacktown for eight years, from the mid 1970s to the early 1980s, an experience which enhanced his ability to understand the culture and theology of the pioneers of CPC schools.

Insider Status – Benefits and Limitations

The researcher's insider status in this relatively small school movement necessarily raises the issue of attendant benefits and limitations. It could be argued for example, that the researcher's sense of loyalty and commitment to the movement and employment as an executive in one of the schools could impair his ability to assess situations dispassionately and therefore with perception and discernment, particularly if unfavourable appraisals were offered, or adverse results revealed.

In response to this, the researcher's motivation for conducting the study has been to improve the practice of CPC schools by revealing possible areas of discrepancy between foundational values and prevailing values and practices. The researcher has been aware that to ignore or even to dilute the criticisms or weaknesses revealed through this research would be misguided loyalty and would undermine the very purpose and value of the study. In order to avoid personal bias, and enhance the study's reliability, the researcher has discussed conclusions and findings with experienced colleagues and with his supervisors throughout the study and has kept a log of these deliberations. Moreover, it will become clear that a number of significant issues have been raised in this study, both positive and negative, which the researcher commends to the leadership of this schooling movement for serious attention.

One of the benefits of the researcher's insider status is the network of relationships and contacts that have been established over many years with teachers and leaders in the CPC movement. This

personal knowledge of the national leadership and of many school executives throughout Australia has enhanced access to documents and people. The gatekeeper problem (Burgess, 1991, pp. 43-52) therefore, was not the problem it would have been to an outsider.

The researcher's long involvement in the movement has also given him a thorough understanding of CPC schools' ideologies, history, politics, important personalities and relationships, and of subtleties that would not be apparent to someone outside CPC schools. It would not have been possible for the researcher to consider either the foundational values or the issue of prevailing practices of CPC schools insentient. The researcher's prior conceptions were however, tested, refined and developed and in a number of cases transformed, through both stages of the study, as documents, surveys and interviews were considered and analysed.

Krathwohl (1998) suggested that the ability to elicit useful data is greatly enhanced when prior social contact had been made: "Compare the bland general comments where insufficient rapport has been established with the candid response where the interviewer is trusted" (p. 290). In the light of these factors, it is maintained that in this study, the researcher's background was a positive factor in the determination and consideration of the foundational values and prevailing practices of CPC schools.

Stage One - The Identification of Foundational Values

The purpose of the research in Stage One was to identify the foundational values of CPC schools in Australia. These values have been defined as those embodied in and expressed by the pioneers and early leaders. In this study, values have been defined as "beliefs that find expression in activity, or commitments to action" (see Chapter One), and it was the commitment and endeavours of the pioneers and early leaders derived from the foundational values, that led to both the establishment of these schools and to the shaping of their early rituals, activities and procedures.

When Were the Foundational Values Established?

The "foundational" period of time chosen for this study is from the mid 1950s to 1980. In 1962, the first CPC school commenced in Australia, but a number of these schools were being planned from the mid 1950s. The first CPC school association was formed in 1953 in both Kingston and Hobart (in Tasmania) and led to the establishment of Calvin Christian School in 1962. A number of other associations were set up in the mid 1950s - in Mt Evelyn (Victoria) and Wollongong (NSW) in 1954, and in Blacktown (NSW), Brisbane (Queensland) and Perth (Western Australia) in 1957.

By 1980, the pioneering phase was coming to a close as the role of the Reformed Churches was diminishing and Christians from a range of other Protestant denominations were planning to establish CPC schools. In 1980 there were 18 schools with just 2953 students, but by 1986 there were 46 schools with 8900 students. A. Deenick (1991) also regarded this as a significant point: "From 1981 onward most of the … new [CPC] schools had little, if any, involvement by Reformed Church members other than through the National Union [of Parent-Controlled Christian Schools]" (p. 248). The documents chosen and the pioneers and early leaders selected for this section of the study were taken from or involved in this time period.

Sources of Information - Documents and People

The two most obvious sources of information concerning the foundational values of CPC schools were the documents which were written at the time and the people who were involved in establishing and leading these schools in their formative years, hence the process of identifying the foundational values involved a study of the relevant early documents and consultation with the surviving pioneers and early leaders of CPC schools.

Burns (1997) suggested that there are four types of historical data sources - documents, oral records, artefacts and quantitative records. This study used two of these sources in both stages – documents and oral records. Documents "are records kept and written by actual participants in, or witnesses of, an event" and oral testimony "is the spoken account of a witness such as a teacher, pupil, parent, governing body member etc. ... that can be obtained in personal interviews as witnesses relate their

experiences and knowledge" (Burns, 1997, p. 391). These two sources of data provided the material from which the foundational values were identified.

The Document Study – Foundational Values

A variety of document types associated with the establishment and development of the Christian Parent Controlled Schools movement in Australia were analysed for the purpose of identifying the movement's foundational values. The substantial archival material contained in the CPCS library and material collected from a number of the movement's pioneers were examined to identify recurring values. The process employed was the isolation and categorisation of possible foundational values in each document, an appraisal of these values and a further re-categorisation in the light of subsequent documents. The researcher's background in CPC schools was beneficial in this process, as it enhanced his ability to understand the context and nuances of the documents and to ask appropriate questions of the documents and the values they comprised. (See Strauss and Corbin, 1990, pp. 65, 78-79).

Early documents often contained commentary concerning Christian schooling expressed in theological terms, and in the context of the early struggles to establish these schools, a degree of polemic and passion was also often evident. As a result, the values as they applied to schools were not always explicit or unambiguous. The variety of documents and the process of verifying the possible foundational values with the pioneers and early leaders assisted in the process of extricating the foundational values from the early documents, however. Evidence of this polemic is found for example, in the following CPC school promotional brochures:

> Secular schools are ungodly and pagan in outlook. While their academic standards may be good, they often have the effect of undermining the faith of Christian children. They cannot help Christian parents in their aim of bringing their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They cannot train children in godliness, nor inculcate Christian attitudes. They are man-centred, humanistic and agnostic, and reflect the prevailing attitudes of society in general – attitudes which have deteriorated considerably over past decades (*Why Christian schools?*, circa 1975).

> As a Christian parent, … are you content to entrust a large and vital part of their [children] training for life - their formal education – to a Godless system which denies

the Truth you hold dear both implicitly and explicitly, and seeks to implant in your child's mind a humanistic view which makes God irrelevant … a sort of optional extra (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974).

Values suggested in these documents which informed the identification of the foundational values included the role and responsibility of the Christian parent, the importance of an educational approach which acknowledged God, the contrast between Christian and secular education, and the issue of 'protecting' children from an education in which God is allegedly absent.

Recurring themes regarding CPC schools' values, purposes and aspirations were sought from the source material; however, a simple numerical content analysis of the documents was regarded as inappropriate. "The frequency with which words or phrases occur in a text (a quantitative emphasis) may ... say nothing about its significance within the document (a qualitative emphasis) ... qualitative content analysis ... [seeks] tendencies, sequences, patterns and orders" (May, 1997, pp. 172-173).

A grid was set up to record themes which recurred in these early documents. As the number of documents examined increased, a number of the themes were modified and others added. The important foundational themes were deemed to be those which were central in the documents and which recurred consistently across the various types of documents (outlined below).

The documents fell into five major categories which provided a thorough coverage of the literature concerning the foundational values of CPC schools. The only category in which access to documents was not comprehensive was the fourth category, 'informal documents', but even in this area, due to the researcher's personal contacts with pioneers and early leaders, many valuable informal documents were made available for examination.

The Documents

1. Papers delivered at early CPC School *Education in Focus* conferences. These were national conferences, primarily targeting CPC school teachers, but also involving a number of parents, which occurred annually from 1973 and generally biennially since 1978. Many of the papers presented at these conferences are still available, held in the CPCS Ltd library. In the early years, a majority of the papers were concerned with issues of educational philosophy, basic purposes and values.

2. Early editions of the movement's magazine - the *Christian School Reporter*, now called *Nurture*. These magazines, copies of which are held in the CPCS Ltd library, commenced in 1966 and frequently addressed foundational issues.

3. Early promotional literature particularly brochures explaining the purposes and commending the virtues of parent controlled Christian schooling. The researcher had access to a number of these brochures which were still available at Tyndale CPC School in the late 1970s and were in the researcher's possession. A number of other brochures were made available by the pioneers.

4. Informal documents such as articles and clippings from church magazines, church bulletins, newspapers and magazines, discussion papers, letters, notes from speeches and minutes of early meetings, including minutes from the first meeting of the 'National Union of Parent Controlled Christian Schools' in 1966. A significant amount of material was provided by the Rev J. Deenick, the first President of the NUPCCS who kept a large file of various documents and records from the early days of these schools in Australia. The researcher has also had access to the RCA's church magazine, *Trowel and Sword* which commenced in the mid 1950s and to other documents donated and loaned by other pioneers.

5. Two books and a chapter in an edited book provided particularly important data for this study. *No Icing On the Cake - Christian Foundations For Education* (Mechielsen, 1980); 'Church and School', (A. Deenick, 1991) in *A Church En Route – 40 Years Reformed Churches of Australia* (J. Deenick, 1991) and *The Christian School: An Introduction* (Weeks, 1988a) which were considered in Chapter Two were written by pioneers and early leaders and were rich in data concerning the foundational values of CPC schools.

Assessing the Quality of Documentary Evidence

Many of the issues that normally need to be dealt with when assessing the quality of documentary evidence, such as authenticity, credibility and representativeness or 'typicality' (May, 1997, p.169; Krathwohl, 1998, p. 578; Burns, 1997, p. 393), are less problematic for this study because the documents are original, relatively young (less than 40 years old), written for a number of different audiences (and therefore with different purposes) and derived from a wide number of sources, many of whom were pioneers or early leaders. The reliability of the broad themes that emerged from the documents was strengthened by the consistency with which they arose across all documents, regardless of audience and document type.

The Surveys of Pioneers and Early Leaders - Foundational Values

A number of themes and foundational values emerged from the document analysis, but many were couched in theological terms and were implied rather than clearly articulated. The purpose of the survey which was administered to pioneers and early leaders was to test the themes that emerged from the documents. The survey was to a large extent still exploratory, as a clear register of the foundational values had not yet been determined.

Verifying the Foundational Values

The commentary and interpretations of the pioneers offered in their surveys and interviews were used to verify and refine the list of foundational values that had been provisionally established at this point. The ten broad themes that arose from the document analysis were listed in Chapter Two. In addition, other themes were added which the researcher regarded as synonymous with Christian schools for many in the educational and wider community.

For example, an item concerned with evangelism (ie, a desire that students develop a personal relationship with God), was included to ascertain whether pioneers and early leaders regarded this as a foundational value. This item was:

11. Students' development of a personal relationship with God

Two other themes which did not feature in the documents, but which are often associated with the purposes of schooling were included as counterpoints to the other themes. These were:

12. Students' preparation for employment
13. Students' use of their academic gifts

The Pioneers and Early Leaders

The pioneers and early leaders were predominantly men who were involved in the very early days of the establishment of Christian Parent Controlled schools in Australia. For example Knol was involved in the Rehoboth (WA) Association from 1954, 12 years before the school commenced, Van Beek was involved from 1958 with Leighland Association (Tasmania) which started its school in 1976, and Dickson was involved in the Blacktown (NSW) Association from 1958, eight years before

Tyndale commenced. Very few women were involved in public leadership at the time, and only Haasjes, the foundation principal of Leongatha CPC School in 1978, was included in this research.

A number of those who were prominent in this period were subsequently employed in leadership positions in these schools, thus the phrase 'pioneers and early leaders' was regarded as the most accurate description of this group of people.

Characteristics of the Pioneers and Early Leaders

Twenty-five pioneers and early leaders were invited to complete the pioneer survey (see Appendix 1) and 23 of the questionnaires were returned. These 23 pioneers can be divided into two groups. The first group of 11 pioneers were non-teachers, most of whom saw their grand-children rather than their children attend the school that they helped establish. The other 12 were teachers, all of whom were, or became, principals. Nine of these teaching pioneers were involved as association members prior to their employment in a CPC school. Five of the pioneers and early leaders were involved as early as the 1950s in associations which were planning schools, another four were involved from the 1960s, five in the early 1970s and the remaining nine were first involved in the late 70s. The 23 pioneers and early leaders represented 15 of the early school associations.

The Selection of the Pioneers and Early Leaders for the Questionnaire

Although the researcher has been involved in CPC schools for over 20 years, the assistance of the then Executive Director of CPCS Ltd, Mechielsen who has a long history in CPC schools, was obtained to add expertise and credibility to the process of selecting the pioneers and early leaders. The researcher was also aware of the identities of many of the pioneers and early leaders as a result of his own history in CPC schools and as a result of the study of early documents, such as the *Christian School Reporter*. The twenty five pioneers selected were the most prominent and accessible. Given the advanced age of many, and of the relatively small size of the movement in its infancy, a selection of 25 was considered a large sample which included a majority of the living pioneers and early leaders who were identified by the processes noted above.

The Questionnaire (Pioneers and Early Leaders)

A 36-item survey (See Appendix 1) using a five-point Likert scale (*strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree*) was used as it allowed for the measurement of the pioneers and early leaders' agreement with the suggested foundational values. Two open-ended questions were incorporated into the questionnaire to allow the pioneers and early leaders the opportunity to suggest additional foundational values, to comment on the preceding items and to discuss their conception of the foundational values. "The survey is the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research and gathers data at a particular point in time … the descriptive survey aims to estimate as precisely as possible the nature of existing conditions" (Burns, 1997, p. 467).

The questionnaire was based on the 10 broad themes (outlined in Chapter 2) which arose from the document analysis. The items in the completed 36 item surveys were appraised (on the five-point scale) according to the support each received. This procedure made clear that the pioneers and early leaders regarded some themes as critically important while others that had appeared from the literature to be significant, were regarded with a degree of ambivalence. The indifferent responses to a number of the items proved to be of great value in the process of giving sharper focus and shape to the foundational values. The open-ended questions provided a considerable amount of useful comment and were invaluable in interpreting the pioneers and early leaders' responses to the 36 items and generated a further source with which to verify data. The two open-ended questions were:

1. *From your own involvement in the establishment of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia, are you aware of other foundational aims, objectives and values? Please describe.*

2. *Please add any other comments you would like to make regarding the foundational or original aims, objectives and values of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia.*

Mechielsen completed a pilot survey, which was discussed and subsequently modified. At the completion of the process of assessing the items, and prior to interviews with pioneers, further consideration was given to the literature and early documents to assist in the clarification and identification of the foundational values.

The Selection of the Pioneers and Early Leaders for the Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 12 of the pioneers and early leaders to refine the set of core values and to expose inconsistencies. It was not possible to interview all the pioneers and early leaders, so in consultation with the executive director of CPCS Ltd., 12 pioneers were chosen for interviews on the basis of factors such as their geographical accessibility to the interviewer and their capacity to manage an interview. A pilot interview was conducted with Weeks, (a pioneer of Sutherland CPC School), as a result of which modifications were made to the schedule of questions and the interview protocol.

The Interviews – Type and Conduct

The interview type was 'semi-structured', which was suggested by the exploratory nature of the issues to be investigated and also as it was regarded as a more respectful approach to the pioneers and early leaders who had greater liberty to digress or focus on issues of significance for them, than would have been the case with a structured interview. Semi-structured interviews "allow the interviewer to clarify and seek elaboration ... [and] allow more latitude to probe beyond the answers and enter into dialogue with the interviewee" (May, 1997, p.111). Similarly, Burns (1997):

> Rather than having a specific interview schedule or none at all, an interview guide may be developed for some parts of the study in which, without fixed wording or fixed ordering of questions, a direction is given to the interview so that the content focuses on the crucial issues of the study. This permits greater flexibility than the close-ended type and permits a more valid response from the informant's perception of reality (p. 330).

The interviews usually took place in the homes of the pioneers, however, on one occasion an interview took place in a pioneer's office at work and on three other occasions in a school. These interviews were taped and later transcribed literally by the researcher. Notes were also taken by the researcher during the interviews to assist with the recollection of the context of the interview and with interpretation.

After the research objectives were explained, the pioneers and early leaders were encouraged by the researcher to reflect on the early days of their school. A typical opening question was "I understand

that you were involved in the establishment of 'X' Christian school. Could you tell me a little about your experiences". As the pioneers and early leaders recalled their early involvement in CPC schools, a number of themes were raised by the researcher, however, the wording of the questions and the sequence varied according to the experiences of the pioneer. As the interview progressed, their understanding of most of the following areas was explored. These areas were similar to the themes used as a basis for the surveys but had been refined as a result of the survey responses:

1. *The pioneers' understanding of parent control.*

2. *The relationship between parents and teachers.*

3. *The place of the Bible.*

4. *The concept of the centrality of Christ.*

5. *Whether CPC schools were established primarily for children from Christian families.*

6. *The employment of Christian teachers*

7. *The pioneers' understanding of a Christian curriculum.*

8. *Why existing schools had been regarded as unsuitable, together with the importance for the early families of protecting their children.*

9. *The influence of the thinking of Kuyper and other Dutch educators.*

10. *The pioneers' original hopes and aspirations for the school in general and students in particular.*

11. *The place of evangelism.*

Further Verification

The interviews with the pioneers and early leaders were analysed to further refine the list of foundational values. This list, which had begun as a number of themes derived from early CPC school documents and modified as a result of the survey, was again examined in the context of the interview responses of the pioneers and early leaders. Their comments regarding parent control for example, enabled the researcher to more clearly articulate the nature and purpose of this foundational value.

Subsequent to the interviews, nine of the pioneers and early leaders provided written feedback on a draft of the foundational values. The written feedback was supportive of the draft of foundational values and typical comments included: "The core values that you list are a good description of the

ones that I saw at [X Christian School] … in early 1964" (Dr. E. Fackerell, personal communication, 6 June, 2000); "The overview [of the foundational values] is accurate and comprehensive" (Stewart Miller, personal communication, 7 June, 2000); "You have the core-values spot-on, except for a possible addition" (Rev. A. De Graaf, personal communication, 17 June, 2000). This possible addition is discussed in Chapter 4 (see page 150). There were also comments on the early practice of parent control, particularly on the relationship between parents and teachers. In addition to these written responses, further discussion was held with pioneers and early leaders such as Mechielsen, Fowler and Dickson, all of which assisted in the final formation of the schedule of foundational values.

Stage 2 – A Consideration and Identification of Prevailing Practices of Foundational Values

The purpose of the research in Stage 2 was to identify the prevailing practices of foundational values in CPC schools. An important issue in the identification of these prevailing practices was a consideration of the extent to which the values of the pioneers and early leaders were still alive in, and important to, CPC school communities, or the extent to which these schools had been faithful to the vision and purposes of the pioneers.

The Document Study - Prevailing Practices

As in the previous stage, sets of data were collected to assess prevailing practices by way of documents, surveys and interviews. In Chapter Two, a number of documents - research studies and publications were examined, predominantly from Australia and North America. The implications of these documents for this study are considered in Chapter Five and are used to support the data arising from the Stage 2 surveys and interviews.

Surveys and Interviews – Prevailing Practices

In Stage 2, the purpose of the research was to establish CPC schools' prevailing practices in relation to the foundational values. This study assessed CPC schools' prevailing practices from the

perspective of members of constituent groups in CPC schools - parents, senior students, graduates, teachers and executive staff. Surveys were first sent to these constituent groups in 12 CPC schools (see Appendices 2, 3 & 4) and these were followed by interviews with selected members of these groups (in the same schools), to clarify and develop issues raised in the surveys and to verify conclusions reached on the basis of the quantitative data.

The Constituent Groups of Christian Parent Controlled Schools

Christian Parent Controlled Schools comprise a number of constituent groups whose perspectives of their schools naturally vary as a result of their particular relationship to their schools. In order to obtain a comprehensive and balanced assessment of the prevailing practices in CPC schools, it was important that attitudes and responses were received from the major constituent groups. The main groups in CPC schools are parents, students and staff. These groups could be regarded as the initiators and owners (parents), the implementers (teachers) and the observed outcome or product of the process (students).

Parents

Each of these groups can be further divided into sub-groups. Parents for example could be divided into those who are also association members, board members, staff members, parents of infants, primary or secondary students, parents who have been involved with the school for longer or shorter periods of time, or various combinations, etc. For the purposes of the survey, parents were regarded as a homogeneous group. Similarly for the interviews, parents were not sub-divided although on those occasions where they possessed other significant characteristics such as board or staff membership, it was noted.

Students

Students are clearly a significant, if not the most significant constituent group within a school. In order to understand CPC schools' prevailing practices of foundational values, it was important that the research incorporate the perceptions of students. For that reason, the schools that were invited to participate in the survey were limited to those with Year 11 students. Senior students (Year 11 and

12 students) were considered to be both recipients and in a sense products of their school's educational endeavours and were considered more likely than younger students to be able to critically reflect on their own education and articulate their perspectives. As it was not considered appropriate to take time away from Year 12 students as they prepared for matriculation assessments and exams, only Year 11 students were invited to participate in this study. Graduate students were also included as a separate group in the survey section of Stage 2.

Teachers

Teachers are the third significant grouping within a CPC school. They are employees with regular contact with students and the agents through which the purposes and intentions of the parents are implemented. Teachers were surveyed as a whole group and the executive staff were not regarded separately. Even though it was not originally the intention, during the interview process, and as a result of different perspectives being expressed (particularly in regard to parent control), the views of executive staff were separated from those of other teachers. Because of their role as leaders in their schools and their close relationship with school boards, principals were also interviewed as a separate group. Principals are in the unique position of working closely with both staff and the school board and are often the vehicles through which parents' intentions are implemented and the values of the school community are given expression.

The Surveys of Constituent Groups - Prevailing Practices

In this Stage, parents, (including a number of board members), teachers, senior students and graduates were asked via a questionnaire to reflect on their experiences of life in a Christian Parent Controlled School community, in particular on their school's prevailing practices in the light of the foundational values established in Stage 1. Twelve schools were involved in the research. Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland between them provided a total of four schools for the study. Victoria provided three schools and NSW five schools. A school (from a state other than NSW or Victoria) withdrew after initially consenting and was replaced at late notice by the fifth school from NSW. The pilot for the constituent group surveys was a large suburban school in a capital city.

Questionnaire Structure

In the first part of the questionnaire, Likert-style surveys were used to measure the extent to which constituent groups agreed with a number of propositions regarding the practice of foundational values in their schools. This allowed for a clear measure by way of a percentage, of the extent to which constituent groups agreed with a particular item. For example, "The Bible is often used in my class" (in the students and teachers surveys), or, "As a parent, I need more education in the school's values and vision" (parent survey).

The questionnaires also incorporated 'open-ended' questions in order to give participants the opportunity to comment on aspects of prevailing practices in their school which were not covered by the Likert-style questions. Interviews with members of the constituent groups in the 12 schools were also conducted to further refine and clarify the quantitative data and to explore a number of issues in greater depth.

May (1997) supports this combining of methodologies noting that a criticism of the survey method is that it:

> rules out the possibility of understanding the process by which people come to adopt particular values or behaviours ... [however] surveys are often used as part of a multi-method approach wherein qualitative methods precede and / or follow a survey, thus permitting the development of an understanding of agents' perspectives, social process and context (p. 104).

Sampling

Given the difficulties of accessing all 79 (at the time) CPC schools in Australia, it was not possible to undertake a probability sample for the purpose of the surveys and interviews. According to Burns, "The major task in sampling is to select a sample from the defined population by an appropriate technique that ensures the sample is representative of the population and as far as possible not biased in any way ... the key word in the sample population relationship is representativeness" (Burns, 1997, p.76).

So, even though a non-probability sample was used for this study, the goal in obtaining participants for the surveys and interviews was the selection of a source of possible respondents such that there

would be a reasonable likelihood that these individuals would provide data which was representative of the CPC school movement. The sampling occurred in stages, firstly in choosing schools and secondly in choosing the groups and then individuals within these schools who would participate in the surveys and interviews. The selection technique used could best be described as 'multistage sampling' (Henry, 1990, p. 109) which involves the selection of clusters (in this case, schools), then nested clusters within these clusters (the constituent groups of parents, senior students, teachers and graduates) and then either the whole population of these groups (teachers and Year 11 students for survey) or a further sampling within these groups to select participants (parents and graduates surveyed and all those involved in interviews).

The Selection of Schools

The schools (clusters) were chosen with the assistance of the Executive Director of CPC Schools, Mechielsen (the 'key informant'), and were chosen to meet the following criteria.

The schools would:

- Represent a broad cross-section of Australian CPC schools;
- Represent a majority of states and territories (six of the eight states / territories were eventually represented);
- Include only CPC schools with Year 11 students;

A variety of school types were chosen for the study, including schools from large country towns, regional cities, working class and upper middle-class suburbs of capital cities, and from semi-rural areas. The schools also ranged in size from relatively small (Year 11 population of 10) to relatively large (Year 11 population of 110). All schools were co-educational. Two of the schools commenced in the 1960s, five in the 1970s and five in the early 1980s. Seven of the schools had their roots in the Reformed Dutch migrant communities and five had evangelical, interdenominational origins. The size of the sample and the variety of schools involved, indicate that the sample was a reasonable cross-section of Australian CPC schools. At the time that the research was conducted, there were 79 CPC schools and 26 schools with Year 11 students. The following tables (3:1 and 3:2) give an indication of the size of the sample and of the distribution of the 12 schools within Australia and in each state or territory.

Table 3:1 - National Distribution of Schools Involved in Study

States / Territories	CPC Schools in this study (1999)	CPC schools with Year 11 students (1999)	CPC schools in total (1999)
NSW	5	11	26
Victoria	3	7	14
Others	4	9	39
Total	12	27	79

The two states with the largest number of CPC schools (NSW and Victoria), contributed the largest number of schools to the study. Three schools were chosen from Victoria and five from New South Wales (NSW). Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory contributed four schools between them to the study. None of these states had more than one school involved in the study. The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) had no CPC schools with senior students. More explicit detail cannot be given without jeopardizing confidentiality.

Table 3:2 - A Comparison of the Characteristics of the Schools in this Study and the Population of CPC Schools with Senior Students

The 12 CPC Schools Involved In The Study	The 26 CPC Schools With Senior Students
Co-Educational	
• *All schools were co-educational.*	• *All schools were co-educational.*
School Size	
• *Student numbers (12 schools) ranged from 260 to 940.* • *Average whole school student enrolment was 540.*	• *Student numbers (26 schools) ranged from 197 to 940* • *Average whole school student enrolment was 485.*
Number of Senior Students	
• *Year 11 student numbers ranged from 8 to 89.* • *Average size of Year 11 was 45.*	• *Year 11 student numbers ranged from 4 to 89.* • *Average size of Year 11 was 39*
Commencement Of Schools	
• *Mean commencement year = 1971* • *2 schools commenced in the 1960s* • *5 schools commenced in the 1970s* • *5 schools commenced between 1980 and 1983*	• *Mean commencement year = 1975* • *3 schools commenced in the 1960s* • *7 schools commenced in the 1970s* • *13 schools commenced in the 1980s* • *1 school commenced in 1990*

At time of study there were 79 CPC schools in Australia. The 12 schools involved in this study comprised 15% of these.

Selection of Participants within the 12 Schools for the Surveys

Four groups within each school were surveyed. These were parents, senior students, graduates and teachers. The identification of the major subgroups and selection of an arbitrary number from each has been described as "Quota selection" (Miles and Hubermann, 1994, pp. 28-29). The division of the school communities into these four sub-groups appeared to be a natural recognition of the structures of schools in general. Further divisions could have been made to each of these groups, but it did not appear that further sub-groups would have increased the quality or usefulness of the study.

All teachers and Year 11 students in each of the 12 schools were invited to participate in the survey. In each school 20 parents and 20 graduates were invited to participate.

Parents

Principals were contacted by the researcher and asked to select 20 parents from the Year 11 student cohort. The principals were asked to ensure that a cross-section of parents was chosen, from those who were involved and supportive through to those who were less involved and less supportive. The surveys were posted directly to the parents and 82 of the possible 240 or 34% were returned.

Teachers

Teacher surveys were given out at staff meetings or placed in teachers' pigeon-holes in each of the 12 schools. The principal (or representative) received returns from teachers and organised a postal return to the researcher. All teachers in the 12 schools were invited to participate and of the 573 possible, 296 or 52% responded.

Senior Students

Senior student surveys were administered at the 12 schools by the deputy or Year 11 coordinator (or equivalent) and were returned to the researcher by post. All Year 11 students in the 12 schools were invited to participate and 405 of the possible 495 students or 76% responded to the invitation.

Graduates

Principals were asked to select 20 students who graduated at least five years ago and who represented a broad cross-section of their student cohort, not just those who were positive about their

schooling experiences. As a result, 20 surveys were posted directly to graduates of each school. Seventy of the 240 or 29% of the graduate students responded.

Table 3:3 - Surveys - Administration and Response Rates		
	No. Of Surveys Administered.	**Response Rate.**
Parents	20 surveys were posted per school.	82 from 240 = **34%**
Senior Students	All students were invited to participate.	405 from 495 = **76%**
Graduates	20 surveys were posted per school.	70 from 240 = **29%**
Teachers	All teachers were invited to participate.	296 from 573 = **52%**

With the support of the CPCS national office, and on the basis of professional and personal relationships that have existed between the researcher and many of the executive staff in the schools involved, it was anticipated that the survey return would be high. The return from parents (34%) and graduates (29%) was less than anticipated, given the accompanying, supportive letter from the executive director of CPCS Ltd and the self-addressed return envelope. The higher proportion of returns from Year 11 students and teachers was likely due to the additional factor of a contact person in each school encouraging colleagues or senior students to complete the survey.

Questionnaire

A series of items on a Likert scale and a number of open-ended questions were used to survey the constituent groups. The decision to use a 4-point Likert scale was based on advice that respondents tend to hide behind a neutral option and that more valuable information is gained from the 4-point rather than the 5-point Likert scale.

> Items with a mid-point ('neutral' or 'neither agree nor disagree') give relatively little information on people's inclinations one way or the other on the issues under consideration. In this sense, the information is "wasted". For most items, people would

have a position (either agree or disagree) other than a middle-ground. The person who has been the main advocate for not using a mid-point is Professor Ben Wright of Chicago University. (Dr. Magdalena Mok, personal communication, May 7, 2001).

In a discussion on the effects of using or omitting a middle position in a value scale survey, Schuman and Presser (1996) also indicated that some researchers omit the middle position on the basis that they want respondents to choose rather than allowing them to take refuge in a non-committal position (p. 177).

The four categories for the Likert-scale were - *strongly agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree and strongly disagree.* In this stage, the items were largely assessed by considering the extent to which constituent groups agreed with them, simply by adding the strongly agree to the mostly agree responses. These were expressed as percentages. The open-ended questions allowed respondents to comment on a number of issues related to prevailing practices in their schools.

Table 3:4 - Prevailing Practices Survey – Foundational Values and Corresponding Survey Questions.
(See Appendices for copies of surveys).

Themes (related to Foundational Values) addressed in survey	Survey Question - Numbers			
	Parents	**Teachers**	**Students**	**Graduates**
Demographic Data	Q's 1-6	Q's 1-7	Q's 1-5	Q's 1-5
I) Parent Control	Q's 16,27-33,45	Q's 15,25-30,41	Q's 25-27	Q's 25-27
IIA) Support for Christian Families	Q 17	Q 10	Q 13	Q 13
IIB) Affordabiliy	Q's 26,43	-------------	-------------	-------------
IIC) Protection	Q's 9,14	-------------	Q's 8,12	Q's 8,12
IIIA) Thoroughly Christian Curriculum	Q's 19,21	Q's 11,14,16-21, 43,46	Q's 19,24,29,30	Q's 19,24,29,30
IIIB) Importance of Bible	Q's 8,22	Q's 23,36,46	Q's 7,16,36	Q's 7,16,36
IIIC) Centrality of Christ	Q's 13,15,38-40, 42	Q's 34,35,37,42	Q's 11,23,34,35, 37,38,39	Q's 11,23,34,35, 37,38,39
IV) Christian Teachers	Q's 7,34	Q 12,	Q's 6,28	Q's 6,28

Interviews - Constituent Groups

Due to the complexity and length of time required for the survey analysis, constituent group interviews were conducted before the analysis of surveys was completed. Nevertheless, a number of issues that arose from the surveys were included in the interview schedule.

Pilot interviews were conducted in a medium sized country CPC school. The subsequent interviews with Year 11 students, parents, teachers and principals were conducted in the same schools as those involved in the surveys. The same twelve schools involved in the survey were visited by the researcher for at least one day in order to conduct the interviews. In four of the schools, two days were needed to complete the interviews.

Administration of the Interviews in the 12 Schools

Parents

Principals were asked to select two parents, one who had been involved in the school for a long period of time and one who had been involved for a short period. This was entirely achieved in nine of the 12 schools. 21 of the proposed 24 parents were eventually interviewed.

Senior Students

Principals were asked to select one group of students who were positive about their school (identified by such criteria as general enthusiasm, congenial relationships with staff, involvement in extra-curricula activities and academic success) and another group who were less positive (identified by such criteria as lack of enthusiasm, lack of involvement in extra-curricula activities and more frequently receiving teacher admonition). This 'maximum variety sampling' technique (a deliberate hunt for negative instances or variations) was used to assist in the process of collecting representative data (Morse, 1994, p.229).

In eight of the 12 schools, principals organised such groups. In the other schools, the variations included: two schools where there was only one group of students (the researcher was not able to ascertain the criteria for choosing these students), one school where there was one group of students

and a number of individual interviews. In the 12th school, as a result of a delayed flight, the researcher was able to interview only teachers and parents.

It was initially envisaged that two groups of students with four or five students per group would be interviewed in each school, ie 24 groups of students, involving between 96 and 120 students. Eventually, 21 group or individual student interviews were conducted, involving 78 students.

Teachers

Principals were asked to select at least one long term staff member and one less experienced teacher in their school who would be prepared to be interviewed. It was proposed that at least two teachers per school would be interviewed, ie, at least 24 in total. As a result of their availability and enthusiasm, 47 teachers were eventually interviewed, including 10 executive staff.

Principals

The principal of each school was to be interviewed, ie 12 principals in total, however one of the principals was unexpectedly unavailable on the day.

Table 3:5 - Numbers Of Interviews	
Parents	**21** parents were interviewed.
Teachers	**47** teachers were interviewed, including 10 with some executive responsibility.
Senior Students	**21** groups of students, involving **78** students were eventually interviewed.
Principals	**11** principals were interviewed.
Total	**100** discrete interviews with **157** people were conducted in **12** schools.

All the interviews in Stage 2 took place on school premises in small classrooms, offices or corners of libraries or staff common rooms. The data from each interview was collected by way of field notes. These notes were later typed. The strengths and weaknesses of note-taking in contrast to tape-recording are evident in the literature (eg, Walker, 1985, pp. 110-116). Note-taking was preferred as a data collection strategy in this study primarily because the researcher did not possess the resources to literally transcribe 100 interviews.

The following questions formed the basis of the semi-structured interviews conducted with constituent groups. In addition to the actual questions asked, the wording and the order of the questions changed from interview to interview, consistent with techniques used for semi-structured interviews. This allowed greater flexibility with the direction of the interview and enhanced the interviewer and respondent's ability to explore issues in greater depth and to establish the validity of document and survey data regarding prevailing practices.

Constituent Group Interviews

All Groups

- *What are your school's emphases and priorities?*
- *Why do parents send their children to this school?*
- *How well does parent control work in this school?*
- *How involved are parents in this school?*
- *Does this school employ Christian teachers only?*
- *Is this school primarily for children of Christian families?*
- *How important is the Bible in this school?*
- *How important is Jesus in this school?*

Students

- *What do you enjoy most about the school?*
- *What could be improved in your school?*
- *How does Christianity impact on your own classroom / What is Christian about your classrooms / lessons?*
- *In what ways is this a Christian school?*
- *Do the teachers or other leaders in the school talk to students about the school's purposes or values?*

Parents

- *Is this a good school for your children?*
- *In what ways is this a Christian school?*
- *Is the school affordable for the average Christian family / for all sections of the school community?*
- *What problems / dangers do you see ahead for Christian Parent Controlled Schools?*

Teachers / Executives / Principals

- *How does Christianity impact on your own classroom? / What is there that is Christian about the way you teach?*

- *What do you understand by Christian curriculum?*
- *How Christian is the curriculum of your school?*
- *In which ways is this a Christian school?*
- *How does your school promote its values and its vision?*
- *Is the school affordable for the average Christian family / for all sections of the school community?*
- *What problems / dangers do you see ahead for Christian Parent Controlled Schools?*

Interview Codes

All interviews were numbered for confidentiality and for referencing purposes. To enhance confidentiality, the interviews were not numbered chronologically (by school), but were coded and sequenced within schools. For example, interviews one to seven were all conducted in school number one, and interviews eight to fifteen in school number two, but these were not necessarily the first and second schools in which interviews took place. To further illustrate this, in school number two, the interviews were conducted and reported in the study as follows:

School Number Two

(Interview 8 Parent), (Interview 9 Senior Student Group), (Interview 10 Parent), (Interview 11 Teacher), (Interview 12 Teacher), (Interview 13 Senior Student Group), (Interview 14 Executive), (Interview 15 Principal)

Particular Issues in Senior Student Interviews – Groups and Individuals

Most students were interviewed in groups, as this was regarded as less threatening to young adults who were unfamiliar with the researcher. There was also the issue of propriety, particularly with female senior students, which could have made 'one on one' interviews problematic. This issue arose for the interviewer during the review and reflection on the interview process at the pilot school which had arranged individual interviews with two female senior students. Even though the researcher thereafter requested group interviews, one other school arranged interviews with individual senior students. In their interviews, students were initially asked to comment on those things they enjoyed most about their school, a process which appeared to be successful in assisting students to relax and talk easily about a variety of school values and issues.

Other Interview Issues – Schools' Preparedness and Accessing Graduates

Even though there were two preliminary letters and at least two prior phone calls to each school, some of the schools did not appear to be completely prepared for the researcher's visit. Two schools did not organise interviews with parents and in three of the schools, the researcher was only able to speak to one group of students.

Interviews with graduates would have enhanced this research, but these were not conducted due to difficulties of access. Communicating with and organising to meet graduate students from 12 school communities in six Australian states and territories who are no longer regularly on their school-site was not feasible.

Notwithstanding the issues mentioned above, a large amount of data was collected from a broad cross-section of parents, senior students, teachers, executive staff and principals in the 12 schools and was used to verify and further develop the conclusions based on the documents and constituent surveys.

Validation

This study has sought to validate findings at each of the stages, and was designed to have a number of checks built into it. The identification of the foundational values did not stand on the basis of document study alone, but was checked and refined as a result of the pioneer survey and further tested by the interviews with the pioneers and finally, when a draft of the foundational values had been composed it was sent back to a number of the pioneers for a final assessment.

Throughout the process, reaction and comment was solicited from experienced colleagues such as the Executive Director of CPC schools, Mechielsen (1987 to 2000) and his successor Metcalfe. In addition, Fowler, a CPC pioneer, academic and lecturer with NICE, and Glanville, a parent, teacher and principal in CPC schools for over 20 years and currently a national board member also commented on processes, results, perceptions and interpretations throughout the life of the project. The researcher also took the opportunity to present the study as a 'work in progress' and seek

responses at colloquia at the Australian Catholic University, at a number of national and state-wide CPC school conferences and at an International Conference in England. These presentations included:

Colloquia

- Presentations at Australian Catholic University, Sydney - April 1997, Oct. 1998, March 2000.

School Conferences / Presentations

- *Foundational Aims, Objectives and Values of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia.* Presentation to Tyndale CPC school staff. July 1998. (Address).

- *Revisiting Our Rich Heritage - Tyndale's Roots in Holland and Australia* - Tyndale Christian School (Parent-Teacher) Partnership Conference. March 1999. (Workshop / Seminar).

CPCS Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Conferences

- *Christian Parent Controlled Schools - Myths and Realities.* "Reclaiming the Future" - International Conference for Christian Educators, Sydney. January 1996. (Workshop).

- *Student Graduates - Are We Producing The Goods?* CPCS NSW State Conference. July 1997. (Workshop / Seminar).

- *Graduates of Christian Schools - Myths and Realities* or *How Effective Are CPCS Schools?* "Education in Focus" conference (CPCS). Geelong, Victoria. January 1998. (Address / seminar).

- *Foundational Values of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia,* CPCS National AGM, June 2001. (Address)

Other Conferences

- *Christian Parent Controlled Schools In Australia - Aims, Values, Objectives and Current Practice* - Combined Christian Schools and Colleges, Scholarly Conference, Gilbulla, Menangle, NSW. 1998. (Address).

- *Christian Schools in an Educational Market-place - An Australian Perspective.* "Issues 2000" - International Conference for Christian Educators, High Leigh, England. September 2000. (Address / seminar).

The following diagram summarises the data collection undertaken for this study. Chapter Four considers the identification of the foundational values via the document study and the surveys and interviews of the pioneers and early leaders.

Data Collection- Overview

> ***Pre-existing Stage*** - The researcher's background meant that the research was conducted and analysed by a long-term "insider".

STAGE 1 - **The Identification of Foundational Values**

> **Stage 1A** - **Identifying possible foundational values** - Document analysis of early CPC school publications and archival material.

> **Stage 1B** - **Pioneer surveys to refine foundational values** - Surveys of pioneers, involving a Likert scale survey and two open-ended questions.

> **Stage 1C** - **Pioneer interviews to validate foundational values** - Interviews with pioneers, to confirm foundational values and refine and triangulate data collected in Stage 1B.

STAGE 2 - **The Identification of Prevailing Practices**

> **Stage 2A – Document Study –** To provide data and context within which prevailing practices can be explored and identified.

> **Stage 2B** - **Constituent group surveys to establish prevailing practices** - Surveys conducted of parents, senior students, teachers and graduates to establish prevailing practices in relation to foundational values.

> **Stage 2C** - **Constituent group interviews to refine & develop prevailing practices** - Interviews with parents, senior students, teachers and executive staff to triangulate data collected in Stage 2B.

Chapter Four

Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values

<u>*Chapter Overview*</u>

While it is apparent that the theological roots and some of the broader values of CPC schools are easily established, and further, that CPC schools frequently assert that they promote manifestly Christian values, it is nevertheless the case that very few CPC schools have explicitly identified their foundational values. This situation was referred to in the review of research and literature in Chapter Two which suggested that Christian schools of this type in Australia and North America, lack a clear articulation of their values and goals.

This chapter identifies the foundational values of CPC schools on the basis of early documents and of surveys and interviews with CPC school pioneers. The chapter concludes with tables that provide an overview of the foundational values and the data sources used to establish these values.

<u>*What Did the Pioneers and Early Leaders Have in Mind?*</u>

In the formative period of CPC schools in Australia, there were not many amongst the pioneers and early leaders who had a clear perception of the implications for schooling practice of their particular Christian-Calvinist beliefs and values, and it was only over a number of years, as the schools grew and as issues were debated in various meetings and conferences, that the foundational values were developed and refined. Some of the difficulties in identifying the foundational values of CPC schools are alluded to in the responses of the pioneers to the initial survey. These responses indicated that while values were strongly held, they were not clearly articulated.

> Many of the foundational aims, objectives and values were poorly defined through the establishment years of the school. They were well alive in the minds of individuals but failed to be clearly and consistently recorded in documents. Much was ideology which did not translate into formal aims, objectives and values. Many of the details were defined through conflict … the mix of theology, imperatives, assertions and dreams loosely drawn together in a period of optimism and determination covered for the lack of clearly articulated and documented vision statements, goals, priorities, values and outcomes. (Johnston, Pioneer Survey 6).

> Apart from the purposes listed in the survey, other supporters voiced intentions for the schools such as to teach church doctrine or catechism, or to ensure that only

'Christian' books were used, but these were not widely voiced, nor did they survive, as far as I can see. (Miller, Pioneer Survey 9).

Initial thoughts were really to have a 'School with the Bible', as in Holland, without necessarily having a clear conception of what that really meant. There was a strong desire to have a Christian perspective but what that really meant was not really worked out until the late 1960s. (A. Deenick, Pioneer Survey 21).

When I began at Tyndale in 1968, two years after its establishment with two junior level teachers, the commitment was high, but the philosophy was a bit vague. The parents knew they wanted Christian education, but seldom expressed their desires in great detail. What was obvious though, was the great commitment. They were prepared to forgo the relatively luxurious facilities of the local state school for a program that honoured God (Vander Schoor, Pioneer Survey 22).

This research endeavours to give a clear picture of the foundational values that led to both the establishment of CPC schools in Australia and to their early approaches and procedures. It became evident after examination of documents from the early period and from extensive discussions with the pioneers, that four broad foundational values underpinned and motivated the establishment of CPC schools in Australia. These four foundational values will be identified in this chapter.

Establishing the Foundational Values

In order to identify the foundational values of CPC schools in Australia, it is important to remember that these schools were established by communities whose members believed that their children's schooling ought to be informed by the same Christian values and beliefs that informed every other aspect of their lives. They regarded these values and beliefs as being distinct and even in conflict with those given priority in available government and non-government schools.

The documents considered for this study often included a complex of interwoven values and themes. The following extract was taken from the speech of Tony Smit, the Chairman of the Maranatha Christian Parent Controlled School (Doveton, Victoria) board, at its opening in 1970. His comments support the view that the foundational values of that school were grounded in Christian beliefs, in particular the view that Christian parents should give direction to their children's school and that educational practices should be rooted in the centrality of Jesus Christ and the Bible. Throughout

this chapter, sections of early documents will be cited to support particular foundational values, but it is important to note that most of these documents involved the discussion of a combination of foundational values similar to the following:

> This school is a Parent-Controlled Christian school. It is a fairly new concept for Australia. This school is not run or supervised by a church. Neither is it run by the State. To put it simply, this is a school established, maintained and directed by a society of Christian parents. It is a school in which God and his Word, both the living Word in the Lord Jesus Christ and his written Word in the Bible, occupy the central place (as cited in Dickson, 1995, p. 63).

The remainder of the chapter will seek to establish the foundational values of CPC schools on the basis of early documents and the perspectives of the pioneers and early leaders. The emphases of the three most significant books examined for this study were outlined in Chapter Two. The broad foundational values or themes evident in these books were used to construct the survey items for the pioneers and early leaders.

Foundational Value I - Christian Parent Control

The first foundational value identified in this study arose from the belief of the Dutch Calvinist parents, that they had been given a responsibility by God for their children's upbringing and education. As noted in different sections of Chapter Two, this value was informed by their own history and culture, but also by their commitment to a covenant theology, and by the significance they accorded the concepts of antithesis and sphere sovereignty. All the early literature of CPC schools referred in one way or another to this responsibility. A brochure published early in the life of one school points to the importance of parent control:

> Are you satisfied that you, as a Christian parent, are doing all you can to fulfil God's command to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? (p.1).
> ... The school ... is truly a Parent-Controlled School, where Christian parents can ensure that their responsibility for the Christ-centred and God-honouring training and education of their children is fulfilled (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974, p.5).

In a number of brochures produced by the National Union of Associations for Christian Parent-Controlled Schools (NUPCCS, circa 1970), the issue of parental responsibility was also prominent:

> Why parent controlled? According to the Scriptures ... the responsibility and privilege of bringing up the children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord has been placed on the shoulders of the parents, and in accepting this responsibility they establish Parent-Controlled Christian Schools. *(Introduction to - Christ-Centred Education)*

> Our children are born into our family unit and we are responsible for them. They will suffer for our mistakes. They will profit by our faithfulness. ... The ultimate responsibility remains ours. ... Christian parents should be satisfied only when their children attend a school where the Bible, 'The Word of God', is the guideline to all subjects of education. *(Call to Christian Parents - Christ-Centred Education)*

> It is with the parents, that the responsibility of educating their children rests. In a very real sense God has given parents to children as well as children to parents. *(Why Christ-Centred Education?)*

> Christian parents:
>
> - have a covenant mandate to educate their children.
>
> - reject domination of their children's education by state or church.
>
> - therefore, feel compelled to establish, maintain and control Christian schools. *(Christ-Centred Education)*

Evidence that 'parent control' was a fundamental and defining feature in the establishment of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia, is provided by the use of the word 'control' itself, in the naming of these schools. The Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1966) maintain:

> As believing parents we … endeavour to bring our children up 'in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (Eph. 6:4). … we gladly accept responsibility for that part of education which takes place outside our homes in the school. We consider the establishment of Christian Parent Controlled schools, which are to assist us in the work of Christian nurture and education, to be our duty and God-given privilege (p.9).

The themes of parents raising their children to revere God and of taking responsibility for their education are frequently found in the early documentation of CPC schools. Mechielsen (1980) wrote "It is a clear Scriptural principle that parents are responsible before God for the upbringing of their

children to a life in God's service. The Christian school is established to help parents in this task" (p. 64).

The Bible and the Responsibility of Parents

As will be discussed in greater detail later, the Bible possessed great importance in every area of life for members of the RCA and therefore also, for those involved in the emerging Christian parent controlled school movement. Great weight was given to the notion that the Bible instructed parents to take responsibility for the religious development of their children. Dickson, a pioneer of Tyndale Christian School in Blacktown, reflected:

> Most early association members were Dutch migrants with little knowledge or understanding of curriculum matters or running a school, but based on Deuteronomy 6 [vv. 4-9], we accepted that the Bible taught it as our responsibility to see to it that our children should be taught to honour God in a Christ-centred school, (Pioneer Survey 12).

The critical role of Scripture is also evident in Nyhouse's (1980) comment in *No Icing on the Cake*:

> Christian parents need Christian schools because of the responsibility God has given them as parents. He has commanded us to bring up our children 'in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:4). Parents are to nurture their children in the service of God in all areas of their lives (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 22:6), (p.81).

Not Only Parents

It is important to note that while the schools were 'parent controlled', membership of school associations was not confined to parents. It was common to have non-parent members from supportive churches involved as school association members. When the first schools were being established, essentially by Reformed Church congregations, there was a strong encouragement and sometimes even an expectation that those belonging to the church, even if they were not parents of school age children, would support the Christian school by becoming association members. One parent interviewee, a member of the RCA, mentioned that her husband had joined the school association when he first worked as a 16 year old (Interview 1 Parent). So while parents are regarded as bearing the responsibility for providing a Christian education for their children, involvement in

and responsibility for CPC schools was not confined to parents, but shared with the wider Christian community. This is also evident in the comments of Bongers (1974):

> The Association is not only made up of Christian parents because the entire Christian community benefits through the existence and character of the education given to succeeding generations. Therefore people other than parents but with basically like views of Christian education may and should become members (p.4).

Similarly, Weeks and Schwarz (circa 1975) observed that:

> While it is the responsibility of the parent to see that the child is taught, it is the concern of the whole Christian community that the parent is able to fulfil this responsibility. Hence Christians may join together to facilitate the education of their children (p.2).

Sietzma (1976) addressed this issue at an early CPC school Focus Conference:

> Who, ultimately, is responsible for Christian education, the parents or the teachers? Ultimately of course we can say that God Himself is responsible. But when we ask instead, 'Who on earth is responsible?', then the answer is neither the parents nor the teachers. Neither the teachers who are responsible to the board, nor the parents who, through the board, employ the teachers, but the whole Christian community and parents and teachers are part of that. This communal responsibility is clearly God-given. ... We must beware ... that we do not feel content that we have a school for <u>our</u> children. It is important that we recognise our responsibility before the Lord to work to provide Christian education for all who desire it (pp. 1&5).

Survey Responses

In their survey responses, the pioneers and early leaders unambiguously confirmed the importance of the concept of parent control in the establishment of CPC schools. The following item contains a number of ideas which had to be combined in order to retain an accurate and complete sense of the value prevalent in the literature of CPC schools. All 23 of the respondents (100%) agreed that *"Christian Parent Controlled Schools were established with the expectation that parents would fulfil their responsibility before God for the upbringing of their children for a life in God's service."* (19 strongly agreed and 4 agreed). Only one of the other 36 items had such strong support from the pioneers.

Sphere Sovereignty and Parent Control

As a consequence of the belief that Christian parents were responsible for the education of their children, it was argued by the pioneers that control of the educational destiny of their children should remain with parents, rather than with federal or state governments, or even a church. Part of the background to this value was the theological concept of sphere sovereignty developed by Van Prinsterer and Kuyper which argued that the family operated within a sphere of responsibility in which it had authority over other institutions, thus parents should shape the purposes of their children's education. This emphasis on the responsibility of parents for the education of their children is apparent in the following extracts from an early NUPCCS brochure and an article produced by one of the original schools:

> The fundamental aim of Christian education is to prepare the child for a life with Christ; this aim should determine the educational programme of the school. ... Christian parents have the duty to establish and maintain a school where such a programme can be carried out, or to send their children to such a school (NUPCCS brochure: *Introduction to - Christ-Centred Education,* circa 1970).

> The Christian school does justice to this parental responsibility for the education of their children in that it is established, maintained and governed by an association of parents. It is this association, and thus the parents themselves, that have and exercise the authority over the entire school, its instructions and operations. The parents are able, therefore, to see to it personally that the school is and remains in every respect Christian (Rehoboth Christian School, n.d., p.4).

The notion of control therefore, was not about 'controlling' the work of teachers, nor even about managing the *minutiae* of daily school life, rather it was about setting the fundamental educational direction of the school and ensuring that it was thoroughly Christian. These parents took seriously the responsibility they believed they had been given by God to educate their children. If the government or even a church controlled their children's education, they would have regarded themselves as negligent, even unfaithful. This division of responsibilities is evident from the following comments made in two early promotional brochures:

> In Holland during the 19th Century Parent-Controlled Christian Schools were started by people whose understanding of the Bible led them to see that it was the direct responsibility of the parents to educate their children. ... This responsibility cannot and

must not be taken over by either the state or the Church. The function of the state is to rule and exercise justice, and that of the Church is to preach the whole counsel of God; neither has been given a mandate for education (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974, p.4).

It is the Church's task, according to the Lord's commission, to evangelise the world and teach men the gospel. To the State or Government, on the other hand, God has committed the task of maintaining law and order and of promoting public welfare and justice. But it is with the parents, that the responsibility of educating their children rests (NUPCCS brochure: *Why - Christ-Centred Education* - early 1970s*)*

That this type of education was concerned to wrest 'control' of the direction and philosophy of their children's education from the government, not from teachers, is a view supported by Dickson who suggested that one of the reasons for the establishment of a "Parent-Controlled Christian School in Blacktown was that educational policies could be changed in the State system without any apparent accountability" (Pioneer Survey 12). Similarly A. Deenick, "I think separation from church and state was a key element of the early thinking, hence, 'Parent Control'." (Pioneer Survey 21). In a similar vein, Maguire (1980) argued that "Christians ought to object to state controlled education because the State has no biblical warrant for assuming the role of sole public educator and the basis of the public school system in Australia is markedly anti-Christian" (p. 96).

As a result of documentary evidence, which was supported by the pioneers, the first foundational value of CPC schools identified by this study was '*Christian parents ought to control the direction and purpose of their children's school*', summarised as '*Christian Parent Control*'.

Conclusion

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Foundational Value I - Christian Parent Control -

"Christian parents should control the direction and purpose of their children's education."

</div>

Tensions Surrounding the Word "Control"

"Parent control" implies for many, a relationship of control by parents that leaves teachers with very little professional autonomy. Unfortunately, parent controlled schools have on occasion run into problems because of misunderstandings arising from the application of this concept. Bongers (1974) anticipated and alluded to difficulties in the relationship between parents (including school board members) and teachers:

> At the present stage of our school movement, board members as well as the teaching staff are still trying to discover their roles, responsibilities and limitations. They often learn by errors. ... In such situations we may expect conflicts. However board members and teaching staff must reflect in their mutual relationships the love of Jesus Christ. ... It is logical to expect some problems, particularly initially but most likely at times thereafter, because the parent and the teaching body is changing all the time and they may not always see their respective roles in the proper perspective. In order to limit misunderstandings and differences of opinion boards of associations should develop written policies which define as clearly as possible how the school is run (pp. 8 & 11).

Schippers maintained:

> Parent control varied from school to school and parents had different thoughts. Some thought it was okay to go into their child's classroom and start dictating things and as a reaction to that, some principals stood in the doorway and wouldn't let any parents in (Pioneer Interview 7).

Nyhouse had similar memories:

> We didn't have many guidelines .… We had a vague concept of parent control, but I think sometimes it was too invasive in the classroom. We didn't respect the office of teacher, or the God-given skill that the teacher has, and the right that goes with those skills. Now I think things are balanced much better (Pioneer Interview 10).

Not all pioneers regarded control as a problem in their school. Weeks maintained that:

> Sutherland [CPC school] tended to think in terms of partnership. We had particularly good staff in the early stages which made this easy. Different schools had a different approach to this issue. It was a very sensitive issue as a result of political difficulties in some schools. However, partnership was the emphasis in most schools. Teachers didn't have to look over their shoulders (Pioneer Interview 1).

Similarly, Hoekzema, involved in the founding of Tyndale Christian School and also of the national organisation commented on the relationship between parents and teachers in the early days of the schools:

> Definitely partnership. I always rejected the word control as an unfortunate choice of words, … there was no way it was parent control … control was an unfortunate choice (Pioneer Interview 3).

The Rev J. Deenick concurred:

> The issue of parent control did not really come up very much. We felt that the parents ought to be in control of the school. It's the parents' school ... but the word control - we struggled a little with the language at the time. We could have found a better word for it, but it wasn't an issue at the time (Pioneer Interview 6).

Even though there have been some difficulties applying the concept of parent control in CPC schools, it is clear that heavy-handed control was not the original intention of the pioneers. This is borne out by their responses to item 19 of the survey. The item, *that Christian Parent Controlled Schools were established with the expectation that parents would scrutinise all decisions made by staff in their school* had support from only 8 of the 23 pioneers, ie, 34.8% (3 strongly agreed and 5 agreed). This item received least support of all 36 items.

The reason for this lack of support is arguably due to the phrase "*scrutinise all decisions*" which implies a much closer and more intense form of oversight by parents of teachers than was originally intended. Wheaton, one of the early leaders, responded explicitly to this issue in the survey: "Parent control was more than scrutiny" (Pioneer Survey 18). Van Beek also indicated that scrutiny by individual parents was inappropriate and that valid complaints should be taken by the school board to the staff (Pioneer Survey 17).

This survey item found its origin in a relatively late document which the researcher at the time believed was a faithful expression of the pioneers and early leaders' perspective. A monograph generated as a result of discussions held in 1991, at the CPCS National Curriculum Summit (1992), claimed that "Teachers make many decisions in the day to day operation of the school. However, in principle, none of these decisions are exempt from scrutiny, revision, and if necessary, change by the parents through appropriate channels" (p.9)

This lack of support for control via scrutiny of teachers decision-making, assisted in the clarification of the pioneers ' perspective on parent control. In the light of other survey and interview responses, it was apparent that the pioneers were not so much concerned to control teachers, but rather to control the religious worldview of the school and to emphasise the fundamental importance of Christianity in education. In order to do this, control had to lie in the hands of the parents, not the government or one of its agencies or a church or any other organisation or group.

This response of the pioneers to the issue of the parents' scrutiny of teachers' work was a clear example of the benefit of using the survey to support the document study because it resulted in a significant refinement of the researcher's understanding of the view of parent control held by the pioneers and early leaders.

While insisting that it was the parents' responsibility and right to determine the nature and character of their children's education, the pioneers and early leaders often emphasised the importance of a partnership between parents and teachers.

Partnership

Many of the pioneers and early leaders were aware that in order for the schools to be effective, there had to be a strong partnership between parents and teachers. As noted previously, Weeks felt that "partnership was the emphasis in most schools" and Hoekzema that 'partnership' rather than 'control', was a better description of the relationship between parents and teachers. Hoekzema also suggested that in the establishment of CPC schools "many of these [foundational] aims were forged in relationship between teachers and parents" (Pioneer Survey 5) and Baxter that the foundational values of CPC schools included the "establishment of such a parent-teacher partnership that the student was not torn between conflicting authorities and both teachers and parents were working from the same biblical basis" (Pioneer Survey 2). The importance of partnership was also implicit in the comments of Mechielsen, "The school is a community in which each worker is respected and supported and able to contribute according to his / her gifts. … Each should support the other in his / her particular task and calling" (Pioneer Survey 10).

Parental Responsibility - A Widely Accepted Concept

Parental responsibility in education is not a concept valued only by CPC schools. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights maintains that "parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (Article 26:3). Other Christian groups involved in education have similar views. The Lutheran Church of Australia (1997) regards parents as having "the first responsibility for the education of their children"; Christian Community Schools (1993) speak of "assisting parents in their God-given responsibility of bringing up their children in the Lord" and the Catholic school view is that "the first and primary educators of children are their parents" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, p.35).

It can be seen from these perspectives that the primacy of parental rights in determining the nature of children's education is widely accepted, however, CPC schools regard the principles of parental rights and responsibilities as so important that they have built parent control into the structure of their schools. As a result, parent control has not only been given a foremost place in these schools, but it is a defining feature.

Parental Involvement

A value which was closely connected to and derived from parent control was parent involvement. This value was not often stated explicitly, possibly because it was taken for granted that parents in a parent controlled school would be involved in their children's school. A brochure distributed by NUPCCS, '*Christ Centred Education*' (circa 1970) did however mention the issue of involvement: "Parents, by means of sub committees or individually, are encouraged to take part in all school activities such as curriculum planning, teaching, fundraising, prayer meetings etc."

The expectation when these schools were being established was that parents would be committed to and involved in all aspects of school life. From the early years in many CPC schools, parental involvement was mandatory, with systems being put in place that required parents to spend a minimum number of hours in the school involved in activities such as excursions or camps, committee meetings, student reading, office work, gardening, general school maintenance or alternatively, contributing money in lieu of their time and labour.

Foundational Value II - Christian Families

IIA. Support for Christian Families

Consistent with the view that Christian parents ought to give direction to their children's education and that that education ought to be Christian education was the associated notion that the particular group for whom this education was being offered, was the Christian family. J. Deenick, now a retired Reformed Church minister and one of those responsible for establishing the national organisation, CPCS Ltd (originally called the National Union of Parent Controlled Christian Schools - NUPCCS), commented on the singular importance for his contemporaries in the Reformed Churches of establishing Christian schools to support Christian families:

> Christian education was so much part of our background, that even before we talked about establishing churches, we were quite sure we needed schools. We needed Christian schools, because you couldn't teach apart from being committed to Christ. … it was part and parcel of your whole faith, your thinking. It was very much a follow-up of what you did in the home … as parents you wanted your children to have an all-round, comprehensive Christian education (Pioneer Interview 6).

Bongers (1974) also maintained that:

> Parents can no longer fulfil their God-given mandate in our culture and civilisation without calling upon others to assist them. Therefore the main task of a school is to assist the family with its proper functioning in society (p.1).

Support by members of the Reformed Churches for Parent Controlled Christian schools was encouraged by their belief in a covenant theology, (outlined in Chapter Two). J. Deenick commented specifically on the significance of the covenant for the pioneers:

> We came from a covenant point of view. Children are children of God's people, so they ought to be brought up as children of God's people. The Holy Spirit will work in his time and in his way, through the family, through the church and through the school too (Pioneer Interview 6).

Nyhouse and Schippers agreed that the concept of covenant was important:

> We came out of an infant baptism background, from a very strong belief in the covenant … where you promise to bring your children up in the fear of the Lord, and

> how can you do that if you don't have schools that have a similar basis to the values of the family? (Pioneer Interview 10).

> One of the foundational aims of CPC schooling was to assist Christian parents in the formal education of their covenant children (Pioneer Survey 15).

These Dutch Christians from the Reformed tradition needed schools which would assist them to fulfil their responsibility as parents of covenant children. While this covenant emphasis clearly focused the attention of CPC schools on the children of Christian families, children from a variety of backgrounds were generally welcome. From the start, children were accepted into CPC schools from denominations other than the Reformed Church and also from non-church backgrounds. Hoekzema, recalled that:

> The schools were established for children with Christian parents … that is not to say that non-Christian children were excluded altogether, but it was primarily for Christian families (Pioneer Interview 3).

In response to the question, "To what extent were the schools started for children from Christian homes only?" Miller commented:

> A high proportion would have had that in mind …. I think it was fairly commonly understood that it was for Christians … there was a fairly high proportion who would have said "Yes, for Christian families - a parent controlled Christian school means Christian parents controlling the school. I think the opportunity to bring in non-Christians became obvious once the schools were started (Pioneer Interview 5).

Nyhouse observed:

> It took me a long time to develop my thinking from Christian schools are only relevant to Christians' children to the realisation that if Christian education is education as the Lord had intended, it is therefore relevant for children of believers and unbelievers alike. (Pioneer Survey 14).

The pioneers did not envisage that CPC schools would act as agents of church evangelism within the Australian community, nor, on the other hand, were they seeking to provide a morally sound education based on Christian principles for the Australian community at large. The pioneers were concerned to provide distinctively Christian schooling for the children of Christian families. Discussions that supporters of parent controlled Christian schools within the Reformed Churches of Australia had with an Adelaide based organisation, 'Christian Educational Fellowship' (CEF),

proved fruitless because of disagreements, particularly over the issue of evangelism. According to the 1960 synod of the RCA, the CEF group, while supportive of Christian parent-controlled schools did not "take into consideration the promise of the covenant to the children of believers, ... they consider the Christian school as an instrument of evangelism" (cited in Maguire, 1975, p. 27).

Blomberg (1980c) wrote:

> The Christian school is neither a retreat from the world nor an attempt to reassert the power of Christians. ... The Christian school does not claim a monopoly on the nurture of the child. Under the guiding hand of parents, and in concert with other nurturing agencies such as the church and social clubs, a multi-faceted integral education is possible. The school does not intend evangelism; it attempts to nurture in the faith children from Christian families, in the confidence that God will bless the faithful efforts of all (pp.19-20).

Weeks (1988a) maintained that:

> The school exists to help Christian parents to fulfil their obligations. That is its first priority. ... Some would argue that the child from the non-Christian family simply 'does not belong'. Yet if non-Christian parents want to give their child the benefits of a Christian education, should we deny the child that benefit? Surely a Christian concern for the needs of that child motivates us to want to present him [sic] with the truth (p. 98).

It is clear from the comments made by Hoekzema, Miller, Nyhouse and Weeks above, that while Christian schooling was intended for the children of Christian families, other children were also welcome. The pioneers of these schools envisaged that the overtly Christian values and approaches taken to support the beliefs of Christian families would render these schools of little interest to those with different values.

On the basis of the preceding evidence and discussion, it is clear that one of the foundational values of CPC schools was that they should support Christian families in the task of educating their children.

Conclusion

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Foundational Value IIA - "Christian Parent Controlled Schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children"

</div>

IIB. Affordable Education for Christian Families

In order for CPC schools to support Christian families in their endeavours to nurture and educate their children, it was necessary that fees and other costs were set at such a level that Christian families could afford them. While this was a largely tacit purpose, it is evident on the basis of the meagre financial resources available to the largely migrant constituency, that it was critically important and widely accepted. Hoekzema (1990) described the conditions that many of these migrants faced:

> Uprooted from their centuries old communities, many left their parents, brothers and sisters behind. These migrants were thrown together in circumstances that could hardly be called ideal. Most did not have a cent to their name. Many started their lives here in barracks, garages, chicken sheds and some even in their packing cases.

The issue of finance was often alluded to in the early days of CPC schools. Patterson (1972) for example, suggested in the *Christian School Reporter* that:

> [Association] membership must reach out and enfold Christians from all situations of life. It is not that one is supporting the Smiths' child, but that one has the privilege of helping other Christian parents in a task which is too big for them financially. Education is a costly business and if there wasn't that brotherly love from the fellow Christian, then school fees would be beyond the cost of many Christian families (p.3).

Commenting on the reasons that Church schools could not adequately meet the needs of Christian parents, and thus highlighting the importance of establishing schools which would be affordable, an early promotional brochure suggested that Church schools "are beyond the reach financially of many families - only Christians with money can send their children to them" and in outlining the fee structure which would be a set percentage of each family's income, observed "In this way each family pays according to its circumstances and so we are able to fulfil our responsibility, not only towards our own children, but also towards the children of our brothers and sisters in Christ who can afford less; it will not be a Christian school for wealthy Christians only!" (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974, pp.2&8).

The spokesman for a projected parent controlled Christian school in Geelong, remarked in an article in a local newspaper that "the school would be for the 'average' person. We don't want to make it a school where people can't send their children because of the cost." (Geelong News*, 1976, p.49). The issue of finance was also emphasised in a review of the history of the Blacktown (Tyndale) Christian School Association. A committee drawn from members of the Blacktown Reformed Church first met early in 1955 to look into the feasibility of starting a Christian school. Moerman (1989) commented:

> Needless to say, the following years were extremely busy for the [association] members, many of whom were new immigrants from Holland, with most of their time taken up in establishing their new careers, building homes and setting up a new church. There wasn't a lot of money to spare so fundraising was the order of the day. Bottles, rags and coffee stalls all helped the savings account. By 1958, 170 pounds had been saved.

In his response to the survey, Schippers made the issue of finances explicit, maintaining that one of the foundational aims of CPC schools was "to structure the cost of education in such a way to provide lowest income parents with Christian education for their children without forcing mothers to work." (Pioneer Survey 15).

The goal of the CPC school pioneers then, was to provide Christian education for a constituency that included many Christian families on average and lower incomes, so in order to achieve this, costs had to be kept to a minimum.

<u>Conclusion</u>

> *Foundational Value IIB - "Christian Parent Controlled Schools should be affordable for Christian families."*

IIC. Christian Families - A Protected Environment

It was evident from the literature and from advice from the pioneers and early leaders, that a number of parents supported the establishment of CPC schools on the basis that their children would be protected from the negative influences of other schools, particularly from the possibility that their family values, primarily their Christian beliefs, would be challenged.

In an early NUPCCS brochure, *Is the State School a Christian School?*, it was suggested that one of the prime motivations for the establishment of Christian schools was a result of the secular and irreligious influences being brought to bear on the minds of children:

> The issue of Christian education in the day school has recently become a far more critical problem in Australia than many of our Protestant leaders care to admit. Christian parents become increasingly aware of the secularising influence that our present system of education has on their children, and that the weekly half-hour of religious instruction - no matter how valuable it may be - cannot possibly counteract the many irreligious influences that are brought to bear upon their children's minds. ... All they [Christian parents] can do is hope for the best and pray that the general atmosphere of the school may not be too antagonistic to the gospel, or that here and there a dedicated Christian teacher may exert some restraining influence (Circa, 1970).

The Rev R.O. Zorn (1970) made the following comments at the third biennial meeting of the NUPCCS held in Blacktown, NSW, using the metaphors of warfare to indicate the dangers associated with public schooling:

> The people of God … must also recognise that they are presently engaged in a battle against the powers of evil … an all-out engagement which requires all our time, all our resources, and the totality of our commitment. … Few would dispute the fact that the philosophy of the public school is that of secularism. …How then are we to overcome the modern Philistine enemies of secularism, humanism and materialism? These soul-destroying attitudes of life which teach that man is his own master, completely sufficient unto himself and living to amass and enjoy the comforts of the good life … We need a fresh vision, a deeper faith, a greater obedience, do we not? For Christian education is not a luxury. After all, a luxury is something that is nice if you can afford it. But since Christian education is a must, Christian schools are no luxury - even if it means sacrificing to bring them about (pp. 6-8).

Consistent with his uncertainty regarding the contribution that CPC schools could make to the wider community, Hill (1991) also suggested that protection from Australian culture was a central motivation in the establishment of these schools:

> A major factor in the initial creation of alternative Christian schools in the 'fifties was the arrival of Dutch migrants resolved to transplant the Reformed ethos onto Australian soil, rather than risk seeing their children absorbed into the Australian culture as represented by state systems (p. 151).

Haasjes recalled that "Some parents wanted the same type of education for their children that they had received themselves or that they were familiar with in Holland" (Pioneer Survey 1) and Wheaton maintained "For some, the foundational values were reactionary - a general non-specific disenchantment with the State system, … a return to traditional values, … the creation of a gentler, kinder, school environment" (Pioneer Survey 18).

There was evidence during the study that there were varying commitments to this particular value. The survey of pioneers and early leaders, for example, did not give overwhelming support for 'protection' as a foundational value. While it received endorsement from 57%, (ie, 57% of the pioneers either agreed or strongly agreed with this item), it ranked second last of the 36 items. The item, that *the wider school curriculum was designed to protect children from negative influences* received support from 13 of the 23 pioneers (3 strongly agreed and 10 agreed).

During the interview process, many of the pioneers maintained that there were parents involved from the outset whose major concern was to protect their children. "The vision we had in starting Christian schools was partly fear. We wanted to keep our kids free from the influence of the world", (De Graaf, Pioneer Interview 8). J. Deenick agreed with this assessment, but made it clear that protection was not a motivation for those in leadership:

> Among the parents there possibly was a concern to protect their children, but certainly not amongst the leadership, the leadership of the movement was definitely not for the way of protection. … many parents may have felt safer sending their children to a Christian school, though (Pioneer Interview 6).

Miller was also aware of a desire on the part of some parents to protect their children:

> Apart from the few who had the big picture, ie, the reformational approach who also provided the impetus in starting the schools, … a great many of the others wanted a church school. There were some lovely well meaning people whose horizons went only as far as 'protect our children from the world and do the catechism' (Pioneer Interview 5).

Hart's survey comments also indicated that concerns with state school education and the desire of parents to provide a protected environment for their children were significant factors in the decision to establish a CPC school (Marrara) in Darwin:

> The value judgements at the time reflected a need to provide a Christian nurturing environment to combat the evils seen in the state schools. These included:
>
> - The free approach to sex and drugs in secular society
> - The negative influence of non-Christian teachers who had no foundation for their lives.
> - The inability of state schools to provide a disciplined environment.
> - General expectations in schools that did not require high standards from students.
> - A great deal of frustration towards state schools, (Pioneer Survey 14).

Regarding the establishment of CPC schools, Weeks (1988a) suggested that:

> Prominent amongst these [reasons] is the need to shelter children from the influences of the world. Whether we put that high on the list of our reasons for having a Christian school, we have to admit that it is high on many parents' lists. Especially as their children grow older, they want to remove them from certain company and influences (p. 95).

While this value did not receive compelling support from all the pioneers, it has been included in the list of foundational values as a result of its importance for the majority of early families, particularly at the 'grass-roots' level and as a result of the acknowledgement of a number of pioneers that the protection of children from a variety of negative influences was an important issue for their particular school community.

Conclusion

> ***Foundational Value IIC -*** *"Christian Parent Controlled Schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined."*

Foundational Value III - Christian Curriculum

IIIA. Thoroughly and Distinctively Christian Curriculum

Throughout the early documents and supported unequivocally by the pioneers and early leaders in the surveys and interviews was the view that everything that occurred in the Christian school, ought to be intentionally Christian. Delivering the opening address at the inaugural meeting of the NUPCCS at Blacktown in January, 1966, the Rev J. Deenick underscored the integral relationship between education and Christianity for CPC schools:

> It is for this and for no other purpose that we establish our Christian day school movement. Education ought to be Christian education, ought to acknowledge the Cross and the Crown of Jesus Christ, and ought to prepare for his return, so that generations come and go, but the church remains and Christian service and Christian life and Christian culture and Christian learning remain. (J. Deenick, personal communication - original notes from address, 14 December 1998).

Given the strong theological background of the CPC pioneers, with their adherence to the motifs of the lordship and sovereignty of God over all aspects of life and the antithesis between Christian and other belief systems and their rejection of a dualistic, sacred - secular approach to life and the possibility of value-free knowledge, the implementation of a thoroughly and distinctively Christian curriculum was necessary.

In outlining the difference between government schools and Christian schools, the national organisation suggested in the brochure, *Is the State School a Christian School?*:

> The Christian believes that there are no neutral facts, that everything is related to God and has significance beyond this life. … Christian education, therefore, has to do with every subject of knowledge. Adding a few courses in religion and Bible study to a school curriculum, or holding religious exercises and chapel services, does not make a school Christian. … Christian education requires a Christian point of view for the whole curriculum; a God-centred program in every department … A Christian school seeks to be Christian every hour of the school day (NUPCCS, circa 1970).

This early booklet made clear that from the beginning CPC schools rejected a view that confined Christianity to discrete aspects of a school's operation and promoted rather, the view that all aspects of school life should be considered from a Christian perspective. At the first *Education in Focus* Conference, Fackerell (1973) addressed the issue of teaching science from a Christian perspective:

> The purpose of my lectures is to give you, Christian teachers, perspectives that will enable you to make significant progress towards the goal of teaching science in a truly Christian way in Christian schools. ... When we turn to the dominant contemporary view of both the natural sciences and the social sciences, the thing that strikes us most as Christ-believers is that all of these spheres of learning are viewed as totally independent of Jesus Christ and his gospel. ... The scientific disciplines have come to agree with the humanist viewpoint that there can be no intrinsic connection between the world of learning on the one hand and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures on the other. ... [However] if we agree with the view that Jesus Christ and his gospel have nothing intrinsic to do with the world of science and of learning, we are denying that Jesus Christ is pre-eminent in all things (pp. 1-2). …

> We have seen that the basic religious character comes out quite clearly in the actual way in which man [sic] responds to his cultural task in science, when he either tries to turn it into an activity whereby and also in which he can be independent of God, or he seeks to render obedient service to God in this field (p. 15).

At the fourth *Education in Focus* Conference, Fowler (1976a) maintained that:

> Christian education must be a distinctive education, a genuine alternative to all education founded on other religious principles. What we must aim for is not secular education with the addition of Christian values but education that is Christian through and through. …The central issue of life is religious and our education can be authentically Christian only as the Christian religious principle directs the whole educational enterprise (p. 1).

Fackerell's contention that the sciences and learning are intrinsically related to the gospel and Fowler's advocacy that Christian education must be thoroughly Christian were themes found throughout the early literature and consistently supported by the pioneers.

Survey Responses

There was substantial support in the survey of pioneers and early leaders for the view that Christian curriculum was a foundational feature of CPC schools:

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that students would acquire a Christian perspective on the world* (20 strongly agreed and 2 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims was that *teachers would devise a curriculum consistent with Christian principles*, (18 strongly agreed and 3 agreed).

The survey responses also indicated support on the part of the pioneers and early leaders for a curriculum which reflected Kuyper's outlook and one that emphasised the importance for students of the Reformed emphasis on the sovereignty of God.

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (ie., 96 %) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was that *the wider school curriculum was designed to reflect to a significant degree, the philosophical dictum of Abraham Kuyper, to "claim every square inch of the Universe for Christ"* (18 strongly agreed and 4 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (ie, 91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that students would acknowledge the sovereignty of God in every realm of life*, (19 strongly agreed and 2 agreed).

Another indicator of the importance for these schools of constructing curriculum with a thoroughly Christian foundation was their early commitment to teacher education, exemplified by their *'Education in Focus'* conferences first held in 1973. One of the constant and most demanding challenges that faced CPC schools was the paucity of financial resources, and the employment of scarce funds to support a national teacher conference was an indication of the high priority that CPC schools assigned the development of Christian curriculum and to teacher professional development.

As indicated in the preceding discussion, the foundational value that 'the school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian' was supported by a wealth of data from documents, surveys and interviews and will also be supported by data in the next two sub-sections which are concerned with the importance of the Bible and the centrality of Jesus as foundational values in CPC schools.

Conclusion

> ### *Foundational Value IIIA - "The school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian."*

IIIB. Christian Curriculum - The Bible as Guide

The pioneers' belief that Christian education was more than just schooling involving Christian teachers, or schooling with regular corporate worship and ought to be thoroughly and distinctively Christian, raised a number of issues, including the role of the Bible.

Numerous early documents could be cited to demonstrate CPC schools' commitment to the Bible as the central and authoritative document for all aspects of education. The following examples are taken from promotional brochures and illustrate the fundamental role accorded the Bible in CPC schools.

> [A Christian school is] "a school where His [God's] Word is allowed to give direction and purpose to the whole process of learning" (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974, p.4).
>
> A Christian school is a school in which God and His Word - both His living Word in the Lord Jesus Christ and His written Word in the Bible - occupy central place. … The Christian school has one basic textbook. It brings the Bible from Sunday's church into Monday's classroom. And it opens all of its other books in the light of that basic text. But a Christian school is not a week- long Sunday school. It is, rather, a week long

school that no more ignores God's Word in education, (NUPCCS brochure: *Why - Christ-Centred Education*, circa 1970).

The curriculum [of a parent-controlled Christian school] includes daily Bible lessons and is otherwise permeated with the light of the Scriptures. ... Such a concept of education does not allow for a separation between religious instruction and secular education, but seeks its content and purpose in God's Word (NUPCCS brochure: *Introduction to - Christ-Centred Education*, circa 1970).

The Bible takes the place it properly deserves only when it is the abiding touchstone of truth, and all of life and thought is brought under the sway of its teaching. Does the Bible occupy any such place in the public school? The question is answered in the asking. In fact, Christian parents should pause at the fact that by the very nature of the public school, the Bible must of necessity be ruled out (Heerema, circa 1970, p.12, brochure: *What school for our children?*).

The pioneers and early leaders consistently assigned prominence and authority to the Bible. Fowler (1976a) at one of the early CPCS *Education in Focus* Conferences maintained that "The Word of God, and the Word of God alone, can be the final authority in the life of the school" (p. 15) and again in *No Icing on the Cake* (1980a) he wrote, "Scripture is central to the Christian school. We do not expect to read out of the Bible all the answers to all the questions we have about living in the world. We do look to the Scriptures to guide us constantly in looking for the answers to every question" (p.30). Maguire (1980) in the same book argued similarly that "The ultimate basis for Christian educational thinking is the written revelation of God given to us in Scripture" (p.93).

Survey Responses

There was support in the survey of pioneers and early leaders for the view that the Bible was of primary importance for school curriculum, school activities and student values:

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *the wider school curriculum was designed to give central place to the Bible* (17 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that parents ensure that all school activities are in harmony with the Word of God* (17 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that students develop values in harmony with biblical principles* (16 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

The Bible was regarded as central to the educational task of the school, firstly as a result of a commitment to the Bible's position as the authoritative Word of God and secondly as a result of a world view which did not separate sacred concerns from secular issues. The Bible was regarded as being just as authoritative in business ethics or in the analysis of English literature as it was in the interpretation of ethical, moral or theological issues and therefore just as relevant in the school as it was in the church.

Conclusion

> *Foundational Value IIIB - "The Bible should be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling."*

In many of the early documents, a discussion or declaration of the fundamental importance of the Bible was immediately preceded or followed by the assertion that Christ was central in the Christian school.

IIIC. Christian Curriculum - The Centrality of Christ

The expression "Christ-centred education" was and remains in common usage in CPC schools and is sometimes employed as though it is synonymous with the movement. A number of early brochures published by NUPCCS used this expression to consider various aspects of CPC schooling. The brochures were entitled:

- *Christ-Centred Education*

- *Call to Christian Parents - Christ-Centred Education*

- *Introduction to - Christ-Centred Education*

- *Why - Christ-Centred Education?*

These brochures maintained that a Parent Controlled Christian School "has Christ central to every sphere of learning", that "the fundamental aim of Christian education is to prepare the child for a life with Christ", and that a Christian school "is a school that understands and seeks to practise Christ-centred education, and that seeks to be Christian every hour of the school day".

Other early documents also expressed the view that Christ ought to be central to, and honoured in a Christian school:

> A Christian school "is a school where Christ is exalted and God is honoured from beginning to end" (Donvale CPC school, circa 1974, p.4).

> Our confession as Christians is ... that 'in him (that is Christ Jesus) all things hold together' (Col. 1:17) and that 'he upholds the universe by his word of power' (Heb. 1:3). As all things hold together in Christ, so the school finds its structure in him (Mechielsen, 1978, p.1).

> Togetherness in the Christian school must start with togetherness in Christ as Saviour and Lord. ... [the school community should] witness to Christ's lordship in education, first to the students in the school but also to the wider Christian community and to the educational world (Miller, 1980, p.104).

A number of those aware of the priorities in the early years also spoke of the importance of Christ. Bongers (1974) in similar vein to Miller, saw the centrality of Christ impacting on relationships within the school: "board members and teaching staff must reflect in their mutual relationships the love of Jesus Christ (pp. 8). J. Deenick understood that faith in Christ would impact directly on the teacher and the curriculum they were teaching - "you couldn't teach apart from being committed to Christ. ... the issue straight away was how to bring faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the teachings of the Word of God to permeate through the whole of the curriculum" (Deenick, Pioneer Interview 6). In response to a question concerning the priorities in the early days of CPC schools, Burggraaf commented that "The intention was Christ-centred education not control" [H. Burggraaf, personal communication, 8 October, 1999]

The Constitution of the NUPCCS stated that:

> As Christ is the Saviour and King of the whole of human life (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1: 20-22; Col. 1:16, 17) we understand by a Christian School, such an educational institution

in which Christ is not only honoured by prayer and study of the Bible, but all subjects are taught by the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ contained in the Old and New Testament.

Although there are many references to this motif of 'Christ-centredness' in the early documents, it was not made clear how the implications of this value would apply in concrete situations in the classroom or in the school as a whole. Clearly, it was a strongly held value, and on the basis of the religious allegiances of the founding communities and the manner in which it was expressed in the early documents, it appears to have acted to provide motivation and purpose, even though it was difficult to point to explicit consequences of its use in the school.

Survey Responses

The survey results indicated strong support for the concept of Christ-centred education. The pioneers and early leaders agreed that the foundational educational purposes included honouring Christ, modelling behaviour based on the life of Christ, unfolding the truth about Christ and acknowledging that Christ is central to an understanding of reality.

- Twenty-three of the 23 respondents (100%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that the wider school curriculum was designed to honour Christ in every facet of education* (17 strongly agreed and 6 agreed).

- Twenty-three of the 23 respondents (100%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would model behaviour based on biblical principles and the life of Christ* (16 strongly agreed and 7 agreed).

- Twenty-three of the 23 respondents (100%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would understand their task as unfolding the truth about Christ in the universe* (15 strongly agreed and 8 agreed).

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that the wider school curriculum was designed to acknowledge that the person and work of Jesus is central to an understanding of reality* (17 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

It is evident on the basis of early documents and the pioneers' responses that the pioneers and early leaders intended that 'Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities'.

Conclusion

> ### *Foundational Value IIIC* - *"Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities."*

Comment – Related Concepts

Separating 'Foundational Value III - Christian Curriculum' into three components was not straightforward. A commitment to a 'thoroughly Christian curriculum', with 'the Bible as the foremost guide' and 'Christ as central', was not a sequence of separate commitments on the part of the CPC pioneers, but was, rather, one commitment to an interrelated and interdependent set of values. For Dutch Calvinists, steeped in the theological traditions of Kuyper, all of life including a school curriculum was religious, the character of which was shaped by the Christ revealed in the Bible. However, while these three concepts were closely related, they nevertheless possessed distinct characteristics and therefore needed separate consideration in this study.

Teachers are critical to the development and implementation of curriculum in any school, and in a school wishing to implement a curriculum based on explicitly Christian values, this is no less the case. The importance of Christian teachers in CPC schools will be considered in the next section.

Foundational Value IV - Christian Teachers

CPC school pioneers were adamant that their schools would employ only Christian teachers. This was evident throughout the early documents and from the surveys and interviews with the pioneers and was clearly necessary if the other foundational values were to be sustained. For schools to give active support to the values and beliefs of Christian families and to offer a curriculum which was

distinctively and thoroughly Christian, required teachers whose own values and beliefs were consistent with that approach. As noted in Chapters One and Two, the earliest CPC school communities were composed of Protestant Christians who adhered to either a Reformed or an evangelical theological position. When they spoke of 'Christians' or 'Christian teachers', they would have assumed in most cases that these 'Christians' would have come from within their own Reformed or Evangelical traditions.

The fundamental relationship between a school's ability to offer a Christian curriculum and the Christian faith of its teachers is made explicit in the following extract from an early promotional brochure, an article in the CPC school journal and a CPC school conference presentation in 1974:

> Teachers who are not committed Christians themselves cannot be expected to give a worthwhile training in the Christian faith. … Nor is it enough that teachers are members of a Christian church. Christian education requires a Christian point of view for the whole curriculum, a God-centred programme in every department and born-again educators in front of every class (Brochure: *Is the State School a Christian School?*, NUPCCS, circa. 1970).

> It is quite clear that the teacher at the Christian school must be a Christian, that is, must be a person whose heart has been opened to the Gospel by the Holy Spirit and who has submitted his or her life to the rule of Jesus Christ as Lord. … an essential qualification of a Christian teacher at a Christian school is that he or she will be committed to the idea that it is possible to develop a truly Christian curriculum in every subject (Fackerell, 1972, p.4).

> Each teacher must be a Christian in word and deed, not a teacher who happens to be a Christian. ... This means that Christianity is not attached as a personal label, but a power, that works as a leaven (Bongers, 1974).

Fowler (1973a) also commented on the importance of teachers having a sincere faith and an ability to translate that faith into educational practice:

> It is the responsibility of the governing association to see to it that the school is staffed with teachers for whom the creed of the school is a confession of their own living faith, and who have the necessary insight to translate that faith into daily educational practice. For a responsible governing association, academic qualifications and experience, though not unimportant, will be secondary considerations in selecting

teachers. Genuine educational insight directed by the faith confessed by the school community will be the first consideration (p. 8).

Survey Responses

As indicated in the previous section, the survey responses indicated that the pioneers and early leaders strongly supported (100% agreement), the contention that teachers ought to model Christ-like behaviour and unfold the truth about Christ in the universe. In addition, the pioneers and early leaders agreed that teachers ought to be motivated by their own relationship with Christ.

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would be motivated by their own relationship with Christ*, (14 strongly agreed and 7 agreed).

It is reasonable to infer from this that the pioneers and early leaders would have expected teachers in their schools to be Christians.

Christian teachers were needed in these schools not, primarily, to protect children from non-Christian influences, but rather because the task of Christian education as understood by the CPC pioneers required a Christian approach to the whole curriculum and this could be communicated only by a teacher who not only understood and agreed with this Christian perspective, but lived and modelled it. It is clear from the documents and comments of the pioneers and early leaders that teachers in CPC schools were required to do more than rationally and dispassionately communicate knowledge and thus a foundational value of these schools was that 'all courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers'.

Conclusion

> ### *Foundational Value IV: Christian Teachers*
>
> *"All courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers."*

Low Priority Values

The items which the pioneers ranked last as foundational values - *that parents scrutinise all decisions made by staff in their school* and second last, *that the wider school curriculum was designed to protect children from negative influences* have been discussed earlier in this chapter, but two other items are worthy of note.

- Eleven of the 23 respondents (48%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was that *that students accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour*, (6 strongly agreed and 5 agreed). This item ranked third last of the 36 items.

- Fourteen of the 23 respondents (61%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was that *that students achieve academic excellence*, (4 strongly agreed and 10 agreed). This item ranked fourth last of the 36 items.

On the basis of their beliefs and values as Reformed and / or Evangelical Christians, and on the basis of the important place they gave to Jesus and the Bible in the surveys, it is reasonable to assume that the pioneers and early leaders of these schools would have been enthusiastic about the prospect of young people 'accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour'. It is nevertheless the case that evangelism was seen by many as lying in the province of the church and the home and that the school performed a complementary rather than a primary role in leading children to accept the Christian faith. This position is consistent with Kuyper's theory of sphere sovereignty and the Calvinist view of the covenant. In response to the question - *'Would you like to comment on why you think Question 16 of the survey, which was concerned with the importance of students accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, rated so low?',* Hoekzema responded:

> It wasn't the aim, in other words we were not on about evangelism. The school was purely to support the parents, an extension of the home, pure and simple - an extension of the home - doing what the parents were doing - they had the first and primary responsibility. The school was to assist them in the subjects which required special skills to teach and therefore the aim was not first and foremost to lead the children to Christ, it was more the parents responsibility, and though some of that might have been achieved through the process - that was fair enough, but it wasn't the aim (Pioneer Interview 3).

The lack of overwhelming support for academic excellence as a foundational value may also seem a little surprising, but many of the pioneers and early leaders would not have regarded academic excellence as being of fundamental importance. They regarded it as a worthy aspiration for all schools and as an outcome which would naturally have occurred if the core 'religious' priorities were being achieved. This position is consistent with the view that the purposes of education for the CPC school pioneers were primarily religious. Some of the pioneers would have hesitated to assent to a foundational value that had been separated from the fundamental religious purposes of the school.

Students Transforming their Society According to Biblical Principles

A value that was considered, but eventually discarded was concerned with the preparation of students to transform their society. Two items in the pioneer and early leader survey addressed this possible value: Item 13 - *that students transform their society according to biblical principles* and Item 29 - *the wider school curriculum was designed to train students to transform their culture for Christ.* These items ranked equal 23rd amongst the 36 items and were based on the Kuyperian – Calvinist cultural mandate (see Chapter 2). De Graaf, in his response to a draft list of foundational values suggested that "a small core of supporters would have added – 'to provide, in the young people graduating from these schools, a band of visionaries seeking to proclaim Christ's shalom in Australia, who are articulate about this vision'" (Rev. A. De Graaf, personal communication, 17 June, 2000).

This value was not, however, strongly supported in the literature, nor by the majority of pioneers and early leaders in the interviews. It was evident in the interviews and ongoing discussions with the pioneers and early leaders that their focus was not primarily on student outcomes, but rather on the provision of a particular type of education, ie, they talked in terms of the kind of education they wanted to provide for their children, rather than the kind of people they wanted their children to become. These approaches are clearly compatible, but equally clearly there is a difference in emphasis. The approach of the pioneers was broadly consistent with the widely held Reformed view

that Christians ought to take their responsibilities seriously, but that the outcome of their endeavours was ultimately God's responsibility.

Other Sets of Values

While research of this type into the foundational values of CPC schools has not previously been undertaken, lists of values have occasionally been suggested. The Australian Christian evangelical magazine, *On Being* in an advertisement in 1994 for CPC schools, called 'Your School for Your Child', listed seven characteristics of CPC schools:

> * Parents have a say.
> * The Scriptures are the central directing principle.
> * Schools that every parent can afford.
> * The Christian world view of the home is reinforced.
> * The School and home form a partnership.
> * Each child is treated as a person with valuable gifts.
> * Students are prepared by learning about the world, its ugliness and its beauty, in the light of God's word (CPCS Ltd, 1994, p.10).

This list shares substantial common elements with the foundational values established by this study, particularly the role of parents, the importance of the Bible and the affordable nature of this type of schooling. This list makes no mention, however, of the centrality of Christ, the employment of Christian teachers or the provision of a protected environment. The advertisements' emphasis on parents 'having a say' and being in 'partnership' with the school is more restrained than the language of 'control'. The foundational values did not consider student outcomes, so even though *'Each child is treated as a person with valuable gifts'*, is not inconsistent with the early thinking in CPC schools, it was not found to be a foundational value.

Lambert (1997) has also suggested a number of reasons for the development and growth of alternative Christian schools in Australia. Even though other Christian schools (such as Christian Community and ACE) are also included in this category of 'alternative Christian schools', his list is generally consistent with the foundational values of CPC schools:

- Parents are ultimately accountable before God for the nurture of their children;
- Religion is not merely an aspect of life, but rather a governing principle;

- An attempt is made to give pupils a different overall 'message' from that communicated through state schools;
- An integrated Christian world view is presented to the students;
- Teachers seek to manifest a Christ-centred world view to their students.

Three of the four foundational values of CPC schools can be found in modified form, amongst Lambert's reasons for the development of alternative Christian schools - 'Christian parent control' (or at least the aspect of the responsibility of Christian parents), 'Christian curriculum' and 'Christian teachers'. Christian families as a foundational value may be absent from Lambert's list because other alternative Christian schools have a different view of the population they are serving.

This chapter is the result of a consideration of documents written in the early days of CPC schools in Australia and of surveys and interviews conducted with pioneers and early leaders of CPC schools. Four foundational values and a number of sub-values have been identified as those which motivated the establishment of CPC schools and generated the policies, procedures and practices developed in the formative years of these schools. These values are listed in Table 4:1 at the end of this chapter. Table 4:2 then summarises the sources used to identify the foundational values of CPC schools in Australia. A number of documents which were examined in this process, but which were not cited in this chapter due to limitations of space, are also recorded in this table.

Chapter Five considers the prevailing practices of CPC schools in the light of the foundational values identified in this chapter.

Summary – Overview of Foundational Values

Table 4:1 - Foundational Values of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia

Foundational Value I: Christian Parent Control

I)   Christian parents should control the direction and purpose of their children's education.

Foundational Value II: Christian Families

IIA) CPC schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children.

IIB) CPC schools should be affordable for Christian families.

IIC) CPC schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families should not be undermined.

Foundational Value III: Christian Curriculum

IIIA) The school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian.

IIIB) The Bible should be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling

IIIC) Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities.

Foundational Value IV: Christian Teachers

IV)   All courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers.

Summary – Data sources and Foundational Values

Table 4:2 – Summary – Identification of the Foundational Values of CPC Schools from Data Sources

Foundational Value I: Christian Parent Control

I) Christian parents should control the direction and purpose of their children's education.

___

Overview- *As a result of the document study and surveys and interviews with pioneers and early leaders, it was clear that Christian parent control was not only a foundational value, but a defining feature of CPC schools in Australia.*

___

Documents

Constitution of NUPCCS (1966, pp.3, 13), A. Deenick (1985, p.13), A. Deenick (1989, p.4), A. Deenick (1991, p.241), De Jong (1976, p.1), Geelong News (1976, pp. 1&49), Hoekzema (1966, p.3), Hoekzema (1983, pp.75-78), Hoekzema (1988, p.5), Hofman (1966, p.5), Hofman (1969, June, p.3), Hofman (1971, p.4), Maguire (1975, pp.19-23), Maguire (1980, p.96), Mechielsen (1980, p. 64), Mechielsen (1991, p.5), Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1988, pp.8, 9, 58), Nederhood (circa 1971), Nyhouse (1980, p.81), Patterson (1971, June, p.3), Patterson (1972, January, p.3), P. Pellicaan (1972, pp.4-6), Runia (1966, p.5), A. Sietzma (1988, pp. 4-6), Smit (as cited in Dickson, 1995, p. 63), Van Der Laan (1977, p.34),Weeks and Schwarz (circa 1975, pp. 2-3), Weeks (1988a, pp. 1-15), Weeks (1998), Zorn (1968, pp. 4-6), Zorn (1969, pp.11-12)

[*Brochures*]
Heerema (circa 1970) *What school for our children?*
Donvale CPC school (circa 1974, p.1) *A Christian School – Now What Is That?*
Geelong Association for Parent Controlled Christian Education (circa 1975).
Rehoboth CPC school (n.d., p.4)
NUPCCS (circa 1970)
- *Call to Christian Parents – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Introduction to – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*

___

Surveys   - All 23 respondents (100%) agreed that *"Christian Parent Controlled Schools were established with the expectation that parents would fulfil their responsibility before God for the upbringing of their children for a life in God's service."* (19 strongly agreed and 4 agreed).

___

Interviews   While there were different perspectives on the way parent control should be given expression, all the pioneers and early leaders agreed that it was a key foundational value of these schools.

Foundational Value II: Christian Families

IIA) *CPC schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children*

IIB) *CPC schools should be affordable for Christian families*

IIC) *CPC schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined*

Overview *- That CPC schools were established to provide an education for children from Christian families was strongly supported, particularly from the documents and the interviews. This foundational value was not initially distinguished from parent control, but as the study progressed, it became clear that the focus of the education in these schools was the children of Christian families. Closely associated to this were the values of affordability for Christian families and a protected environment for the children of Christian families.*

Documents - IIA)

Bongers (1974, p.1), A. Deenick (1991, p.240, 241), Mechielsen (1991, p.5), Constitution of NUPCCS (1966, pp.3, 13), Hoekzema (1983, p.76), The Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1966, pp.9), Nederhood (circa 1970), Nederhood (circa 1971), Nichols (1990/1972, p.14), Nichols (1973, pp.4-7), Nyhouse (1980, pp. 79-84), E. Pellicaan (1973, pp. 10-11), J. Sietzma (1976, pp. 1&5), A. Sietzma (1988, pp. 4-6), Weeks and Schwarz (circa 1975, p.2), Weeks (1988a, p. 98).

[Brochures]

Heerema (circa 1970) *What school for our children?*
Association for Christian education of Blacktown (circa 1975) *– Why Christian Schools?*
Donvale CPC school (circa 1974, p.1) *A Christian School – Now What Is That?*
NUPCCS (circa 1970)

- *Introduction to – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Call to Christian Parents – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*

Documents - IIB)

A. Deenick (1991, p.243), Geelong News (1976, pp. 1&49), Hoekzema (1988, p.5), Hoekzema (1990), Hofman (1969, December, p.20), Miller (1980, p.106), Nyhouse (1980, p. 81), Patterson (1970, October, p.3), Patterson (1972, March, p.3), Rockwell (1985, p.7), Tyndale Christian School (1979, p.5), Van der Schoor (1991, pp.16-17), Westendorp (2000, p.1)

[Brochures]

Donvale CPC school (circa 1974, p.1) *A Christian School – Now What Is That?*
Maranatha CPC school (1972) *Christian Schools?*

Documents - IIC)

A. Deenick (1991, p.240), Hill (1991, p. 151), Hoekzema (1988, p.5), Nederhood (circa 1970, pp. 4,5,8,9), Nederhood (circa 1971), Nyhouse (1980, p. 80), E. Pellicaan (1973, pp. 10-11), Weeks (1988a, pp. 95-105), Zorn (1970, pp. 6-8)

[Brochures]

Heerema (circa 1970, pp.9-18) *What School For Our Children?*
Association for Christian Education of Blacktown (circa 1975) *– Why Christian Schools?*
NUPCCS (circa 1970)

- *Call to Christian Parents – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*

Surveys

IIA)

Only indirectly addressed in survey, but supported by Nyhouse (Pioneer Survey 14) and Schippers (Pioneer Survey 15).

IIB)

Not specifically addressed in survey, but supported by Schippers (Pioneer Survey 15).

IIC)

- 13 of the 23 pioneers (57%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was that *the wider school curriculum was designed to protect children from negative influences*, (3 strongly agreed and 10 agreed).

Haasjes (Pioneer Survey 1), Wheaton (Pioneer Survey 18) and Hart (Pioneer Survey 14) commented in the second section of the survey that this was a value for many of those involved in the establishment of CPC schools.

Interviews

IIA) Strongly supported in the interviews. Some of the pioneers and early leaders indicated that as the schools grew, there was an increasing awareness and acceptance of children from non-Christian homes, nevertheless, Christian families remained the focus of these schools.

IIB) Identification of this value arose during and after the survey process. It is a value derived from IIA), and was subsequently found in a number of documents In the interviews with pioneers and early leaders in which it was directly addressed (in five of the twelve), it was supported.

IIC) This foundational value is the most contentious. A number of pioneers and early leaders maintained during the interviews that while the majority of families who were involved in these schools regarded the protection of their children from a variety of negative influences as a foundational value, most of the leadership of this young schooling movement did not.

Foundational Value III: Christian Curriculum

IIIA) *The school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian*

IIIB) *The Bible should be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling*

IIIC) *Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities*

Overview - *The documents, surveys and interviews gave unequivocal support to the importance of a thoroughly Christian curriculum in which Christ is central and the Bible is the foremost guide. Together with parent control, this foundational value forms the raison d'être of CPC schools in Australia.*

Documents - IIIA)

Barkley (1990/1972, p.14), Blomberg (1980a, 41-59), Blomberg (1980b, 119-121), Brooks (1976, pp.2-5),Constitution of NUPCCS (1966, p. 13), A. Deenick (1991, p.240-241), De Graaf (1971, pp. 4-7), Fackerell (1972, p.4), Fackerell (1973, pp. 1-2), Fowler (1972, June, pp. 14-16), Fowler (1973b, June, pp. 4-7), Fowler (1973c, December, p. 5), Fowler (1976a, p.1), Geelong News (1976, pp. 1&49), The Herald (1975, p.2), Maguire (1975, p.22), Mechielsen (1978, p.5), Mechielsen (1991, p.6), Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1988, p.58), Miller (1973, p.9), Nederhood (circa 1970, p. 3), Nichols (1990/1972, p.14), Nichols (1973, pp.4-7), Patterson (1971, October, p.3), E. Pellicaan (1973, pp. 10-11), Van Der Laan (1977, p.34), Weeks (1988a, Chaps. 8-13), Weeks (1998), Zorn (1968, pp.4-6), Zorn (1969, p.12-14)

[*Brochures*]

Geelong Association for Parent Controlled Christian Education (circa 1975).
Rehoboth CPC school, (n.d., p.4.)
NUPCCS (circa 1970)
- *Introduction to – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*

Documents - IIIB)

Blomberg (1980b, pp. 113-115), Brooks (1976, pp. 1-7), Constitution of NUPCCS (1966, pp.3,4, 13), J. Deenick (1972, p.11), De Graaf (1973, March, pp.4-11), De Graaf (1973, June, pp.8-11), De Graaf (1977), Fackerell (1973, pp. 1-2), Fowler (1972, March, pp.4-9), Fowler (1972, June, p.14), Fowler (1976, p.15), Fowler (1980a, p.30), Fowler (1980b, pp.131-137), Geelong News (1976, p. 1), The Herald (1975, p.2), Hofman (1966, p.5), Hofman (1970, pp. 6-7), Hofman (1990/1957, p.14), Maguire (1980, p.93), Mechielsen (1978, pp.1,4), Mechielsen (1991, p.6), Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1988, pp.8, 36, 37), Nederhood (circa 1970, pp. 6-11), Nederhood (circa 1971, pp. 8, 10-13), Octigan (1980, p.77), Patterson (1971, June, p.3), P. Pellicaan (1972, p.5), Ridgway (1980, pp. 128&129), Schenk (1973, p.6), Smit (as cited in Dickson, 1995, p. 63), Weeks (1988, Chap.1), Weeks and Schwarz (circa 1975, pp. 1-3).

[*Brochures*]
NUPCCS (circa 1970)
- *Call to Christian Parents – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Introduction to – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*
Association for Christian Education of Blacktown (circa 1975) – *Why Christian Schools?*

Donvale CPC school (circa 1974, pp.4-5) *A Christian School – now what is that?*
Heerema (circa 1970, p.12) *What school for our children?*
Geelong Association for Parent Controlled Christian Education (circa 1975).

Documents - IIIC)

Bongers (1974, pp. 8 & 11), Brooks (1976, pp. 1,6,7),Constitution of NUPCCS (1966, pp. 4, 6, 13), J. Deenick (1985, pp. 16-17), De Graaf (1973, March, pp.6&10), Fackerell (1973, pp. 1-2), Hoekzema (1969, p. 5), Mechielsen (1978, p.1), Mechielsen (1991, pp.5-6), Memorandum and Articles of Association of CPCS Ltd (1988, pp. 9, 58), Miller (1980, p.104-106), Nederhood (circa 1970, p. 7,8,11), Nederhood (circa 1971, p.8), Nichols (1973, p.7), Nyhouse (1980, p. 84), Octigan (1980, pp.74 & 77), Patterson (1971, June, p.3), E. Pellicaan (1973, pp. 10-11), P. Pellicaan (1972, pp.5-6), Smit (as cited in Dickson, 1995, p. 63), Van Der Laan (1977, p.27), Westendorp (2000, p.1), Yallop (1980, p. 147), Zorn (1969, p.15)

[Brochures]
NUPCCS (circa 1970)
- *Call to Christian Parents – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Introduction to – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*
- *Christ-Centred Education*
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*

Association for Christian Education of Blacktown (circa 1975) – *Why Christian Schools?*
Donvale CPC school (circa 1974, p.1) *A Christian School – Now What Is That?*

Surveys

A number of pioneers and early leaders made comments in the second part of their survey which gave strong support to this foundational value (III).

IIIA)

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that students would acquire a Christian perspective on the world* (20 strongly agreed and 2 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims was that *teachers would devise a curriculum consistent with Christian principles*, (18 strongly agreed and 3 agreed).

IIIB)

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *the wider school curriculum was designed to give central place to the Bible* (17 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that parents ensure that all school activities are in harmony with the Word of God* (17 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that students develop values in harmony with biblical principles* (16 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).

IIIC)

- Twenty-two of the 23 respondents (96%) agreed that the wider school curriculum was designed to reflect to a significant degree, the philosophical dictum of Abraham Kuyper, to 'claim every square inch of the universe for Christ' (18 strongly agreed and 4 agreed).

Interviews

All aspects of this foundational value were strongly supported in the interviews with pioneers and early leaders.

Foundational Value IV: Christian Teachers

IV) *All courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers*

Overview - *There was no doubt after the document study and the surveys and interviews with pioneers and early leaders that this was a foundational value of CPC schools in Australia.*

Documents

Bongers (1974), Brooks (1976, p.4),Fackerell (1972, p.4), Fowler (1973a, p.8), Geelong News (1976, pp. 1), Hoekzema (1983, pp.78-79), Hoekzema (1988, p.5), Hofman (1971, p.4), Hofman (1990/1957, p.14), Mechielsen (1991, p.6), Nichols (1990, p.14), Patterson (1971, October, p.3), Patterson (1972, September, p.9), E. Pellicaan (1973, pp. 10-11), Van Der Laan (1977, p.35),Weeks (1988, pp. 61-76), Weeks and Schwarz (circa 1975, p. 3).

[Brochures]

Association for Christian Education of Blacktown (circa 1975) – *Why Christian Schools?*
NUPCCS (circa 1970)
- *Is the State School a Christian School?*
- *Christ-Centred Education*
- *Why – Christ-Centred Education*

Surveys

- Twenty-three of the 23 respondents (ie., 100%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would model behaviour based on biblical principles and the life of Christ*, (16 strongly agreed and 7 agreed)

- Twenty-three of the 23 respondents (100%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would understand their task as unfolding the truth about Christ in the universe*, (15 strongly agreed and 8 agreed).

- Twenty-one of the 23 respondents (91%) agreed that one of the foundational aims of Christian Parent Controlled schools was *that teachers would be motivated by their own relationship with Christ*, (14 strongly agreed and 7 agreed).

Interviews

There was unambiguous support for this foundational value during the interviews.

Chapter Five

Christian Parent Controlled Schools - Prevailing Practices of the Foundational Values

Chapter Overview

The first stage of this study identified four foundational values:

  Foundational Value I: *- Christian Parent Control*

  Foundational Value II: *- Christian Families*

  Foundational Value III: *- Christian Curriculum*

  Foundational Value IV: *- Christian Teachers*

The present chapter is focused on the second stage of this study, which was a consideration and identification of the prevailing practices of CPC schools. This stage of the study was based largely on the perspectives of groups with a vital interest in CPC education. These groups were parents, teachers (including classroom teachers, principals and other executive staff) and students (represented in this study by senior students and former students or graduates).

Values Held in Common in CPC Schools

It is important to note from the outset that the 12 schools involved in the research for this study had various contexts, including different histories, socio-economic profiles, management structures and financial situations. However, it was anticipated on the basis that they were all members of CPCS Ltd., that these schools would hold common foundational values. It was also evident from the surveys and interviews that the constituent groups across the various schools shared similar educational values.

During the interviews, the researcher did not detect variations in perspectives between schools greater than that which existed within schools. Regarding the major issues (directly related to the foundational values), the constituent groups in different schools had similar views and concerns. For example, executive staff, particularly principals across all schools, expressed support for the notion

of parent control, but shared concerns regarding its practice; teachers across all 12 schools struggled with the complexities of implementing Christian programs in their classrooms; parents in all schools supported a curriculum which was not only Christian, but Christ-centred and Bible-based; parents also supported the concept of parental responsibility and control in education, and amongst all groups there was widespread support for the view that CPC schools employ Christian teachers.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value I: Christian Parent Control

The pioneers and early leaders believed that because Christian parents were responsible for their children's education, they should control its religious foundation, character and direction. The prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the first foundational value, 'Christian Parent Control', or *'Christian parents should control the direction and purpose of their children's education'* is the first to be examined.

This study found that the term 'parent control' is commonly used in CPC schools and it was evident from both the surveys and interviews that while it is understood and applied in various ways, it nevertheless remains a central tenet with widespread support in these schools. The observation of a parent who is also a teacher and an association member in one of the schools gives an overview of the mechanism of parent control in her school:

> The 'control' comes through the association, in that parents who believe they are responsible before God for the education of their kids become members of the association. The association drives the direction of the school and the board of directors and committees ensure that this direction is followed. The control is more a responsibility to make sure that our kids are hearing the same things about the world they live in, at home, at church and at school (Interview 90 Teacher).

As this teacher-parent explained, parent control is in effect, control by an association of parents (and other supporters), with much of the decision making responsibility delegated to a board elected by the school association.

It is important to note that membership of a school association is not confined to parents, as former parents or students, grandparents and other interested members of supportive churches are welcome to join a school association. So, while parents are regarded as bearing the responsibility for providing a Christian education for their children, oversight of, and management in, CPC schools can be shared with non-parent members of a school community. The issue that this teacher-parent raised, ie, that control was more about ensuring that children receive messages at school which are consistent with the home, will be explored in more detail later in this chapter.

In recent years, a variation in the governance model has occurred as a result of a number of associations supporting more than one school. Some of these associations have adopted an alternative model in which the board has overall responsibility for the governance of a cluster of schools, while councils (elected by association members in individual school communities) are given responsibility for specific issues related to their schools.

Perspectives of Parents

In the survey, parents were asked a number of questions which related to the issue of parent control. The statement that most directly addressed the concept of parent control: *Christian schools run by parents reflect the God-given authority of the home in the education of children* received 90% agreement from the parents (ie, 90% of parents either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with this assertion). The statement was framed in order to check the extent to which parents agreed, not only with the concept of parents being in control of the school, but also the religious rationale behind it. It is clear from this response that a majority of parents agreed with the notion of parent control as proposed by the pioneers and early leaders.

Parents also agreed that they had been encouraged to be involved in school life (78% agreement), and that they felt like partners with teachers (73% agreement). Only 26% of parents felt they needed education in their school's values and visions, and 58% of the parents believed they could be more involved in the school (See Table 5:1 for these results). Parent involvement will be considered later in the chapter.

These questions were designed to measure the extent to which parents agreed with the concept of parent controlled Christian education, and the degree to which parents understood it was working in their school, in particular, the degree to which they felt welcomed by, in partnership with, and involved in their school. The question concerning the parents' need for education in the school's values and vision related to their ability to properly fulfil their parental responsibilities as understood by CPC schools.

Table 5:1 - Parents on Parent Control		
Survey Items	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
The governance of the school reflects the God-given authority of the home in the education of children (n=81)	**A = 90%**	SA = 47% MA = 43% MD = 7% SD = 3%
As a parent, I am encouraged to be involved in all aspects of school life (n=82)	**A= 78%**	SA = 37% MA = 42% MD = 20% SD = 2 %
As a parent I feel like a partner in the educational process with teachers (n=81)	**A= 73%**	SA = 24% MA = 49% MD = 22% SD = 5%
As a parent I could be more involved in the school (n=81)	**A= 58%**	SA = 19% MA = 40% MD = 24 % SD = 19 %
As a parent, I need more education in the school's values and vision (n=81)	**A= 26%**	SA = 4% MA = 22% MD = 44 % SD = 30%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of parents completing survey item. Maximum possible = 82.		

During the interviews, parents were generally positive about parent control, focusing mainly on issues of communication, of access to teachers and the principal, and of involvement in the life of the school rather than on governance matters or decision making mechanisms. The following comments were characteristic of the positive perceptions most parents had of parent control.

> [*And the issue of parent control?*] Control is not a good word. We elect a board who oversee the running of the school. They have authority. Individual parents can't come in and say this is how it ought to be. Because of the way that the board empowers others, there are a lot of people running the organisation. It is healthy to have a lot of

gifts at work. …I believe it works well here - there are new parents coming through all the time … they flush the system through. On occasion there are little groups of parents who control things, but they are also the most enthusiastic and the hardest working, so it isn't a problem. (Interview 1 Parent).

[*How well does parent control work?*] As far as parent control goes, … it works well from the point of view that the board represents parents. … The board has a cross-section of abilities and all in all, it works well for us. Parents certainly have input into what happens. … It doesn't mean that you can change anything you don't like though (Interview 25 Parent).

[*What do you think of parent control?*] Parent control is a good system from what I have seen of it. In my son's previous school, I had a 'run in' with the principal. He wielded absolute power, or at least projected it. Here, I have access to the board if I have any real concerns. It is much more balanced (Interview 53 Parent).

[*Why did you send your children to [this] Christian School?*] I liked the ethos of parent control and the opportunities for parental involvement. ... [*Are you still happy with your decision?*] Yes. It is not a perfect school, but it is an extension of what we believe at home. God is central, … there is prayer. These things are still central to the ethos. When our daughter was entering high school, we gave her the option of deciding her school, and she chose to continue here. We were happy and thankful she wanted to stay, because of the Christ-centred worldview that continued into the high school. … I know we have done what God would have us do. Christian schooling is part of the process of doing that (Interview 81 Parent)

From the 79 surveys and the 21 interviews, it was clear that parents were positive about the concept of parent controlled Christian education, about the encouragement and welcome they received from their schools, and about the support their schools gave their Christian worldview and lifestyle. On the whole, parents indicated that CPC schools were effective in providing what they required as Christian parents. The issue of parent involvement will be considered later in the chapter.

<u>Perspectives of Senior Students and Graduates on Parent Control</u>

The surveys showed that a majority of senior students and graduates considered that *parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process with teachers* (62% and 77% respectively), very few thought that *parents have too much say in the running of the school* (31% and 14%) and

both groups were divided over the question of whether *parents could be more involved in the school* (49% and 51%). See Table 5:2 below for details.

Table 5:2 - Senior Students and Graduates on Parent Control			
Survey Items	**Constituent Group**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
Parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process with teachers	Senior Students (n=403)	**A = 62%**	SA = 15% MA = 47% MD = 26 % SD = 12%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 77%**	SA = 31% MA = 46% MD = 20% SD =3 %
Parents have too much say in the running of the school	Senior Students (n=402)	**A = 31%**	SA = 14% MA = 17% MD = 43% SD = 26%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 14%**	SA = 6% MA = 9% MD = 47% SD = 39%
Parents could be more involved in the school	Senior Students (n=404)	**A = 49%**	SA = 13% MA = 37% MD = 36% SD = 15%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 51%**	SA = 6% MA = 45% MD = 42% SD = 7%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of senior students or graduates completing survey item. Maximum possible = 405 and 70 respectively.			

Seventy-eight students were interviewed, in 21 separate group or individual interviews. However, when asked their opinion of parent control, (for example, *How does parent control operate in your school?*), there was not one occasion when a student commented on the principle of Christian parents controlling the religious direction of their children's education or commented on the relationship between parents, the school association and the board. Senior students were most likely when asked about parent control to comment on issues such as the parents involved in various activities around the school, their own parents' ability to challenge particular teachers, concerns about the poor styling of the school uniform or the lack of board approval to have a school canteen. The following are typical of senior students' responses:

> [*Does this feel like a school where parents are in control?*] I don't think so. It depends on the subject and the teacher - sometimes parents ring and complain (Interview 9 Senior Student Group).

> [*Are parents very involved in your school?*] The same five parents are always wandering around (Interview 19a Senior Student Group). My parents don't take a great

interest, but they can contact the school and teachers if they have a problem (Interview 19b Senior Student Group).

[*Does it appear to you that you are in a school that is controlled by parents?*] There is a little group of parents controlling the school. There is a group of really active parents on the 'Parents and Friends' and on the board (Interview 32a Senior Student Group). I don't notice it! (Interview 32b) Neither do I! (Interview 32c) A lot of parents help in the junior school in craft and things like that. Lots of parents help out and volunteer for things - excursions, camps, canteen (Interview 32d Senior Student Group).

[*Are parents involved in the school?*] Parents come for camps but they don't get involved in classrooms. They help at carnivals (Interview 67 Senior Student Group).

[*How does parent control operate here?*] Some parents are more involved than others. It depends on whether they want to be. Some haven't got time (Interview 47 Senior Student Group).

[*How does parent control operate here?*] The parents won't let us have a canteen (Interview 89a Senior Student Group). Parent control is much better - parents know what is happening in the school day to day, for example the diary system. When the parents get notes from school, they know what is going on (Interview 89b Senior Student Group).

One of the reasons that many senior students appeared to be unaware of the processes of parent control may have been because they were uninformed. When asked '*Do people talk with you about the school's purpose?*', a student with leadership responsibilities commented: "People don't talk about the school's purpose. Sometimes it is indirect, rumours go around." (Interview 13a Senior Student Group).

In many of the interviews, both parents and teachers talked about the significant amount of parental involvement occurring in the primary sections of their schools, in contrast to the dearth of parental involvement in the secondary sections. Another senior student leader, in response to a question about the practice of parent control in his school, expressed a view which could explain this difference, at least in part:

> Parents don't have too much control. Too much control would be a problem. Parents are always walking around. They are here mostly in primary classrooms, for reading

etc. We have parents at home, we don't want them here as well (Interview 76 Senior Student).

This scenario, of teenage students discouraging their parents from participating at school is unlikely to be confined to CPC schools. It nevertheless impinges on the ability of parents to become involved to the extent that CPC schools' foundational values would indicate is appropriate. One teacher commented specifically on the difficulty of getting parents for secondary camps because their children told them not to go. "I have even had board members who are unwilling to go on senior camps, because their children banned them" (Interview 96 Executive). A teacher who has also had her own children in a CPC school for 12 years supported this contention: "Parents get involved mainly in the junior school, not in the high school, as the children don't want their parents around" (Interview 31 Teacher).

Perspectives of Teachers on Parent Control

Strong support was received from the 296 teachers for the concept and for the practice of parent control in their schools. The concept of parent control, encapsulated in the statement *Christian schools run by parents reflect the God-given authority of the home in the education of children*, received agreement from 86% of teachers. In addition, most teachers thought the practice of parent control was effective, evidenced by their positive responses to the issues of the encouragement that parents received to maintain a relationship of partnership (89%), and their view that parents make decisions (72%) without having 'too much say' (89%). See Table 5:3.

Table 5:3 - Teachers on Parent Control		
Survey Items	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
Christian schools run by parents reflect the God-given authority of the home in the education of children (n=292)	**A = 86%**	SA = 40% MA = 45% MD = 12% SD = 2%
Parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process with teachers (n=295)	**A = 89%**	SA = 49% MA = 40% MD = 10% SD = 2%
Parents make decisions about the broad direction the school should head (n=292)	**A = 72%**	SA = 29% MA = 43% MD = 18% SD = 10%
Parents have too much to say in the running of the school (n=294)	**A = 11%**	SA = 3% MA = 8% MD = 56% SD = 34%
Parents could be more involved in the school (n=296)	**A = 75%**	SA = 24% MA = 50% MD = 22% SD = 3%
Parents regularly help in classrooms (n=294)	**A = 47%**	SA = 17% MA = 30% MD = 26% SD = 27%
Parents need more instruction in the school's values and vision (n=295)	**A = 65%**	SA = 22% MA = 43% MD = 29% SD = 6%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of teachers completing survey item. Maximum possible = 296.		

Given the potential in a CPC school for teachers to feel that parents are encroaching on their professional territory, it is noteworthy that such a large percentage of teachers are positive about the processes of parent control in their school and that such a small percentage feel that parents have too much say in running the school. The issue of 'control' does not appear to be a problem for the majority of teachers, but as will be seen later in this chapter, school executives have a different perspective. In conjunction with the *75%* agreement that *'Parents could be more involved in the school'* and only 47% agreement that *'Parents regularly help in classrooms'*, it appears that many teachers on the other hand, feel that parents are not participating in the school to the extent they would have anticipated.

Another significant response on the part of teachers was their 65% agreement with the statement that *'Parents need more instruction in the school's values and vision'*. Rather than feeling the pressure of

interfering parents, teachers appear to be indicating that they support the concept of parent control and they perceive that parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process, but that parents are not sufficiently involved or aware of their own school's fundamental values.

The teachers' responses to these questions, in conjunction with the parents' view of their own lack of involvement noted earlier, raise important issues as CPC schools in Australia seek to maintain one of their foundational priorities of an education directed by Christian parents. There are implications for the future character of CPC schools if parents are unaware of their school's foundational values and vision and if there is a decline in parental involvement in these schools.

The teachers interviewed were generally positive not only about the principle, but also the practice of parent control in their schools. The following comments from three experienced teachers, in response to the question - *'What is your view (or impressions) of parent control?'*, were representative:

> The school liaises well with parents. Parents have a high profile. Parents are on site a lot, especially in lower primary [school]. We are training groups of parents in how to help more effectively, eg, with language skills, reading skills, process language and mathematics (Interview 22 Teacher).

> The school supports parents. Parents are number one in kids' lives and it is the parents who want Christian education for children. Everything else follows. The curriculum needs to be acceptable to Christian parents. Our board is very supportive of staff. They try and do the best they can for the school, but they leave the running of the school to school staff (Interview 78 Teacher).

> The concept of parent control is good. Parents making decisions for their kids is appropriate (Interview 85 Teacher).

This positive appraisal was not confined to experienced teachers. Two teachers in their first year of teaching commented:

> [*What are your impressions of parent control?*] I think parent control is a good idea. It is important for parents to own their children's education rather than to fob the job off to someone else. CPC schools listen to their clients, the parents and implement their wants and that is why they are so successful (Interview 44 Teacher).

> [*How do you think parent control operates at this school?*] I was initially reticent about parent control when I applied for the position. I was concerned that parents would be breathing down my neck. I have had no bad dealings with parents though, in fact, they are quite supportive. The kids whose parents are involved, benefit, others feel that their involvement stops at sending their kids and paying fees (Interview 64 Teacher).

A minority of teachers raised concerns that were more common in the views expressed by executive staff. A teacher of over 15 years experience appeared to hold both negative and positive feelings about the board's role in his school. It is also clear from his response that this teacher, with many in CPC schools, equates parent control with the operation of the school board:

> [*Is parent control a good system?*] One of the hassles is that people on the board don't know anything about education and their expectations are unrealistic. However, the checks and balances they put in place are important and I like the way our board is outward looking (Interview 42 Teacher).

Perspectives of Principals and Other Executive Staff on Parent Control

Support for the Concept of Parent Control

Without exception, the 23 executive members of staff, or school leaders, including 11 principals were positive about the principle of "parent control", but most had significant reservations about at least some aspects of its practice. CPC school leaders were considerably more critical of aspects of the implementation of parent control than parents or other teachers.

Typical of the support for the concept, as opposed to the implementation of parent control were these comments made by executive staff, including four principals:

> Fundamentally I agree with it. … The board's role is to look after the big picture, to maintain the integrity of the Christian vision, to look after the finances and the future (Interview 5 Principal).

> I am warmly committed to the biblical principle behind parent control (Interview 35 Principal).

> Yes, parent control works … parents are responsible. They send us kids and give us day to day control - we are parents to the kids during the day. Control means it is the parents who set the policies and parents who govern (Interview 82 Principal).

My view is that if you are going to have an educational institution such as a school, then parent control is the best system to allow parents to fulfil their God given responsibilities (Interview 94 Principal).

I do believe that it is important that parents take responsibility for their children's education (Interview 21 Executive).

There are good relationships here between the board and staff. Yes, it is working. Board meetings are open. ... The board is incredibly supportive of staff (Interview 75 Executive).

I would give parent control 7 or 8 out of 10. I am positive about it, because it fulfils a biblical mandate. Many things we do at school are pragmatic, but parent control has a biblical mandate. You could never get 10 out of 10 for a system, except maybe for good home schooling (Interview 93 Executive).

During the interviews however, principals and executive staff raised major concerns regarding the implementation of parent control. These included the quality of board leadership, the narrow conservatism of some boards, the relationship between boards and staff, and the lack of commitment by school communities to parent control. These issues are considered in the following sections.

Concerns with the Practice of Parent Control

(I) The Quality of Board Leadership

The most frequently expressed concern regarding parent control focussed on the quality of leadership exercised by school boards. As one principal put it, in response to *'Do you think parent control is a good model?'* - "The greatest weakness of parent control is the political process needed to get the right people on the board. … getting the right people, people who have some experience." (Interview 39 Principal). This principal then went on to give an example of a nearby CPC school which had recently undergone great trauma as a result of a three-cornered conflict which had involved the school board, executive staff and teaching staff.

Another principal suggested, in response to the question – *'Are you aware of dangers for CPC schools in maintaining a distinctively Christian approach?'* - "Our Achilles' heel as a movement is our boards. Our own board is very good, but where this is not the case, you can get a lot of conflicts"

(Interview 24 Principal). Many of the leaders spoke of the instability that results from school board change-over, of the importance of schools having long-serving, mature board members, of the changes in direction that schools can experience as a result of the election of new boards, and of the subsequent "bust-ups" as the previous principal put it (Interview 24 Principal), resulting in the incumbent principal no longer meeting the perceived needs of the new board.

A school executive spoke of new board members who did not understand the history or the ethos of a school, the consequence being a lack of positive leadership and "the possibility of a school running with a number of different agendas - the principal, the school association, and the board, and even a split board pulling in different directions, but that is the worst case scenario. The best case scenario is where you have a cohesive board and a principal who is subject to the board" (Interview 93 Executive).

A principal with over two decades experience in CPC schools also commented on concerns he had with aspects of parental control:

> The problem with parent control is that it is often too difficult to implement good ideas. In a CPC school, ideas often need to go to association meetings to be justified or overturned and there are usually only two association meetings per year. The issue of control is also a problem, because the key word in Christian Parent Controlled schools is control not Christian. The board spends hours talking about control, not about Christian education (Interview 17 Principal).

In conjunction with teachers' survey perceptions that parents *need more instruction in the school's values and vision'* (65% agreement), the preceding comments highlight a potential problem for CPC schools. If many parents have only a shallow understanding of, and commitment to, their school's foundational values, and if the aspect of control is central, then instead of parent control operating in order to encourage teachers to provide an exciting and rich experience of distinctively Christian education for children, it may increasingly operate in the negative sense of parents as watchdogs with the power of veto over teacher initiatives.

This problematic situation can be compounded by decision making processes which are so time consuming (involving permission being sought from a number of committees and eventually the

board) that teachers are robbed of enthusiasm and enterprise. As one teacher commented, "We encourage the participation and involvement of parents … but the problem is time. Decisions in a parent controlled school can take so long!" (Interview 34 Executive - Parent).

It was noted in Chapter 3, that Collins' (1997) research suggested that the practice of parent control can go awry if parents seek to exercise their control individually rather than corporately, or with a view to indulging their own needs for control and power. Consistent with the comments of many of the principals and executive staff members in this study, Collins (1997) suggested that Christian schools "need to define what they mean by parent control and have clear guidelines to facilitate parental involvement - an involvement that seeks to serve the collective interests of the community" (pp. 290-291). She also maintained that Christian schools need to actively recruit board members who have the professional expertise necessary to successfully govern multi-million dollar businesses (p. 292). A school board member who also had responsibility at state level for CPC schools, agreed that there was a need for professional input:

> [*What dangers do you see ahead for Christian Parent Controlled Schools?*] Getting appropriate people to serve on committees. We need professional contributions. We have mothers on school boards because they are often in the school. (Interview 70 Parent).

Concerns with the quality of board leadership extended beyond a lack of understanding of a school's ethos or a lack of professional expertise. A second and related concern raised by leaders was the danger of boards becoming 'conservative' or narrow, in the sense that they could see very little of value in the wider culture and that the major role of the Christian school therefore, was to shelter students from the evils of that culture.

(II) Conservatism of Boards and Parent Control

In response to the question *Are you aware of dangers for CPCS schools in the future, in particular in maintaining a distinctively Christian approach?*, one principal expressed a concern at the negative response of the school board to an assembly presentation performed by senior students which included a light-hearted and humorous reference to nudity. This principal observed:

> The danger is that we might be captured by the conservative element. We are preparing not protecting. There is a risk that we will be taken over by a very conservative element. … Particularly as the world becomes more challenging, our natural response will be restrictive. There are parents who are frightened of the world, who don't want to talk about things (Interview 24 Principal).

Another principal, responding to a question concerning possible problems with parent control, expressed similar disquiet:

> Parents of primary age children should not be on the board of a secondary school. They are idealistic and their ideas are not tenable with reality. There is a danger when there is changeover of a board that they will go back and revisit issues that have been solved before, eg, censorship issues. Schools never mature - this is a real threat. It is better and more stable to have self-perpetuating boards which identify and nominate and train those who show that they have the ability to function in a productive way. Continuity is really important … it leads to maturity and stability (Interview 5 Principal).

This concern that CPC schools will come under the influence of parents who wish to have their children isolated from their culture rather than prepared to have a positive influence on it, was expressed by a number of teachers and leaders including this experienced primary school teacher. She responded to the question – *'Can you see any dangers ahead for Christian schools in maintaining their distinctive approach?'*:

> Some of our students are not exposed to what is out there. Some parents have taken books off the shelves rather than allow students and teachers to read and discuss them. There are parents who won't allow their children to go on camps or excursions. There are two students who come to mind in one class who aren't allowed to watch TV or read the paper. As a school, we need to make sure we aren't shaped by parents who want to protect their kids. We need to give kids good Christian principles so that they are able to assess things for themselves (Interview 22 Teacher).

In the light of the concerns expressed above regarding the quality of board members and the difficulties of pursuing an educational practice in keeping with the foundational values when board members are reactionary and conservative, it is not surprising that the relationship between staff and school boards was another area of concern raised by school leaders.

(III) Role Perceptions and Relationships between Boards and Staff with respect to Parent Control

A view widely held by school executive staff is that school boards should focus on the "big picture" and leave the daily administration of the school to staff. A non-teaching staff member commented in response to a question regarding problems she perceived with parent control:

> Christian schools need to get governance correct. The balance between an all powerful board and the principal and business manager and the carrying out of day to day decisions is not always easy. CPC schools need boards that make big decisions and leave the running of the school to the executive (Interview 14 Staff).

The tension evident in the comments of this staff member surfaced in the comments of many of the principals and other executives. A principal of one of the older, well established CPC schools added in response to – *'Are parents involved enough? Is parent control working?'*:

> It is very difficult to define and translate parent control into meaningful processes and therefore it is more difficult to manage the processes in an even-handed way. I am warmly committed to the biblical principle behind parent control, but not at all convinced that CPC education as an expression of those principles is sustainable. The resources put in place to support this mechanism are too great. For example, the number of hours put into a recent student issue (Interview 35 Principal).

This principal then outlined a situation in which a decision concerning a difficult student which had consumed a significant amount of senior staff's time and energy was vetoed by the school board. While clearly frustrated with this process, this principal nevertheless concluded,

> I still believe in the principle that parents are responsible for the character of their child's education. The principal needs to honour the parents' role and encourage them (Interview 35 Principal).

Another school executive put the issue concisely: "Staff see the board as controlling. The idea is good, but the practice has problems" (Interview 21 Executive). That some CPC teachers are apprehensive of their school board ought to be a matter of concern for CPC schools, as it impacts negatively, not only on a teacher's well being, but also on their capacity to creatively express the school's vision in the classroom:

> There are plenty of teachers who are afraid of the board executive, very concerned about what they say and do. The school needs to face the reality that teachers are very nervous (Interview 50 Teacher).

A secondary school coordinator commented on problems that had arisen as a result of a board making decisions without consulting teachers:

> From a board point of view, there have been mistakes. Not enough consultation, especially with senior staff. The board has made changes and just presented them to staff. Staff have been stunned by directives from the board and not given enough time to respond. ... A recent example was when the board announced that there would be [a major management restructure]. Staff were stunned (Interview 40 Executive.).

A parent also expressed concerns about a situation in which a school board acted without the support of the parent body, relating it to a wider concern about the operation of parent control:

> [*Your impressions of parent control?*] A brilliant concept, but I think it got lost a little this year. ... when does a school become too big to be parent controlled? ... The board learned that it needed to listen to the parents when it tried to introduce the new uniform policy without consultation. We need to revisit our roots and refocus on parent involvement and parent control. Maybe we need to get people more excited about joining the association and giving people the opportunity to have a say (Interview 92 Parent).

An issue that arises from these last two interviews is the extent to which it is possible to employ a parent controlled management model while simultaneously encouraging a high degree of consultation. It appears that where a board believes that it has a mandate and a responsibility to control and direct a school, with practices that include the oversight of educational programs and the supervision of teachers, that a leadership approach involving consultation, even with other parents in the school community, is difficult to achieve. It may be that without a thorough understanding of the foundational purpose of parent control, the language of 'control' will encourage autocracy rather than consultation.

A teacher who had been a parent and association member of the school, before becoming a staff member gave an extended response to the question - *'How does 'control' in 'parent control' operate at your school?'*:

Parents may control in terms of giving permission, but I'm not sure that they drive the task, as is the ideal in parent control. Lately I've come to realise that they rely very heavily on staff for guidance, expertise and even example more than ever. By example, I mean that many staff seem more dedicated to their Christian walk and Christian work and service than some parents do. …

In terms of expertise and knowledge, I guess it is normal for the board and association to rely on the guidance of professionals, but I don't think, once again, that they admit this to themselves. They prefer to think they initiate whereas really, they usually react to staff initiatives. This is fine and really is the obvious and best way. The professionals should lead, but it is frustrating that in some ways this is down-played and even denied. … this denial is bad for staff morale. … An obvious 'control' is through the association voting on issues, saying OK to budgets and to plans for the future, etc. Employment is another area where parents exercise control as they are involved in the interviewing panels that select staff (Interview 88 Teacher-parent).

A number of CPC schools are still struggling to make a clear distinction between daily management by staff and governance by school boards. It is becoming increasingly the case in the older and larger CPC schools that a number of senior staff are more experienced members of their school community, with a firmer grasp of their school's ethos and foundational values than many school board members. Many of these senior staff have been grappling with the implications for educational practice of the foundational values for a number of years and exercising leadership in significant areas while parents and school boards grapple with day to day, management issues such as the appropriateness of particular excursions or school uniform details.

A corollary of this concentration of influence in the hands of a few parents who serve on the school board and committees, is a detachment from the school on the part of many parents and a subsequent lack of commitment to the school and its values and traditions.

(IV) Lack of Commitment of School Communities to Parent Control

The degree of commitment of school communities to parent control and hence the quality and quantity of people willing to commit themselves to working on boards was another area of concern raised in interviews by school executives. An executive in one of the older CPC schools maintained:

The concept of the pre-eminent position of parents in the education of their children is quite well defined and understood by the school community. On the whole however,

the parent body has become quite lazy in its adherence to this. This may be a function of the school becoming larger and more professional. The relationship, whilst well defined in terms of the school's articles, is dependent on the gracious reading of it by both staff and parents. The control part of the term can be both positive and negative. On the whole however, the relationship is a healthy one, but can be prone to problems because of ignorance by new parents when coming into positions of influence (Interview 87 Executive).

A secondary school executive commented on the decreasing commitment of parents to the mechanisms of parent control:

The original aim was that parents would join the association and elect a board. In the late 80s we had an abundance of members in the association to elect the board, but the numbers have diminished. It is a problem keeping parents close to the board. There are lots of single parent families and two parent working families. Families are under incredible pressures. To keep parents aware of their responsibility for Christian education is a real challenge. It is hard to keep parent control as a vision, alive (Interview 75 Executive).

One of the principals, reflecting on the various problems of getting "the right people on the board", commented that "you need enough people committed to Christian education, which comes back to the school community" (Interview 39 Principal).

A few of the more experienced teachers expressed concerns regarding the commitment of their school communities to the practice of parent control. Two senior staff members in one school were interviewed together (at their request) and responded to the question, *'Is parent control a good model?'*. They suggested that many teachers and parents exhibited little enthusiasm for the parent controlled model and that the few parents who were interested in becoming more deeply involved, were not encouraged:

In theory, parent control is a wonderful model, but it doesn't work in practice. To work, it needs everyone committed to it, especially the management of the school and the staff. All the stakeholders are not on the same wavelength. Not all staff are aware of the board. There is a lack of trust - the teachers think that the board is out to get them (Interview 41a Teacher);

I would like to see a bigger commitment on the part of staff to parent control. Many staff members have no commitment to the association. It would be good to have staff

as part of the school community. A lot of staff don't really understand what parent controlled Christian education is about (Interview 41b Teacher);

> As far as parents go, it is a constant job to educate them about parent control and the role of the board. Parents buy a service and if they are unhappy, they go elsewhere. Parents don't steer the school in the direction it goes. …The reality in parent controlled schools is that parents have a say and they are involved if they really want to be, but they don't control. Most parents are not seeking more involvement, but those who are, are regarded as troublemakers or as nosy. The school is not going out and getting parents involved in anything other than fetes, fairs and fund-raising. Parents can get involved in classrooms but not in decisions about middle-school or the Internet etc. (Interview 41a Teacher).

Another teacher expressed similar concerns in response to the question, *'What dangers do you see ahead for Christian schools?'*:

> When we were small, we had 10 staff who knew what was happening. Now staff talk less informally about the importance of Christian education. Teachers are less involved and lose direct ownership of ideas. My fear is that in 10 to 15 years time this will be a lovely place to go to, but without a Christian emphasis (Interview 78 Teacher).

(V) *Parent Involvement and Parent Control*

A related issue, which surfaced in both the parent and teachers surveys, was parent involvement. While parent involvement is not synonymous with parent control, it is nevertheless a necessary element. As a mechanism of school governance, parent control requires an association of parents to elect a board of directors to represent them and govern the school. Parents who are involved, who are familiar with and committed to their children's school, not only make informed decisions (as association members), but also provide a capable group from which directors can be chosen, who will in turn 'control' the direction of the school on behalf of other parents.

The issue of parental involvement in CPC schools then, impinges on the quality of leadership in CPC schools. The difficulty that schools have in persuading association members to nominate for directorship of the school board is a consequence of the diminishing degree of parental involvement in all aspects of school life.

Many CPC schools have sought to emphasise the importance of parental involvement by developing parent participation systems whereby parents spend a minimum number of hours working in their children's school, involved in tasks such as assisting students to read, attending 'working bees', camps or excursions, gardening, assisting with maintenance or alternatively contributing money in lieu of their time. However there are other CPC schools that regard the compulsory nature of such parental involvement as inimical to their ethos of parental responsibility and control.

The interviews indicated that parent involvement varies from school to school and that there is consistently more involvement in the junior or primary section of the school than in the senior or secondary section of the school. The majority of parents appear to have very little active involvement in their children's schooling in CPC schools. Those parents who are involved are most likely to be found assisting with reading, craft or similar activities in the primary school or on excursions or camps. The degree of parental involvement also appears to have diminished since CPC schools commenced in the 1960s.

Weeks, a CPC school pioneer who is still actively involved in CPC schooling asserted that three main factors had contributed to this reduction in involvement by parents:

> The school constituency has expanded way beyond those belonging to the Reformed Church or even those with an understanding of Reformed theology. Many no longer understand or appreciate covenant theology and are therefore less committed to parent controlled Christian education.
>
> Secondly, the younger generation of Reformed Church people are better educated but have less of an intuitive understanding of the conceptual framework of Reformed thinking and the place of Christian education, than their parents.
>
> Thirdly, the present generation of parents have been shaped by the cultural changes of the 60s and 70s, particularly the view that the individual has a right to their own enjoyment, their own pleasure etc. This has led to less committed parents which has in turn led to emotionally starved children, divorce, etc. The particular impact on the Christian school has been a growing expectation on the part of parents that the school will produce results with a decreasing sense of commitment or responsibility to the education of their child (Pioneer Interview 1).

As noted earlier, teachers in the surveys indicated for the most part, that they believed parent involvement was relatively low. During the interviews, teachers supported this view, with explanations that complemented Weeks' view:

> [*Do you see other problems ahead for CPCS education?*] Dual income families have eroded the effectiveness of parenting because children get less of their parents' time. The school has noticed a slide in the 'follow-through' and dependability of home processes (Interview 35 Principal).

> [*Are parents involved here?*] We would like more parent involvement, but it is the same as in other places - parents are busy. … We haven't engaged parents to come (Interview 37 Teacher).

> [*Your impressions of parent control?*] We find it difficult to get parent involvement on the school board. There are some parents who do have time and do get involved. We require a lot of parent involvement in the camping program and we do get a lot of help from parents there, which is fantastic. As far as the classroom goes, there is a lot more involvement of parents in primary than in the secondary school (Interview 40 Executive).

> [*Are parents encouraged at this school?*] Parents are certainly encouraged, but over the years, parent involvement has decreased as so many parents are working (Interview 42 Teacher).

> [*How involved are parents?*] I don't see as many parents involved as I expected. I don't see many 'canteen Mums' or 'reading Mums'. Even camps have been condensed due to a lack of parental support. Parents are happy to send money for camps but not to attend or to assist. I don't have any parents involved in my classroom at all (Interview 44 Teacher).

> [*How does parent control work at this school?*] We are frustrated by the lack of parental involvement. I don't think people understand their commitment goes beyond paying fees. … A very large part of our parent body would not understand that they could have a bigger role (Interview 46 Teacher).

> [*How well does parent control operate here?*] ... Often two parents need to work, in some cases to pay for the school fees, so parents are tired and have no time. You just can't get parents into the classroom like you used to (Interview 49 Teacher).

> [*What are you impressions of parent control?*] The hardest part is making parents recognise that it is a cooperative effort. Ironically, there is more concern to get parents involved and playing a valid part in the life of the school than there is over the negative impact that control may have. The original Dutch families had a clear vision of what

parent control meant. … In the early days, the parents kept you accountable - that doesn't happen at all now (Interview 50 Teacher).

[*Are parents involved and welcome?*] ... In the 14 years I have been here, parents have become less involved and are tending to say 'we pay our money, you are a business, you do the job' (Interview 78 Teacher).

[*What kind of involvement is there in the school?*] Over the past five years, the level of parent involvement has diminished. Parents are definitely less involved now. We struggle to have meetings well attended by parents. We have less than 50% attendance at meetings. 20% of students can't even get their parents to respond to homework questions. The Parents and Friends struggles to get a quorum (Interview 79 Teacher).

[*What are your impressions of parent control?*] As we have grown, we have lost a lot of parent involvement. Sixteen years ago, parent involvement was much greater. Little struggling schools have a vision and excitement about their future, but we take what we have for granted (Interview 91 Staff-Parent).

If CPC schools are committed to maintaining their foundational emphasis on an education for which parents take responsibility and provide direction, then the whole area of parental involvement will need to be considered. Many teachers see the negative consequences of this lack of involvement in the classroom and as was evident in the previous section, many principals see the consequences in the lack of quality leadership available from within the parent population for school boards. The following section considers whether this situation might be improved if parents and school boards were given greater support.

(VI) *The Education of Parents in Parent Control*

A school board member who had also had (CPCS Ltd.) leadership responsibility at national level, brought a perspective on the issue of parent involvement and commitment couched in terms of the importance of the education of parents:

[*Is parent control as a concept, working in our schools?*] In spite of giving lip service to parent control, we have almost nothing that is tangible evidence of the way we inform, frame or include parents in the education of our children - we provide board members with board training seminars, which assists with governance, but we don't include parents in the process - we don't teach them what Christian parent controlled education is about and we don't include them in programs for teachers that speak to leadership in our schools. A suggestion was made that a parent be sent to the international forum on Christian educational leadership, but [a teacher-leader] said 'no,

this is about education!'. We have 70 or so associations, which means about 700 board members. We need seminars to educate and involve these parents… we need to involve all parents much more inclusively and thoroughly in educational processes. … We need to get school boards and school leadership generally talking about how we can get parents involved, not about uniform and small insignificant issues, but big picture stuff (Interview 7 Parent).

The perspective of this parent tends to validate the viewpoint of the teachers that CPC parents need to be educated in their schools' visions and values. However, rather than leaving the responsibility for this situation, by implication at least, with the parents, this board member suggested that parents need to be supported by CPC school and national leadership. The complexities of the relationships between parents, boards, teaching staff and executive staff emerge here. In many of these schools the question of whether the school executive or the school board assumes authority and responsibility for a particular decision is not clear, nor is it clear what parent control means for the majority of parents who are not directly involved in decision making at board or committee level.

Another issue that arose from the practice of parent control, where significant decisions were made by a school board which was off-site and virtually inaccessible during the day, was the perception of a number of teachers and students that there was no place for them in any decision making forum within their school.

(VII) The Impact of Parent Control on the Decision Making of Teachers and Students

A concern that arose in a number of interviews was that due to the nature of parent control, students were not given opportunities to lead and teachers were not involved in school decision making. The following comments were made by a school executive, an experienced teacher (an ex-school board member), a young teacher and a senior student, all concerned about teacher or student exclusion from participation in the leadership processes of a CPC school.

> I believe that if we want to see student leadership, then students need to see they have some leadership responsibility. Our board doesn't give students an opportunity to lead, however. There is a view that students should be seen and not heard. It would be good to have student and teacher representatives on the school board (Interview 21 Executive).

> It is good to have parent involvement, for example in the parents and friends club, but the down side is that while parents get what they want, there is very little student

involvement. There should be more student involvement in issues such as school uniform. A lot of students don't like the new uniform … It would be good to survey students or hold talks with year groups to get their views on issues like this (Interview 83b Senior Student).

When I was on the board, I thought it was good that the parents were in control. More recently, I have begun to think it would be good to have teacher representation on the board. …The teachers need a voice, even if it isn't a voting voice, other than a school executive member, because the 'exec' don't always know what is going on for teachers (Interview 12 Teacher).

There has been a fair bit of turbulence this year. At times I would like to see a bit more representation, teachers on the school board for example. ... Initially they seemed like a mysterious force behind the scenes. I am concerned that they rely too heavily on negative messages from parents. I don't have any problems with the concept of parent control, but there needs to be more representation from the teachers' side (Interview 26 Teacher).

From these comments it is apparent that in some CPC schools, one of the negative outcomes arising from responsibility and control being delegated to the school board, is that decision making is not shared with staff or students, thus excluding significant constituents in the school community from a sense of influence. A consequence of this can be the loss of a sense of belonging to, or being valued participants in, their school community.

Different Perspectives of Constituent Groups on Christian Parent Control

It is evident from the preceding discussion of this foundational value that parents and teachers were in general, quite positive about the principle of parent control in CPC schools. It is also evident, however, that parents and teachers had different perceptions of the practice of parent control in these schools. Executive staff, particularly principals had serious concerns with the way that parent control was manifest in their schools. Many of the principals had had negative experiences of parent control in situations where control was used primarily as 'authority over' staff rather than as a means to protect a school's vision in partnership with staff. In this second stage of the research, this issue was the most contentious and revealed the greatest difference in perspective amongst the constituent groups. The practice, as distinct from the principle or notion of parent control possesses the greatest potential to cause significant and ongoing problems for CPC schools if not addressed.

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value I. Christian Parent Control

Foundational Value I of CPC schools was 'Christian parents should control the direction and purpose of their children's education. This study has found regarding this foundational value that:

Parent Control is primarily exercised by school boards on behalf of other Christian parents in their school community on the basis that parents have a responsibility before God for the nurture of their children. Constituent groups in the school communities involved in this study are strongly committed to the concept of parent control, however, there is widespread concern on the part of executive staff with the manner in which boards understand and exercise this control. The major issues facing CPC schools in relation to parent control relate to the quality of school boards, the problematic relationships between boards and principals, and the passivity, lack of enthusiasm and lack of involvement on the part of many in these school communities.

Closely allied to Christian parent control which has been the focus of the first part of this chapter, the pioneers and early leaders understood that their task was to provide schooling to support Christian families. The next section considers the extent to which this is still the case in CPC schools.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIA. Support for Christian Families

The pioneers and early leaders believed that Christian schools controlled by parents were needed in order to support Christian families to fulfil their responsibility before God to nurture their children. The prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the second foundational value, 'Christian Families', in particular *IIA. 'Christian Parent Controlled schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children'* is examined in this section.

Constituency of Schools

In order to assess whether CPC schools support Christian families, the first question to be considered concerns the constituency of these schools. Are CPC schools providing education for Christian families or for the wider community? While it would be generally understood in CPC school communities that genuinely 'Christian' families belong to a wide variety of Christian traditions, in the context of the constituency of CPC schools, Christian families would generally, but not exclusively be Evangelical, Reformed or Pentecostal Protestants.

Of the 82 parents who responded to the survey, 78% attended church at least weekly, 86% at least monthly and only 9% did not attend church at all. This statistic which indicates a high rate of church attendance amongst CPC parents is supported by the responses of the senior students (404 Year 11 students in 12 schools), 64% of whom indicated that they attend church at least weekly, 81% at least monthly, and only 13% not at all. These statistics support the contention that CPC school communities are composed predominantly of church going families and therefore (according to the definition), Christian families.

According to the 1998 Australian Community Survey, 20% of Australians (of all ages) say they attend church monthly or more often and for 16 to 19 year old Australians, the figure is 13%. When these statistics are compared to the 86% of CPC parents and the 81% of CPC senior students who attend church at least monthly, it is clear that the CPC schools serve a population of church families which is significantly different to the general population (Kaldor, Bellamy, Powell, Castle, and Hughes, 1999, pp. 30-31). These figures are displayed in Graph 5:1 below.

Graph 5.1 - Church Attendance 'Monthly' or 'More Often'
(*A comparison of CPC school parents and senior students with the wider Australian population*)
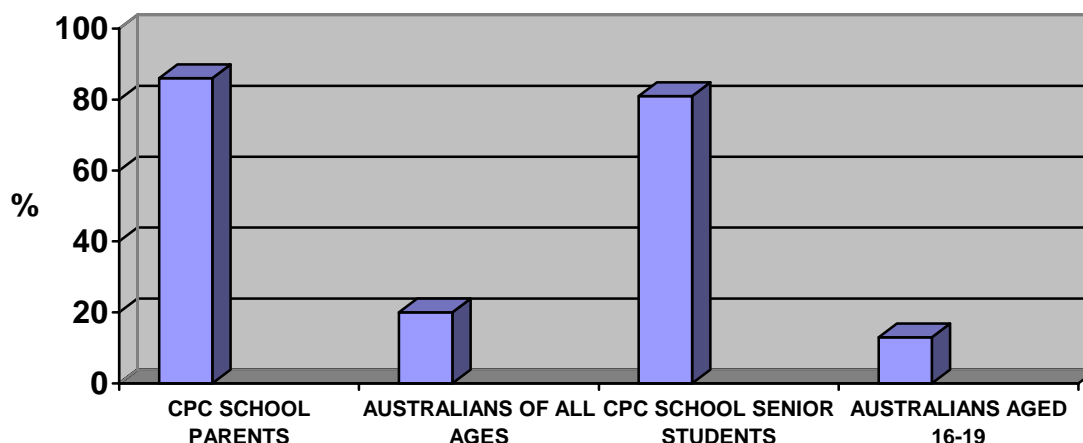
As indicated above, the figures for the CPC school parents and senior students were taken from the present study. Eighty of the 82 parents and 404 of the 405 Year 11 students, who completed the surveys, completed this question. The second sets of figures were taken from the 1998 Australian Community Survey.

Reasons for Sending Children to a CPC School - Survey Response

Parents - Survey

Parents have a miscellany of purposes and reasons for choosing a particular school for their children. However, it is clear from the surveys and interviews that parents involved in CPC schools send their children primarily for purposes that are consistent with their Christian beliefs and way of life, and that many are looking for the school to support them in their role as Christian parents.

When surveyed regarding their reasons for sending their children to a CPC school, 'religious' or 'faith' factors generally rated most highly for parents, and were also perceived by senior students and graduates as most important for their parents. The item, *'Because there are Christian teachers'* received the greatest endorsement from parents with 96% agreement (*strongly agree* or *mostly agree*). *'Good discipline', 'that the Bible is of central importance'*, and the *'school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything',* also received strong support from parents, however the two religious factors received stronger endorsement in the form of 'strongly agree' than the discipline issue.

'Dissatisfaction with state schools', and *'Better employment opportunities'* were not as strongly supported. See Table 5:4 below.

Table 5:4 – The Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools		
Parents		
I send my children to this school because:	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
there are Christian teachers (n=81)	*A = 96%*	SA = 63% MA = 33% MD = 3% SD = 1%
there is good discipline (n=82)	*A = 90%*	SA = 33% MA = 57% MD = 10% SD = 0%
I believe that the Bible is of central importance to all things (n=82)	*A = 87%*	SA = 70% MA = 17% MD = 10% SD =4 %
the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything (n=82)	*A = 87%*	SA = 62% MA = 24% MD = 10% SD =4 %
of dissatisfaction with local state schools (n=80)	*A = 56%*	SA = 28% MA = 29% MD = 26% SD =18 %
so that they will have better employment opportunities (n=82)	*A = 56%*	SA = 7% MA = 49% MD = 31% SD = 13%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = number of participants completing each survey item. Maximum number of participants was 82.		

Senior Students and Graduates

As is evident in Table 5:5 which follows, senior students and graduates while also understanding that 'religious' or 'faith' factors were more important in their parents' choice of school than 'other' factors, did not accord faith factors the same importance as their parents. For example, only 70% of senior students and 85% of graduates supported *Christian teachers* in comparison to 96% of parents.

			Distribution of Responses
Table 5:5 – The Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools – According to Students and Graduates			
My parents sent me to this school because:	**Constituent Group**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 89%**	SA = 60% MA = 29% MD = 7% SD =4 %
	Senior Students (n=402)	**A = 70%**	SA = 31% MA = 39% MD = 17% SD = 13%
	Parents (n=82)	**A = 87%**	SA = 62% MA = 24% MD = 10% SD =4 %
there are Christian teachers	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 85%**	SA = 44% MA = 41% MD = 10% SD =4 %
	Senior Students (n=402)	**A = 70%**	SA = 14% MA = 56% MD = 19 % SD = 11%
	Parents (n=81)	**A = 96%**	SA = 63% MA = 33% MD = 3% SD = 1%
they believe that the Bible is of central importance to all things	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 89%**	SA = 57% MA =31% MD = 9% SD =3 %
	Senior Students (n=401)	**A = 66%**	SA = 23% MA = 43% MD = 20 % SD = 14%
	Parents (n=82)	**A = 87%**	SA = 70% MA = 17% MD = 10% SD =4 %
of dissatisfaction with local state schools	Graduates (n=69)	**A = 43%**	SA = 19% MA = 24% MD = 34% SD =22 %
	Senior Students (n=403)	**A = 53%**	SA = 25% MA = 28% MD = 28 % SD = 18%
	Parents (n=80)	**A = 56%**	SA = 28% MA = 29% MD = 26% SD =18 %
there is good discipline	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 36%**	SA = 7% MA = 29% MD = 49% SD =16 %
	Senior Students (n=401)	**A = 40%**	SA = 8% MA = 32% MD = 38 % SD = 22%
	Parents (n=82)	**A = 90%**	SA = 33% MA = 57% MD = 10% SD = 0%
so that I will have better employment opportunities	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 23%**	SA = 7% MA = 17% MD = 50% SD = 26%
	Senior Students (n=402)	**A = 41%**	SA = 11% MA = 30% MD = 35% SD = 24%
	Parents (n=82)	**A = 56%**	SA = 7% MA = 49% MD = 31% SD = 13%

A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree   **SA** = Strongly Agree   **MA** = Mostly Agree   **MD** = Mostly Disagree   **SD** = Strongly Disagree

n = number of participants completing each survey item. Max. number of participants was 82, 405 and 70 respectively.

A possible reason for the smaller support by senior students and (to some extent, graduates) of the 'faith' factors (*Christian teachers, the Bible and Jesus*) than parents is the different perception that parents have of Christian teachers and of the 'Christian' nature of their school in contrast to students. From the open-ended survey responses it appeared that there was a 'love-hate' relationship for senior students with their teachers. Some senior students were effusive in their praise for, and gratitude to teachers, while others were intensely critical. It is possible that senior students, being in much closer relationships with teachers than parents, are more aware of teachers' inconsistencies and shortcomings than their parents and are less likely to have an idealised picture of teachers.

In response to the survey question *'What do you enjoy most about this school*?', 83 of the 388 Year 11 students (21%) mentioned caring or friendly or supportive teachers, making comments such as:

> *Most teachers genuinely want to help you, you feel valued and special;*
>
> *I enjoy the close teacher-student relationships and the fact that teachers care about you;*
>
> *The personal interest teachers show in students;*
>
> *How teachers take time out of their spare time to help you out whether it be for work or just problems;*
>
> *Teachers are always understanding;*
>
> *The way teachers care about you and what becomes of your life.*

However, in response to the question *'What do you enjoy least about this school?'*, 93 (24%) of the senior students mentioned teachers or teacher issues such as:

> *The strict and pathetic rules and how the teachers will pick on you for the littlest thing;*
>
> *The strictness and harsh punishments;*
>
> *Teachers expecting too much of students;*
>
> *Sometimes the teachers don't believe you;*
>
> *Sometimes the way teachers act towards students, especially during sports days - they hassle the kids too much;*
>
> *Biased and hypocritical teachers.*

Tables 5:6 and 5:7 below list the top three responses by students to the questions *What do you enjoy most about this school?* and *What do you enjoy least about this school?*

Table 5:6 - Senior Students' Positive Responses to Teachers			
(Open-ended Survey Question)			
Senior Students - *What do you enjoy most about this school?*			
Number of students responding was 388 from possible 405. *Top three responses only, shown.*	***Number***	***%*** (denominator of 388)	***Rank***
Friendships / Socialising	174	**45**	1
Environment - warm, positive	107	**28**	2
Caring, supportive teachers	83	**21**	3

Table 5:7 - Senior Students' Negative Responses to Teachers			
(Open-ended Survey Question)			
Senior Students - *What do you enjoy least about this school?*			
Number of students responding was 388 from possible 405. *Top three responses only, shown.*	***Number***	***%*** (denominator of 388)	***Rank***
Teachers / Teacher issues	93	**24**	1
Subject Issues / Timetable	82	**21**	2
Workload, homework, pressure	75	**19**	3

Differences Between Parents and Students

It is evident from Table 5:5 (page 190 above), that parents gave greater support to each item (measured by total agreement, ie *strongly agree + mostly agree*) than senior students and in only one item (*so that I will have better employment opportunities)* was the *'Strongly Agree'* greater for senior students. Nonparametric difference tests applied to each of the "*reasons parents send their children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools"* indicated that there was no association between the responses of parents and students for five of the six items (see Appendix 8):

- *because the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything*
- *because there are Christian teachers*
- *because there is good discipline*
- *because the Bible is of central importance to all things*
- *so that students will have better employment opportunities'*

The only item which revealed an association between the responses of parents and students was: *'because of dissatisfaction with local state schools'*. (It is noteworthy that for the three explicitly religious factors, although students expressed overall agreement (70% for 'Jesus', 70% for Christian teachers and 66% for the Bible – see Table 5:5, page 190) their agreement was significantly less than their parents.

The differences between parents and students are likely to result from their different roles within their schools. CPC schools were established to support the faith positions of families (in effect parents), and these schools are organised so that parents possess influence and authority. Students are the focus of the schools' endeavours but do not generally possess their parents' understanding or enthusiasm for their school's distinctive religious ethos. In addition, students' interview responses indicate that they do not spend the same time as their parents reflecting on the deeper purposes of their education. Hence, while students recognise the primacy of the religious basis of their schools, they are not likely to be as aware or committed as their parents and not likely to respond as strongly as their parents to questions concerned with their school's ethos and values.

The survey responses of graduates which generally lie somewhere between parents and senior students support this contention. Graduates, having been exposed to contexts other than school, are likely to be able to reflect a little more objectively on their schooling and responded more positively in the surveys than senior students to the notion that parents sent their children to CPC schools for explicitly religious reasons.

Reasons for Sending Children to a CPC School - Interview Responses

As noted earlier, parents send their children to CPC schools for a diversity of reasons, however, a number of particular issues were reported consistently in the interviews with teachers, parents and senior students.

In the previous section it was indicated that in the surveys of parents, senior students and graduates, various 'religious' factors were more significant in the choice of school by CPC parents than other factors. Consistent with the surveys, most of those interviewed (in all groups) mentioned some kind of religious or Christian factor such as 'Christian emphases', 'Christian teachers', 'Christian values', 'Christ-centred discipline', or 'prayer' as the primary reason for parents sending their children to a CPC school. In the interviews many added other factors as supplementary to, or in a small number of cases, more important than, the religious factors. Many of those interviewed suggested that a combination of factors determined parents' choice of a CPC school. An executive in one school for example, suggested:

> Parents want their children to be safe from society. They believe their children will receive a better academic education, that they'll be better disciplined, that the moral spectrum is a lot narrower, that they will be loved by their teachers and many want an education with a distinctively Christian worldview (Interview 93 Executive).

From the interviews, the reasons that parents sent their children to CPC schools can be summarised as:

- *Christian teachers and an ethos consistent with a Christian home.*

- *A caring atmosphere; good values; good discipline; good academic results.*

- *A school free of the problems associated with some state schools such as drugs and violence.*

Christian Teachers and an Ethos Consistent with a Christian Home.

The following are typical of the comments of the parents who sent their children to a CPC school for religious reasons, although even here it is evident that religious and other factors are mixed. The question put to these parents was – *'Why did you (do parents / other people) send their children to this school?'*:

> Because it is a Christian school, with Christian teachers and a caring environment. This is what I had heard people talk about a lot before we came - a caring environment, and I was impressed with the way the day starts with prayer (Interview 25 Parent).

> We wanted the ethos of our home supported in all aspects of our child's life. Children spend an awful lot of time at school. Follow-up in a place where they spend so much time is important. We want our children, when they have finished school, to have had a

good grounding in Christian values and ethics. … We have friends who have children, but who have the opposite view - they want their children to live in and not be protected from the world, but we believe that children need a strong foundation on which to face the world (Interview 29 Parent).

I wanted a school with Christian values and Christian teaching (Interview 52 Parent).

I liked the ethos of parent control and of the interdenominational emphasis and the opportunities for parental involvement. It was God's direction at the time. We prayed specifically for guidance. … It is not a perfect school, but it is an extension of what we believe at home. God is central, … there is prayer. I certainly don't think that that has changed. These things are still central to the ethos (Interview 81 Parent).

I was talking to a Mum yesterday who isn't a Christian, but she is really glad her kids will have Christian values taught at school (Interview 92 Parent).

In response to the question *'What has this school provided that other schools may not?'*, one parent summarised views expressed by many of the CPC school parents:

Definitely nurture and guidance and example for our children. The most powerful thing is that the school is representing what we are saying at home. Some of our friends have their children in other schools and they aren't getting the support they would like for their values. This school supports our somewhat 'geeky' Christian perspective. When kids are in a secular school and they go through that stage where they are questioning their faith, it is very difficult for them. Grace is critical, essential in our lives but a Christian school supports your perspective (Interview 84 Parent).

Teachers' Perspectives on Reasons that Parents Sent Their Children to CPC schools

When asked why parents send their children to their particular CPC school, teachers most frequently mentioned faith or religious factors as the primary reason. Teachers, however, were more likely than other groups to mention other factors as also being significant for parents. The following responses were typical of their observations:

Some parents see the school as providing distinctively Christian education where kids are cared for (Interview 4 Teacher).

The majority of parents want education from a Christian framework which provides consistency between home and school (Interview 34 Executive - Parent).

Many send their children because it is a Christian school and they want the values of their home backed up (Interview 40 Executive).

Christian parents check out the school and see that the school will support their Christian values. There are probably 50 - 60% of our students from Christian homes (Interview 64 Teacher).

Most Christian parents, that is, the type that join the school association, are seeking a Christ centred education and curriculum, Christ centred discipline and pastoral care and policies delivered by Christian teachers who acknowledge that parents are biblically responsible for the education of their children and want to work in partnership (Interview 88 Teacher-parent).

Christian parents look to a partnership with the school and for the school to be an extension of their Christian home (Interview 91 Staff-Parent).

Students' Perspectives on Reasons that Parents Sent Their Children to CPC schools

Students' views on their parents' reasons for sending them to a CPC school also focused chiefly on the Christian values of their school. The following responses were from a range of the schools:

Christian values - my parents didn't want me to have the pressures of being a Christian in a non-Christian environment (Interview 13 Senior Student Group).

My parents sent me here because of the Christian emphasis of the school. They liked the people here too, and that it was a parent controlled school so they could keep an eye on me (Interview 20 - Senior Student Group).

My parents wanted a Christian based education for me (Interview 32 Senior Student Group).

Because it is a Christian school and my brother already went here (Interview 47 Senior Student Group).

Christian parents want Christian education (Interview 65 Senior Student)

My parents wanted to have reinforced what they were teaching at home - a Christian environment, a caring environment (Interview 74 Senior Student).

Other Perspectives

An experienced principal of a large school however, was less inclined to see parents motivation as religious suggesting that: "Most parents send their children here because they want their kids to be

cared for, because of their expectation that discipline will be strong and because we aren't a state school." When asked *Do many want a distinctively Christian education*?, he responded that "This would be an exception rather than the rule" (Interview 94 Principal).

The reflection of a younger teacher on the situation in his school also raises the question of whether there is a degree of rhetoric rather than substance in the argument that parents are concerned primarily with religious factors in their children's schooling.

> [*Why do you think parents send their children to this school?*] It is interesting at parent teacher interviews that I get a lot of parents for geography, but not many at all for Christian studies. This might be a reflection on how parents see the importance of the Christian content of the school. I teach Christian studies, and I am in my first year and I am not getting much support and there isn't much accountability (Interview 26 Teacher).

There are a number of plausible reasons that teachers in CPC schools were more likely than parents themselves to suggest non-religious factors as significant for parents in their choice of a CPC school for their children. Firstly, it is clear that all constituent groups acknowledged that there were a range of factors, both religious and non-religious, influencing parents. It is possible that teachers in CPC schools do not accurately understand the priorities of parents in their school community. On the other hand it is possible that in commenting on these factors, that parents felt constrained to emphasise the faith factors because they considered this to be the most suitable or acceptable viewpoint to articulate in a CPC school. In addition, this situation is consistent with the observation that many parents only fully embrace their (CPC) school's religious culture after they have been members of the school community for some time, and that they subsequently read their later deep commitment to the school's religious ethos back into their original motivation.

A Caring Atmosphere With Good Values, Good Discipline And Good Academic Results

Many of those interviewed commented on issues which might traditionally have been associated with 'good' schooling as features that were important to parents. The following comments of parents, staff and senior students were representative:

> [*Why do other parents send their children to this school?*] The level of care for the special needs kids is higher than in the state system - the level of care here goes above and beyond what is expected. ... I had my daughter ... in a state school, but she hated it, and I hated it. ... There is such a difference in discipline and standards compared to the state school - there are major differences, even the overall friendliness of teachers. Teachers here are more receptive to parents than the state school. I knew my daughter's teacher at the state school, but she still wasn't particularly friendly - she wasn't unfriendly, but there was a teacher-parent gap there that doesn't exist at [this school]. I had to really push at the state school, but I was welcomed here, and encouraged. (Interview 10 Parent).

> [*Why do you think parents send their children to this school?*] Because parents would like the school to be teaching the same as they are at home, because of the problems in other schools and because of the nice environment (Interview 33 Teacher).

> [*Why do parents send their children to this school?*] The majority see the finished product and like what they see - values, not so much academic results recently, but they definitely like how they are taught. Others send because it is cheaper than other grammar schools, yet it is still a private school education, so it is a good compromise. Christian parents check out the school and see that the school will support their Christian values. There are probably 50 - 60% of our students from Christian homes. (Interview 64 Teacher).

> As I talk to parents, it appears to be the care that kids will receive. This is especially the case for non-Christian parents (Interview 91 Staff-Parent).

> People are impressed with the school's standards, not just academic. The school has solid standards on issues. It has a good reputation in the local area for morals and discipline. Academics do come into it, but for many, the school is just solid. And for a private education it is cheap (Interview 11 Teacher).

> My parents sent me here because it is a good school that provides a good education (Interview 68, Senior Student Group).

> This school has a good reputation in the community. … The school is recommended by other parents. Students are well behaved and on the right track (Interview 76 Senior Student).

An Alternative to Other Schools

Members of all groups also mentioned that parents are attracted to CPC schools because of their concern with the alternatives, particularly state schools. This was evident in the parent interviews (Interview 10 Parent) and (Interview 30 Parent) in the previous section, where parents commented on their concerns with the levels of care experienced in particular government schools. This issue will be addressed in greater detail later in this chapter when considering Foundational Value IIC – *'CPC schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined'*.

Enrolment Policies Designed to Preserve the Christian Constituency

Many CPC schools have enrolment policies, (mostly undocumented, but nevertheless widely known), which have been designed to ensure that a certain percentage of Christian families supportive of the school's ethos is maintained within their school. In general, these school communities would regard a 'Christian' family as one in which at least one of the parents could articulate a personal faith in Christ and would attend church regularly.

It should be noted that the definition of 'Christian' proposed by the Oxford dictionary - "one who believes or professes the religion of Christ" (p. 332, 1973) would be accepted by the vast majority of Australian CPC school communities and would certainly be understood to include those belonging to other Christian traditions. The term itself though, has a narrower currency in most of these schools. As mentioned earlier, it would be understood that most, if not all of the Christian families associated with CPC schools would come from the Reformed, Evangelical or Pentecostal (Protestant) traditions. The use of the term 'Christian' in this study ought not, however, be read as exclusive or restricted, but rather as the self-designation that these traditions regard as most appropriate and from here on is used in its unarticulated form.

In the interviews, parents, teachers and executive staff were strongly supportive of these policies. There was a general concern that if the essentially Christian populations of CPC schools were to change, then support for the schools' religious basis and ethos, and eventually the distinctive natures

of the schools themselves, would also change. In a number of interviews, concerns were already being expressed about the impact that families and children who did not share the school's Christian ethos were having:

> Another danger is the slow nibbling away of the morals and standards that Christian schools stand for. This is related to bringing in non-Christian families and their children. The peer pressure on my daughter in middle school is stronger from the non-Christian disruptive kids [than from the Christian kids]. I am concerned about language and put-downs (Interview 14 Staff).

A number of parents and teachers commented on the specific ratio of Christian to non-Christian families that their schools were keen to preserve. A mother who had been associated with a school for 6 years commented:

> [*Was this school established primarily for children from Christian families?*] Originally yes, but not now. I think they want a quota of Christian families at about 80%. I would like to see the quota stay high. Too many non-Christians could become the majority and change things (Interview 10 Parent).

Teachers also generally supported the maintenance of a high proportion of Christian families in their schools: The question put to the following teachers was (or was very similar to) – *'Is this school primarily for Christian families?'*

> We have an open enrolment, but we don't want to get in a situation where 10 - 15% of non-Christians become 25% non-Christians (Interview 5 Principal)

> The ratio of Christians to non-Christians is 75%. Below that could spoil the atmosphere. We already have a couple of classes where we have concerns (Interview 12 Teacher).

> The school is set up for Christian families. There needs to be a percentage open for non-Christians, but there is a concern that we could lose our emphasis. … Non-Christians need to support the school creed and its religious basis (Interview 73 Teacher - Parent).

> We have to be careful about how many kids come from non-Christian families. There comes a time when you let so much water in the boat, that the boat sinks. More non-Christians in your classes impact on your ability to teach Christianly. Christian kids who hear Christian values being ridiculed will join in (Interview 50 Teacher).

Principals were also aware that a change in the constituency of their schools might have a detrimental impact on their schools. In response to the question – *'Does the school provide education primarily for children from Christian homes?'*, one of the principals commented:

> Yes, we see this as our main focus but we are willing to accept children from non-church homes if they are willing to accept the direction of the school. We do not provide any overt evangelistic programs but aim to assist parents nurture their children in the ways of the Lord (Interview 54 Principal).

Another principal was also concerned about the impact on staff of a high proportion of students with problems:

> When I interview non-Christian families I tell them that we operate from an unequivocally Christian basis and that their kids might become Christians in the process. If they are still totally for us, then there are no problems. A lot of people come for pastoral care, because their kids are in strife. I am now quite discerning about that. I don't want staff negatively affected by stress levels etc. I am keen to protect the core, to be here for those whose first priority is to love the Lord and want to have their kids in an environment that supports that. We have an open enrolment policy, but we won't take just anyone (Interview 39 Principal).

In a brochure for parents and other supporters considering the establishment of a Christian school, CPCS Ltd gives advice that links a restrictive enrolment policy to the maintenance of the school's direction and ethos:

> Christian parent controlled schools have adopted a variety of policies in relation to enrolling students. Each school serves a particular community of Christian families and any policy should be responsive to the priorities they share. … Some schools limit the number of families that do not profess a Christian commitment to a level that allows the school to share the riches of Christian education without the climate and direction of the school being threatened (CPCS - Getting Started I - Establishing a Christian School)

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIA. Support for Christian Families

Foundational Value IIA of CPC schools was '*Christian Parent Controlled schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children*'. This study has found regarding this foundational value that:

CPC schools serve a largely church-going constituency that is looking to these schools to support their religious values. Parents are attracted to these schools because there are Christian teachers and because they believe Christ and the Bible are central. It is also evident that in general, CPC schools preserve their Christian constituency via enrolment policies that maintain a certain percentage of Christian families in the school. This study has established that CPC schools' prevailing practices are consistent with the foundational value that regarded support for Christian families in the task of educating their children as important.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIB. Affordable Education for Christian Families

In the early days of CPC schools, one of the important values was that Christian families should be able to afford school fees. As pointed out in Chapter 4, this was an implicit but nevertheless critical priority, because if fees and other costs were too high, the schools' fundamental purpose of providing a Christian education for the children of Christian families would have been considerably compromised. The prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the second foundational value, 'Christian Families', in particular *IIB.'Christian Parent Controlled schools should be affordable for Christian families* will be examined in this section.

It is difficult to make a definitive assessment of the affordability of CPC schools in general, or even of particular CPC schools, due to a large extent to the problem of defining 'affordability'. Is a school

affordable if families who are struggling financially are required, (as is the case in at least one of the schools), to take out a loan to cover fees which would be finally repaid a number of years after their children have completed their schooling?

This issue will be addressed by considering the perspectives of the 82 parents who responded to the survey and the perspectives of the 21 parents who were interviewed. Parents in the survey, while acknowledging that others might be prevented from sending their children for financial reasons, were nevertheless not convinced that their school should be more conscious of the financial needs of low income families. See Table 5:8 below.

Table 5:8 - Parents' Views on Financial Difficulties		
Survey Items	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
Income prevents some parents from sending children to this school (n=80)	**A = 73%**	SA = 40% MA = 33% MD = 15% SD = 13%
This school should be more conscious of the financial difficulties faced by parents on low incomes (n=81)	**A = 36%**	SA = 10% MA = 26% MD = 41% SD = 24%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of parents completing survey item. Maximum possible = 82.		

These survey responses appeared to leave the question of the affordability of CPC schooling for Christian families unanswered. If parents believed income was a problem for others, it could be argued that schools should be more conscious of low-income families, however that was not the view of these parents. It may have been that the parents surveyed believed that fees could not go any lower without leading to a decrease in school services and facilities or that lower income families needed to change their financial priorities in order to send their children to a CPC school.

The interviews provided some clarification of this issue. On the whole, parents suggested that CPC schools were affordable if families were willing to make sacrifices, but they also pointed to the policies of many CPC schools which already subsidise the fees, or in some way, financially support the enrolment of children from low-income families.

[*Is this school affordable for all sections of the Christian community?*] Many parents are doing it tough, but they are not asking for handouts. This shows their commitment level (Interview 1 Parent).

A lot of Christians decide whether or not to sacrifice … it is very tight for a lot of people, but most people would be able to send their children to a Christian school if they were willing to sacrifice (Interview 2 Staff-Parent).

We had to have a good think before our kids went into the senior school. We are on a pretty average wage, probably lower than most, but the school isn't a charity either. We would really struggle financially with the school if we had a mortgage, but we own our home and the school assists people (Interview 8 Parent).

They have a policy - "no child from a Christian family will miss out on a Christian education because of money". From what I have heard, [this school] is one of the cheapest Christian schools around (Interview 10 Parent).

Some families find it hard to meet fees, but this school is cheaper than other private schools. Scholarships for needy families are an issue. We only have minimal scholarships (Interview 19 Teacher).

Fees are moderate in the first place. There is a fee remissions policy and some budgetary counselling occurs (Interview 34 Executive - Parent).

[*Is education at this school affordable?*] I don't work and my husband is an instrument fitter, but we are finding a lot of people wanting Christian education who can't really afford it. So it is a difficult question to answer. Personally, I think people can afford it, if it is a priority. A lot of people here are more interested in a Christian education than a private education. There are a lot self-employed tradesmen in this area - not many professionals, so financially, it can be difficult (Interview 52 Parent).

[*Is this school affordable for all sections of the Christian community?*] I am a single parent and it is a real struggle. My accountant said that I should not have my children here, but I decided to fumble through. My son was unhappy in a state school and I moved him over here. … The gap between the rich and the poor is growing. It would be good to have a bigger bursary system (Interview 73 Teacher - Parent).

Finances are difficult for many. The school community is advised that financial difficulties need not be the end of the story, though. If parents are struggling they are helped. Compared to other Christian schools, the costs are very reasonable. … I understand that fees are negotiable and that there are a variety of means to assist people (Interview 81 Parent).

If your priority is for it, yes it is affordable. From my time on the board, I know of parents who have sold their homes and invested the money in order to keep kids in

school. However, this school has the cheapest fees I know except for Catholic schools (Interview 84 Parent).

There were a minority of parents and teachers who sounded a note of caution however. One of the Principals, considering the possible dangers that face CPC schools warned: "If we are not careful, we could cost ourselves away from those who have a heart for Christian education." (Interview 82 Principal).

A number of parents and teachers had similar concerns:

> [*Are you aware of dangers that face schools like this in maintaining a distinctively Christian approach to education?*] Some schools are becoming more elite and this is reflected in the type and cost of their uniforms. ... [*Is there a connection here with fees?*] It gets to a point where the school is out of reach for people who can't afford high fees and yet parents want to send their children to a Christian school. I am sure the Lord doesn't want parents to suffer to send their children to a Christian school. We need to be careful not to put Christian education out of the reach of the everyday family (Interview 49 Teacher).

> [*Is this school affordable for the average Christian family?*] Catholic schools do a good job of making schools affordable. I wouldn't like it if we said 'we have a good thing going, so lets charge for it'. I wouldn't like to see fees blow out. It would hurt a lot of people. Sometimes we don't give God enough credit for what he can do. We look at dollars as the bottom line. If we have something to offer, the school will grow and it has, through spiritual input. I would like to see fees more affordable, lower (Interview 69 Parent).

Significantly, two of the pioneers who have retained an active interest in CPC schooling spoke of their disquiet about the cost of educating children in CPC schools today:

> [*What do you see in the future for CPC schools?*] Where will the schools end up further down the track? Will they become elitist as the grammar schools have? … That would be my main concern. … If I listen to some of the parents who are 'hard up', in terms of meeting the school fees and the way that is being dealt with, well they are the first signs of really becoming elitist. … I know you need to be firm and you need to get the fees in, but there needs to be real discernment about this whole situation, and this is where we lose it … this is where the [Reformed] Church, closely living alongside the school, had a spiritual input, and a balancing influence, but that has been lost (Hoekzema, Pioneer Interview 3)

> [*Have parents become less involved as schools have grown in size?*] Definitely yes.
> Not only because of size, but because of changes in economic circumstances. Two
> incomes are needed to support a family. ... [*Is that a concern for you?*] Very much so.
> Because it also means, and this is a hobby-horse of mine that the schools become
> 'yuppie' schools. There are too many extra-curricular activities, and for the real
> Christian battler, there is no room, it becomes too expensive. This is one of the biggest
> dangers facing our schools … people I know are going to home schooling and cost is a
> big factor in that, … I know some of the students [in a local theological college] would
> like to send their children to the Christian school, but they cannot afford it, not unless
> the wife can work. I know that there are ways and means, there are scholarships and
> the schools try to do the right thing, but on the whole we are losing part of the less
> economic section of the Christian community (Schippers, Pioneer Interview 7).

As these responses indicated, there was not a consensus in CPC school communities about their
general affordability. While the parents on the whole suggested that CPC schools were affordable,
particularly if families were willing to sacrifice, there were some who were concerned that CPC
schools could lose sight of a foundational value which focused on the importance of Christian
education being available to all Christian families, regardless of their income level.

There is evidence from Catholic schools in the USA in particular, which indicate that it is very easy
for schools to shift their focus away from their core values toward the specific requirements and
desires of middle-class families and their children, and in doing so, to effectively exclude low income
families. Baker and Riordan (1998) maintained "It is well known that the families of students from
higher social classes are more demanding customers and are often very adept at seeing that schools
provide what they want" (p.19).

Two CPC school board members expressed a similar disquiet about the possibility of CPC schools
adopting the values of the 'middle-class':

> [*Is there a danger that our schools will not be affordable for the average Christian
> parents?*] I am not sure if we are out of the price range now - we could be bordering
> on it. We are mainly middle class - it is difficult for lower socio-economic Christians.
> … Another danger is that we are progressively creeping into middle-class comfort in
> the guise of Christian education - we are becoming increasingly academically
> competitive (Interview 7 Parent).

[*What dangers do you see ahead for Christian Parent Controlled Schools?*] We can easily become middle-class. When we started, there wasn't a degree in the board-room. People wanted a Christian education, but many now see Christian education as a commodity. It is easy to lose focus via the enrolment policy (Interview 70 Parent).

The national organisation, CPCS Ltd is aware of this issue and continues to advise schools that their fee schedule should not lead to the exclusion of students whose families are not wealthy:

The Christian school must not become just a school for the rich. Christian parent controlled schools provide an excellent educational experience for their students but do so while keeping fees to an acceptable level. Nevertheless it does entail some financial sacrifice for Christian families to provide their children with a Christ-centred education. … Whatever system you use, you should stress that those who can afford it, have a responsibility to give over and above their fees. You should also stress your willingness to assist those who cannot afford to pay fees (CPCS Brochure - Getting Started II - Establishing a Christian School, p.6).

This view was also supported by those (mainly teachers and executive staff) who attended the CPCS National Curriculum Summit in 1991: "It is also the responsibility of the [particular school] association to see that, as far as it lies with the school community, Christian education is not priced out of the range of Christian families" (CPCS, 1992, p.9).

Long (1996) also suggested that the ability of families to afford themelic school education was an issue worthy of note. While agreeing that these schools had affordable fee structures (p. 29), he nevertheless maintained that "there is a hidden tension in themelic schools arising from competing demands: on the one hand to maintain levels of excellence and credibility and, on the other hand, to satisfy the need for low fees to enable themelic Christians to enrol their children" (p. 76).

Affordability is clearly an issue that requires the continued attention of CPC schools if they are to resist the pressure to focus almost exclusively on the needs of families who are wealthier and more assertive. The result of such a focus would be the gradual but effective exclusion of less affluent families from CPC schools and the erosion of a foundational value.

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIB. Affordable Education for Christian Families

Foundational Value IIB. of CPC schools was *'Christian Parent Controlled schools should be affordable for Christian families*. Regarding this foundational value:

This study has not been able to clearly identify CPC schools' prevailing practice in regard to affordability. Many schools exhibit evidence of a commitment to this value through the provision of fee-relief for low income families, but this was not the case in all the schools involved in this study. The widespread use of the word 'sacrifice' indicated that the financial responsibility for this type of education was generally regarded as being the responsibility of individual families rather than that of the wider school community and there was evidence of concern amongst some members of CPC school communities that this foundational value lacked widespread support.

The final component of Foundational Value II, was the concern of Christian parents that their children be protected from non-Christian influences.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIC. Christian Families - A Protected Environment

As indicated in Chapter Four, when CPC schools were being established there was a desire to protect children from 'worldly' or non-Christian influences, particularly from religious values which conflicted with those of their families. This section of the study will consider the prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the second foundational value, 'Christian Families', in particular *IIC. 'Christian Parent Controlled schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined.*

It has already been demonstrated in relation to Foundational Value IIA, that religious or faith factors were important for parents in their choice of a CPC school and the surveys and interviews also indicated that a considerable number of parents also considered non-religious reasons as important. Some of these factors could be regarded as directly and others indirectly related to a protected environment, or an environment 'free of non-Christian influences' for students. In the survey, 90% of parents specified that they sent their children to a CPC school for discipline factors, 56% because they were dissatisfied with local state schools, and 49% because of their desire to keep their children protected from non-Christian influences. This last figure indicates that close to half of the parents enrolled their children in a CPC school in order to shield them from influences in conflict with Christian values. See Table 5:9 below.

Table 5:9 - A Protected Environment			
Survey Items	**Constituent Group**	**Agree**	**SA, MA, MD, SD**
I send my children to (my parents chose) this school because there is good discipline	Parents (n=82)	**A = 90%**	SA = 33% MA = 57% MD = 10% SD =0%
	Senior Students (n=401)	**A = 40%**	SA = 8% MA = 32% MD = 38% SD = 22%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 36%**	SA = 7% MA = 29% MD = 49% SD = 16%
I send my children to (my parents chose) this school because of dissatisfaction with local state schools	Parents (n=80)	**A = 56%**	SA = 28% MA = 29% MD = 26% SD =18 %
	Senior Students (n=403)	**A = 53%**	SA = 25% MA = 28% MD = 28% SD =18 %
	Graduates (n=69)	**A = 43%**	SA = 19% MA = 24% MD = 34% SD = 22%
My parents chose this school for me because they wanted to keep me safe	Senior Students (n=402)	**A = 53%**	SA = 11% MA = 42% MD = 28% SD = 19%
	Graduates (n=69)	**A = 53%**	SA = 16% MA = 37% MD = 27% SD = 19%
I send my children to this school because I want my children to be safe from non-Christian influences	Parents (n=82)	**A = 49%**	SA = 6% MA = 43% MD = 22% SD = 30%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of participants completing survey items. Max. possible was 82 parents, 405 senior students and 70 graduates.			

During the interviews, a number of senior students who responded to the question '*Why did your parents send* you *here?*', were aware that their parents were concerned with issues of safety.

> My parents sent me here because I was beaten up in my old school … it is better here (Interview 20, Senior Student Group).

> My sister went to a public school and it was really bad for her and so they sent us both here (Interview 32 Senior Student Group).

> My parents don't believe in the public system. I had a lot of problems at school, not fitting in … unless you are perfect in every aspect, you don't fit in (Interview 47 Senior Student Group).

> Protection is a big issue, parents want a safe upbringing. Children aren't as likely to get into the bad stuff here. … My other school was getting bad with drugs and alcohol and I didn't want that (Interview 83 Senior Student Group).

> They sent me here because the facilities were good and the public schools in our area looked awful (Interview 89 Senior Student Group).

> Non-Christian parents want a safer environment (Interview 95 Senior Student).

Parents also commented on their concerns that their children not be exposed to the negative aspects of other schools, particularly state schools:

> We were having difficulties with the local state school, morals and things. There was a lot of swearing and fighting and there was a different standard applied to students from different socio-economic areas. The students from the lower areas were favoured, were given more support and leeway when they misbehaved. And the educational standard was low. My husband was the school council President [of state school] and when he inquired about academic standards we were told that our kids were bright and we should be thankful our own kids were doing well and not to worry about other kids who couldn't spell. … Then someone told us about this school (Interview 8 Parent).

> Our children went to a public school. They had a lot of problems - both my eldest were hyperactive, my son was diagnosed with oppositional behaviour disorder and ADHD, and he had learning difficulties … he was being bullied, … His teacher kept calling me in, but the school didn't want to help, they wanted me to fix the problem on my own. I was going to numerous doctors, and I felt like I was going under.. Then I met a friend from childhood and she suggested [this school]. The school is great, … I have only got praise for the school. It is a safe environment for the children. …There is a lot of nurturing at the school. I can't say enough good things about the school. Some people complain about things, but I say, "Have you seen the state system?" (Interview 30 Parent).

> I wasn't happy with the state schools, … the standards, … I wasn't happy to have the kids time wasted. And the humanistic ideas, homosexuality, evolution, … Also discipline standards - there is such a wide range in state schools. It is a third teach and two thirds discipline. In a Christian schools these fractions are reversed, therefore they are better value, better run. Teachers really care. It is not just about money, but teachers really put in the effort. This is not so much the norm in public schools (Interview 80 Parent).

A teacher of over 15 years experience in CPC schools who had a young child, reflected on the importance for parents of the 'safety' factor:

> I don't really talk to parents about this, but you get the feeling that parents send their children here because it is a safe environment for kids and it has good morals. …Thinking of my own [pre-school] child, I want her to grow up knowing God, but also protected. The danger is I suppose that the protection factor is most important - and how many parents think like me? (Interview 85 Teacher).

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIC. Christian Families – A Protected Environment

Foundational Value IIC. of CPC schools was *'Christian Parent Controlled schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined.* Regarding this foundational value:

It was evident from the survey responses and interview comments that there were many families who continued to send their children to CPC schools because they regarded the environment as safer, or as more protected than alternative schools. It was also evident, on the basis of the comments of a number of students and parents that protection involved not only a guarding of the Christian beliefs and faith of the families, but also the provision of a morally and physically 'safe' environment.

Consistent with values that emphasised the role of CPC schools in supporting the beliefs of Christian parents was an emphasis on the importance of a curriculum that was genuinely Christian. The next section considers the prevailing practices of CPC schools in relation to this value.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIA. Thoroughly and Distinctively Christian Curriculum

From the perspective of the CPC school pioneers, education was an area where the all-encompassing Reformed religious outlook inherited from Kuyper in particular, needed to be applied. Thus, according to the pioneers and early leaders, every aspect of schooling ought to be subject to Christ and by extension, his word, the Bible. Christian education from this perspective, extended beyond the employment of Christian teachers, the use of chapel services, and the study of the Bible. It involved a comprehensive consideration of the whole school curriculum from a Christian viewpoint.

This section of the study will consider the prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the third foundational value, 'Christian Curriculum', in particular *IIIA. 'The school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian'*.

What Is Christian Curriculum?

Definitions of curriculum range from a narrow focus on formal subject matter taught in the classroom, to a broader understanding of curriculum as everything students experience in a school. The way that curriculum is conceived depends largely on the way education itself is conceived.

This broader understanding of curriculum in the context of Christian schooling is evident in the comments of Stronks and Blomberg (1993):

> What students learn is determined not only by the content that has been selected but also by the way in which it is taught … The structuring of curriculum is a whole school concern, to be determined in the light of the school's vision and objectives. It is in the overarching curricular framework that we will detect the religious vision of the school. … The Christian character of a school cannot be determined by analysing the percentage of "sacred activities" in which it engages (Wagner, 1990) but only by an investigation of the ways in which Scripture directs all the school's activities (pp. 188-189).

Similarly, Van Brummelen (1994) has an expansive and religiously focused view of curriculum in a Christian school:

> A Christian school will … consciously ask whether all aspects of the content and structure of its curriculum contribute to helping students be and become responsive disciples of Jesus Christ (p. 52).

For the purposes of this research, curriculum is understood in the broader sense, because CPC schools involve at their heart a religious perspective, and are concerned not just with an accumulation of academic skills but with a religious orientation to the whole of life. This orientation, arising from a faith in Christ, is attended by broad life attitudes and priorities such as principled and ethical living, regular corporate worship, care for others, service to the community and a belief that faith in Jesus Christ has a critical relevance to every situation in life.

One of the difficulties encountered by the researcher in discerning the commitment of CPC schools to the foundational value concerned with Christian curriculum was the diversity of understandings of the term curriculum itself. While a broad understanding of curriculum was employed in the study, it was evident from the interviews that many of the respondents understood curriculum in the narrower sense of material used in the classroom.

In order to measure the extent to which CPC schools have developed curricula which are thoroughly and distinctively Christian, consideration will be given to the survey and interview responses of CPC constituent groups focused on classroom practice, teaching programs and school support for teachers and the development of courses from a Christian perspective. Structural issues such as the national movement's support for, and involvement in professional development focused on Christian curriculum will be considered along with the limited amount of other research on Australian Christian schools pertinent to curriculum.

Survey Responses

In the survey, parents appeared to support the view that their school was able to offer distinctively Christian education as only 28% agreed with the (negative) statement: *'This school still has a lot of work to do in working out what it means to provide a distinctively Christian education'*.

Focusing more closely on the classroom, senior students (73% agreement) and graduates (90% agreement) both supported the statement: *'Teachers at my school present(ed) lessons from a*

Christian perspective' and together with teachers did not agree with the statement: *'Teachers are / were often too busy to teach from a Christian perspective'* (Graduates - 13%, Senior Students - 29% and teachers - 25% agreement). This last item was phrased in this way to give constituent groups the opportunity to agree that teaching from a Christian perspective was not occurring, without necessarily implying that teachers were at fault.

The proposition that CPC schools were serious about teaching from a Christian perspective received further support from teachers in two other survey items. A substantial majority (94%) of teachers agreed that their school continually challenged teachers to teach from a Christian perspective while 83% agreed that teaching programs were written from a Christian perspective and 80% that their school supported teachers in their task of teaching from a thoroughly Christian perspective. See Table 5:10.

These responses indicated that all groups supported the contention that CPC schools were making serious attempts to maintain a distinctively Christian curriculum.

Table 5:10 - Curriculum from a Christian Perspective.			
Survey Items	**Constituent Groups**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
This school still has a lot of work to do in working out what it means to provide a distinctively Christian education	Parents (n=79)	**A = 28%**	SA = 9% MA = 19% MD = 35% SD = 37%
Teachers at my school present(ed) lessons from a Christian perspective	Students (n=402)	**A = 73%**	SA = 26% MA= 48% MD = 21% SD = 6%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 90%**	SA = 44% MA = 46% MD = 10% SD = 0%
Teachers are / were often too busy to teach from a Christian perspective.	Teachers (n=295)	**A = 25%**	SA = 5% MA = 20% MD = 49% SD =27%
	Students (n=400)	**A = 29%**	SA = 6% MA = 23% MD = 49% SD = 23%
	Graduates (n=69)	**A = 13%**	SA = 1% MA = 11% MD = 51% SD = 35%
Teaching programs at my school are all written from a Christian perspective	Teachers (n=295)	**A = 83%**	SA = 39% MA = 44% MD = 14% SD =3 %
This school continually challenges teachers to teach from a Christian perspective.	Teachers (n=296)	**A = 94%**	SA = 66% MA = 28% MD = 6% SD = 0%
This school supports teachers in their task of teaching from a thoroughly Christian perspective	Teachers (n=296)	**A = 80%**	SA = 27% MA = 52% MD = 18% SD = 2%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of participants completing particular survey items. Max. possible - 82 parents, 405 senior students, 70 graduates and 296 teachers.			

Teachers and Executives Views on Christian Curriculum

The impression received from the surveys that CPC schools offered curricula that were thoroughly and distinctively Christian did not however, receive consistent support in the interviews. There were varied responses to this issue across all constituent groups.

Teachers in one of the schools talked positively about the existence of the Christian curriculum in their school, citing the example of an integrated unit involving 3 subjects:

> [*In what ways does this school present a Christian curriculum?*] We teach a unit which looks at war, war poetry and war literature such as *'All Quiet On The Western Front'* and we look at forgiveness and the impact that forgiveness at the end of WWI may have had and whether WWII may have been averted. Other staff are often talking about Christian perspectives in their subjects (Interview 3 Teacher)

> The school teaches a unit in the humanities on forgiveness. It is an integrated study looking at the broad implications of forgiveness. … One of the strengths of this school is that it is not just giving lip-service to Christian perspectives and a Christianised curriculum, it is more, not just Christianised answers. … One day next term, we will reiterate more formally what we understand to be a Christian curriculum. We will look at teaching units. This is an ongoing process involving asking deep questions. There is value in the process - being conscious of what is most important in the material being selected. We need to continue wrestling. It is not just about documents, it is important that it is meaningful for kids (Interview 5 Principal).

> [*Is the Curriculum distinctively Christian at this school?*] I am not sure about the whole curriculum, but certainly true in primary from my experience - there are plenty of workshops on how to develop curriculum from a Christian point of view, and in our conferences, this is always part of it. (Interview 4 Teacher).

Teachers in other schools also responded positively to questions about the Christian character of their curriculum. Their various responses indicated some differences in approach:

> [*Would you say the education here is distinctively Christian?*] The primary curriculum has units designed with biblical perspectives at the heart. In the secondary school, while individual subject teachers bring biblical perspectives to bear on particular units, for example in history / geography, as always it is harder. [Years] 7-12 teachers have the constraints of the curriculum to deal with. Perhaps they don't think in the same way. [Years] K-6 teachers think of the whole, the big picture (Interview 18 Teacher).

> [*What kind of professional development is provided for staff in terms of teaching from a Christian perspective?*] We have student free days at the beginning of term. A

determined effort is made on those days to look at how Christianity relates in the classroom and at Christian perspectives on a range of issues (Interview 19 Teacher).

[*Is there a deliberate attempt to ensure that the teaching content is Christian?*] Our programming model encourages us to ensure that our teaching content is Christian. The question asked of teachers is, "What is the Christian perspective on this unit?" It is not forced, but we sometimes deliberately choose a unit with an overtly Christian outlook (Interview 34 Executive)

[*How do you bring Christian perspectives to bear in your class?*] As far as curriculum goes, English is one of the easier subjects in this. Novels such as *'Cry The Beloved Country'* are great vehicles for Christian perspectives. Books like this give students options and ideas not presented in the media. Kids appreciate you not being 'in their face'. This novel presents ideas that kids want to discuss. It isn't good to 'stage' Christian perspectives, it is important rather to use the opportunities that present themselves (Interview 64 Teacher).

[*What do you understand by 'teaching Christianly'?*] Regarding teaching from a Christian world-view, our middle school pattern is creation / fall / redemption from a religio-critical standpoint. We pull texts apart from this perspective, but this is easier in primary and middle school than in the senior school (Interview 79 Teacher).

An experienced teacher and executive commented on a wide range of difficulties experienced by teachers attempting to implement a Christian curriculum:

[*How does the school help teachers in their endeavours to teach Christianly?*] NICE [National Institute of Christian Education of CPCS Ltd] is encouraged and in order to address the issue, this is a critical step. I haven't enrolled, but this is one way. Also state [CPC school] conferences where these issues are raised. …We also have staff discussions, eg, on 'Gifted and Talented' or 'Boys Education' which we need to look at as Christians, but these things don't help teachers in the classroom to teach Christianly. It is often like the blind leading the blind. A big factor is the lack of time to put ideas into practice. There is a gap in time for teachers to implement the ideas, to put them into programs. …

The business of teaching Christianly is the biggest issue and the biggest difficulty that Christian teachers face. ... How do you teach maths and science Christianly? … Many of the teachers do reasonably well and teach Christian perspectives reasonably often. Many who don't, find it difficult and perhaps don't know how - there is an "icing on the cake" approach for some people. There aren't too many teachers who teach Christianly in everything they do. Sometimes opportunities are lost, because teachers don't know how. Teachers need the time and opportunity to develop these ideas. ... I often feel depressed after professional development conferences. I haven't got time, but I can see

what I am not doing, and I can see the enormity of things, but I have no time to do them. Heaps of issues are raised, but I feel overwhelmed. Awareness and expectations are raised which I can't meet (Interview 62 Executive).

Reservations about the Quality of Christian Curriculum in CPC Schools.

A number of teachers were less positive about the management and processes of Christian curriculum in their school:

[*How do you see the outworking of 'Christian' in Christian education?*] One of my disappointments is our 'icing on the cake' approach, especially in the senior school where I work. ... The primary school, which is like any other primary school except for devotions and talk of God, is still driven by outcomes and profiles. Our reporting and assessment is not much different. The kind of discussion that occurs in classrooms, the discussion and the informal learning with a Christian focus wouldn't occur in other places though (Interview 41a Teacher).

[*How does the school seek to keep its vision for distinctively Christian education alive?*] If it weren't for an academic and talented executive, the whole direction, the whole vision for Christian education would go under here in no time. The board and parents have little or no input in helping staff keep the vision. This is not a criticism, just an observation (Interview 88 Teacher-Parent).

The comments of an experienced English teacher in an established CPC school revealed that the application of Christian perspectives does not always occur consistently:

[*Can you give me an example of something that you do that is explicitly Christian in English?*] When we studied *'Lord of the Flies'*, I set an essay topic with a verse from Matthew which the students had to relate to the text. But this doesn't happen regularly (Interview 19 Teacher).

A number of experienced teachers also expressed concerns about the ability of some of their colleagues to offer a Christian curriculum:

[*Is parent control a good model?*] We haven't got it right in terms of Christian perspectives in the classroom. We get a wide range of staff in terms of where they are coming from. The school's statement of beliefs is rarely looked at. There should be more encouragement of staff to grow in their faith. Some just trip over the line at interview. There have been staff at management level who did not belong to a church (Interview 41b Teacher).

[*Christian perspectives in the classroom?*] Teachers here didn't have a clue about teaching from a Christian perspective. One of our teachers commenting on the significance of *'To Kill a Mockingbird'* said 'Imagine that you are a youth pastor giving a talk … about how you become a Christian.' There was no talk of justice, or the importance of Christians standing up for justice. Unfortunately, there is a lot of this dualism in teachers' thinking. They have very little understanding of how to integrate Christian perspectives in their classrooms (Interview 63 Principal).

The assistance that teachers receive for the task of teaching their subjects from a thoroughly Christian perspective varied from school to school and also within schools. A teacher in his first year indicated that he had received little support in the development of a Christian perspective for his subjects:

[*How do you teach your subjects from a Christian perspective?*] They just said 'this is geography and this is psychology - try and inject some Christian perspectives into this.' The last three years have seen three different geography teachers, so there were no geography programs, just course outlines. I developed the whole program (Interview 11 Teacher).

A number of school executives and experienced teachers were aware of dangers that face CPC schools in their pursuit of a Christian approach to education. An executive with lengthy experience commented:

[*What dangers can you see ahead as schools such as this seek to maintain a distinctively Christian approach to education?*] There will always be a danger that we will slip into other paradigms. Other elite Christian schools strengthen the chaplaincy, but we have resisted this because all teachers are chaplains. The danger here is that our Christian schools will follow this dualistic approach. … The danger for this school as it seeks to maintain a distinctively Christian approach to education is the dissonance between core values, which will probably remain on the books and the reality of what goes on in the place. … in terms of our teaching staff, the potential weakness is the difficulty in coming to a shared understanding - we need to work hard on our biblical focus. … A lot of teachers see Christian education as equivalent to Christian teachers in a school. If we lose our focus, the character of our schools could change. Schools need to work intentionally at ensuring that teachers are conscious of Christian perspectives (Interview 21 Executive).

This concern was shared by a parent with experience on national committees:

[*What are your main concerns for the future of Christian Parent Controlled Schools?*] Christian curriculum is still a problem in the movement. We rely very heavily on

Christians who are teachers, to teach our kids. We do not insist on rigour in the Christian content of curricula. We use secular curricula. I haven't seen evidence that this has been pursued diligently (Interview 7 Parent).

Students' Views on the Christian Curriculum of Their Schools

Many students commented on the Christian character of their schools, but it was clear from their observations that Christian perspectives are not applied consistently across subjects, across school sections or across different CPC schools. There were also students who were aware of, but negative toward the Christian emphases in their schools:

[*Do you get much Christianity in your subjects?*] Teachers talk about evolution and give both sides. They are prepared to talk about Christian perspectives - they often get side-tracked into talking about the Bible (Interview 16a Senior Student Group). The physics teacher talks about God from time to time. Christian perspectives are given, but the emphasis is on getting a good mark. Comments like 'Surely God must have made this - it is so wonderful' (Interview 16b Senior Student Group). We sometimes talk about Christian things in English. The non-Christian boys often joke about it. There is also a healthy difference in the denominations of teachers. Issues are never regarded as being black and white (Interview 16c Senior Student Group).

[*What do you see that is Christian about your school?*] Our lessons show the Christian side of our school. In history we were looking at the Arab-Israeli conflict. We talk a lot about the Old Testament and get the Bible's perspective. It is natural to talk Christian perspectives in class (Interview 32a Senior Student Group). ... We get everything we need for the HSC but teachers put more emphasis on your relationship with Christ and that you are not getting stressed by the studies (Interview 32b Senior Student Group).

[*How do you find the Christian side of things at this school?*] We do a subject, 'Contemporary Christianity' where you study a Christian world view and other religions and other issues. We also have 5 to 10 minutes of devotions each morning. We mark the roll and read the Bible or a devotional book and then pray. Apparently other classes aren't as organised for their devotions as our class (Interview 45a Senior Student Group). In Indonesian, we talk about Christianity informally. We discuss lots of issues (Interview 45b Senior Student Group). One subject where we don't talk Christianity is English because there is no room for it. It depends on the teacher. In science we talk about Christianity and evolution. We are encouraged to keep an open mind. There is a little bit in biology, but it comes out often in history. Our teacher goes

off on tangents. But it doesn't link or fit in maths (Interview 45c Senior Student Group).

[*What are the school's priorities?*] ... The school is not competitive in terms of sport. There are no awards nights or school captains - people aren't singled out. We have sport once per term against other schools. I like it that everyone gets a chance - everyone gets chosen. It is different to my other school where they just take the best of the best - I tried out for 3 years in a row and didn't make the team. … The school believes in giving everyone an equal chance. It gets back to Christianity and what the school believes in (Interview 47 Senior Student Group).

[*Is the Bible, is Jesus, central in the school?*] With the Bible being the foundation, the school is open to people considering everything from a Christian perspective. We have two Christian Living classes each week and [the principal] talks on assemblies… (Interview 65a Senior Student Group). In English, the text we study often has a Christian theme, eg, T.S. Eliot, Tim Winton (Interview 65b Senior Student Group). We are studying '*Away*' and we talk about how the values conflict with Christian values (Interview 65a Senior Student Group). … also in history - the ideals of the Communist Revolution (Interview 65b Senior Student Group).

[*What is Christian about this school?*] Teachers here comment on curriculum from a Christian perspective, eg, in biology. I have friends at church who go to other state schools and they comment that it would be good to go to a school that had devotions, but they don't understand that it is much more than that here, that the Bible is the basis for all classes (Interview 89 Senior Student Group).

A number of students felt that there was very little that was Christian in their school, however some of these students came from schools in which other students had commented positively about the Christian nature of their school:

[*Is there anything Christian about your classes?*] There is a little bit in biology - a little bit - tiny, tiny, tiny bit - there is also a little bit in physics, - I don't know why (Interview 13a Senior Student Group). I don't think there is much Christian education - there is a prayer meeting every recess run by students, but apart from devotions, there isn't anything (Interview 13b Senior Student Group).

[*What do you observe as 'Christian' about this school?*] ... There isn't much emphasis [on Christianity] in most subjects, but there is in religion classes which are compulsory for first semester. … The Christian perspectives in other subjects depends on the teacher, but there isn't much. There used to be more in the junior years. Even our ethics class is pretty much just morality, without much that is Christian in it (Interview 20 Senior Student Group).

On a number of occasions, senior students within the same school had different perspectives toward the Christian character of their school. The following were consecutive comments:

> [*Are there aspects of school you don't enjoy?*] There is too much Christian stuff - in school-work, in roll call - in English - we are doing euthanasia, and every article is from a Christian perspective - we don't get any balance (Interview 36a Senior Student Group).

> I don't get much Christian input in my classes at all! I came from [a grammar school] and this school was supposed to be Christian. My roll call teacher doesn't do anything Christian at all (Interview 36b Senior Student Group).

The interview responses of the following three senior students to the issue of the Christian nature of their school - *'In what ways do you notice that the school is Christian?'* also revealed inconsistencies in approach within their school:

> Some teachers talk about God, others don't. Some teachers just teach what you need to know. My biology teacher always gets onto Christian things (Interview 68a Senior Student Group). I don't really have any Christian input in my subjects except for 'Christian Living' (Interview 68b). Same for me - it [Christian input] is fairly rare if it happens (Interview 68c). … It also comes up a lot in Lit. [Literature] - it is good that it comes up (Interview 68a). It used to come up a lot in junior years in Years 8 and 9 (Interview 68b).

Differences Between Survey and Interview Responses

Taken together, the survey responses of all constituent groups indicated that teachers presented their lessons from a Christian perspective, and that schools both supported and challenged teachers in this task. In the interviews, however, there was a broad range of perspectives regarding the extent to which the curriculum in various CPC schools revealed a Christian character. According to both teachers and senior students, there was diversity in both quality and approach by teachers, (even within the same school), in their endeavours to teach from a Christian perspective.

The Study by Potts

Notwithstanding these concerns that CPC schools have not consistently developed Christian curriculum to the extent that pioneers might have anticipated, or that teachers are not capable of consistently presenting such a curriculum, there is, nevertheless, evidence to indicate that it remains

at some level, a characteristic of CPC schools. Potts (1998) for example, explored the official perspectives of four fundamentalist Christian schools in Australia, three in Bendigo and another in nearby Swan Hill. One of these schools was Son Centre CPC school which commenced in 1993. He found similarities and differences in the ways these four schools understood the Christian faith in relationship to curriculum and enrolments, but his study noted the CPC school's emphasis on Christian curriculum:

> Son Centre had the most pronounced faith-based curriculum documents. It entitled its curriculum policy as 'Living in God's World.' It aimed to develop a 'distinctive curriculum based on a Christ-centred approach to education' which 'differs from the humanistic child-centred philosophy of secular education' and to 'train the children to think from a Christian perspective in their approach to life.' [Son Centre Prospectus, p.4] (Potts, 1998)

In this study involving four Christian schools, the CPC school stood out as a school which was aiming to provide a distinctive curriculum based on a Christ-centred approach.

Professional Development of Teachers and Christian Curriculum in CPC Schools

One of the indicators that a distinctively Christian curriculum remains an important issue in CPC schools is the amount of time, energy and money that is devoted to professional development. There are national (generally biennial) teacher conferences, annual state and regional conferences and international teacher conferences every 4 years. Many CPC schools also give their staff up to two student-free weeks per year, often described as "curriculum weeks" to emphasise that these weeks are concerned with the development of Christian curriculum, not merely administration matters or even classroom preparation.

A school executive responded to *'How does the school seek to keep its vision for distinctively Christian education alive?'*:

> The school seeks to keep its distinctively Christian vision alive through an emphasis on professional development in staff meetings, in-service courses, post graduate study, conferences and parent meetings. There is always an attempt to promote the vision in the school's literature (Interview 86 Executive).

CPC schools also support a teacher training body, NICE which offers Graduate diplomas and Masters level courses in education, accredited through the Department of Education and Training of the NSW government. NICE received a number of positive comments from teachers and executives during the interviews:

[*Is NICE encouraged?*] Yes, some of us have been involved. The discouraging part is the sheer load of work for people in Christian education. People who are new to Christian education are strongly encouraged to get a good undergirding, a good understanding of Christian education, but people have very little time (Interview 34 Executive).

[*Does the school's professional development program support the school's emphasis on Christian education?*] We have NICE. It is compulsory to do a unit. I struggle with that - for someone like me who has four children ... it is more challenging and valuable for me to talk rather than to write essays and read books. ... Having said all that, it is important that we have that knowledge -NICE helps keep us on the boil (Interview 49 Teacher)

[*What do you think of the proposed coalition between CPCS and CCS?*] I was encouraged at the Principals' conference that in considering the possible amalgamation, the principals voted to strengthen the wording that committed any united movement to the provision of teacher education, ie to the continuation of NICE in some form. ... It is important to us to be distinctive, not so that we can say that we are the best, but for God's glory. There is a need to think more deeply, hence the NICE courses (Interview 51 Principal)

[*As principal, how do you keep the vision for distinctively Christian education alive?*] I study with NICE or at least make the attempt. I have a team (staff and board) who challenge me and my thinking and I encourage them to do this. I try to get some thinking time and attend conferences (Interview 54 Principal)

The best thing I ever did was NICE - I now see patterns that I never saw before. In some ways it affirmed many things which I knew intuitively (Interview 71 Teacher)

 [*What is [this school] doing well?*] … Our inservicing and induction of new teachers is improving, but we could do better. Schools are dynamic - we need to keep listening to God and people, but we need to keep on our original foundation or we will get off the track. We need to continue to encourage young teachers to study through NICE. (Interview 75 Executive).

[*What dangers do you see ahead for Christian schools, particularly CPCS schools?*] Finding sufficient numbers of Christian teachers could be a problem, therefore NICE is important, eg, the passion of [two middle-school teachers] - how are we going to keep

generating this? ... [the two middle-school teachers] are shining lights. ... Their work on integral curriculum with NICE has been first-rate. (Interview 82 Principal)

It was also the researcher's observation that the teachers who had studied at NICE were more able than most of their colleagues to articulate a Christian worldview and comment on how it affected their teaching:

"The Most Difficult Task" - Engagement and Struggle

The substantial research undertaken by Long (1996) on themelic Christian schools raised concerns regarding the legitimacy of the claims made by themelic schools that they are offering Christian curricula. As noted in Chapter 3, Long (1996) reported that "staff at themelic schools are unable to establish what a 'Christian perspective' is" and that there is no really distinctive curriculum in themelic schools (p. 31).

The research undertaken for this study supports the view that there are teachers who struggle to clearly articulate their understanding of a Christian perspective on curriculum and there are schools where attempts to present a distinctively Christian approach to curriculum can best be described as inconsistent. The results of this research do not however, support the contention that this situation applies to all teachers or all schools. The difficult nature of this task has never been underestimated by CPC educators. Mechielsen (1978) for example, argued:

> Developing a distinctively Christian approach in the construction of curricula is without doubt the most difficult task faced by parents and teachers in all Christian schools. It is one thing to announce that such and such a Christian school has opened where the Lord is central and where all activities have the common goal of praising His great name, but quite another to put this into practice in the day-to-day operation of the school as an educational institution (p.2).

Teachers and executives continue to struggle with the difficulties outlined by Mechielsen and highlighted by Long, but it would be reasonable to argue that CPC schools are characterised by their engagement with the issue of Christian curriculum. Many CPC schools would willingly use the word 'struggle' to describe this engagement as it reflects the difficulty of the task and also the sense that the task is incomplete.

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIA. Thoroughly and Distinctively Christian Curriculum

Foundational Value IIIA. of CPC schools was *'The school curriculum should be thoroughly and distinctively Christian.* Regarding this foundational value:

The resources that CPC schools allocate to professional development and graduate teacher training together with the comments of teachers and executives, highlight the commitment of school leaders and teachers in CPC schools to the preparation and presentation of thoroughly and distinctively Christian curriculum. However, the interview comments also indicate that the task is one which teachers struggle to realise, due to a combination of time limitations and a lack of expertise. The provision of a thoroughly and distinctively Christian curriculum then, continues to be pursued in CPC schools, with an attendant awareness that at this point in the development of CPC schools, the prevailing practice of this value is tentative and inconsistent.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIB. Christian Curriculum - The Bible as Foremost Guide.

In Chapter 4, the CPC pioneers' commitment to the Bible as the authoritative guide in all aspects of schooling was established. This section of the study will consider the prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the third foundational value, 'Christian Curriculum', in particular *IIIB. The Bible should be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling.*

Survey Responses

The survey questions addressed perceptions of the frequency of use of the Bible in the classroom, and a variety of questions concerned with perceptions of the importance of the Bible in a CPC school. In order for the Bible to operate as 'guide' in a school, it needs to be actually used in the school and it needs to be held in high regard. There was strong support in the surveys for the view that CPC schools *'teach students to understand the Bible'* (Parents = 83%, Senior Students = 71% and Graduates = 75% agreement). There was also support for the view that schools prepared teachers to teach from a biblical perspective. 62% of teachers disagreed that they had *'not really been adequately prepared to teach from a completely biblical perspective'.*

However the statement that *'The Bible is often used in my class'* received 58% agreement from teachers and only 23% of senior students and 25% of graduates agreed that *'The Bible is often used in my English class'.*

These responses are summarised in Table 5:11, below.

Table 5:11 - The Bible as Guide.			
Survey Items	**Group**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
This school teaches students to understand the Bible	Parents (n=82)	A = **83**%	SA =23% MA =60% MD =15% SD =2%
	Students (n=403)	A = **71**%	SA =20% MA =51% MD =23% SD =6%
	Graduates (n=70)	A = **87**%	SA =30% MA =57% MD =11% SD =1%
In my teaching, I have <u>not</u> really been adequately prepared to teach from a completely biblical perspective	Teachers (n=295)	A = **38**%	SA =8% MA =31% MD =45% SD =17%
The Bible is often used in my class	Teachers (n=293)	A = **57**%	SA =24% MA = 33% MD =36% SD =7%
… The Bible is often used in my <u>English</u> class	Students (n=400)	A = **23**%	SA =5% MA =18% MD =34% SD =44%
… The Bible was often used in my <u>English</u> class	Graduates (n=69)	A = **25**%	SA = 6% MA = 19% MD =46% SD =29%
I (My parents) chose this school for my children (me) because the Bible is of central importance to all that happens	Parents (n=82)	A = **87**%	SA =70% MA =17% MD =10% SD =4%
	Students (n=401)	A = **66**%	SA =23% MA =43% MD =20% SD =14%
	Graduates (n=70)	A = **89**%	SA =57% MA =31% MD =9% SD =3%
The Bible is essential for students to understand science	Parents (n=82)	A = **67**%	SA =40% MA =27% MD =22% SD =11%
	Teachers (n=293)	A = **77**%	SA =42% MA =35% MD =19% SD =5%
	Students (n=402)	A = **45**%	SA =16% MA = 29% MD =29% SD =26%
	Graduates (n=70)	A = **61**%	SA =27% MA = 34% MD =30% SD =9%
The Bible is essential for students to understand the world / human society	Parents (n=82)	A = **94**%	SA =73% MA =21% MD =2% SD =4%
	Teachers (n=295)	A = **94**%	SA =69% MA =25% MD =5% SD =1%
	Students (n=403)	A = **57**%	SA =20% MA =37% MD =25% SD =18%
	Graduates (n=69)	A = **80**%	SA =51% MA =29% MD =15% SD =6%

A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree   **SA** = Strongly Agree   **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree

n = Number of participants completing survey. Max. possible was 82 parents, 405 senior students, 70 graduates and 296 teachers.

When teachers' responses to '*The Bible is often used in my class'* are broken down however, the picture looks somewhat different. 87% of infants teachers, 84% of primary teachers and 68% of middle-school teachers agreed that the Bible was often used in their classrooms, but only 44% of secondary teachers agreed that they often used the Bible in class. See Table 5:12 below.

This decreased use of the Bible in the senior years of schooling could be a consequence of the increased emphasis in secondary education in Australia on external assessments and examinations, with the result that there is less time to consider the Bible. It could also, however, be due to a greater emphasis in the senior years of CPC schools on biblical principles rather than biblical text. It is important nevertheless, to note that the use of the Bible in the classroom is greatest when students are youngest and diminishes as students progress through the school.

Table 5:12 - Teachers' Use of the Bible in Different Sections of the School.		
"The Bible is often used in my class" - <u>Teachers</u>		
Section of School	**Agree** (Number)	**Agree** (%)
Infants teachers (n=23)	20	**87%**
Primary teachers (n=51)	43	**84%**
Middle-school teachers (n=28)	19	**68%**
Secondary teachers (n=170)	75	**44%**
Other teachers (n=8)	5	**63%**
Total (n = 280)	**162**	**58%**
Agree = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree		

An experienced secondary teacher suggested that although the Bible itself might not be used habitually in secondary classrooms, it is nevertheless prominent:

> The Bible is important, although it doesn't mean that every lesson revolves around the biblical text, but it is central to the school (Interview 19 Teacher).

A senior student from his school agreed:

> The Bible is important - the school is based on it (Interview 20 Senior Student Group).

The comments of a teacher in this school illustrated the relative freedom she had in the primary section of the school to use the Bible:

> We have devotions every day, including a Bible verse that students learn for the term, … students lead the devotions on a roster. … The Bible can be used in any topic, but particularly integrated topics can be used for focus, eg., government in Australia; what does God say about living together? The rules are found in the Bible - what does God say about these things? (Interview 22 Teacher).

A primary teacher in another school had a similar approach:

> The Bible is central to our teaching. We use it in devotions and in general. Just using the energy topic as an example, where we look at the creation of the sun. We often just pick up the Bible. It is part of my teaching and the school's teaching - "Let's get the Bible out and look at such and such". It is not unnatural or unusual to do this (Interview 49 Teacher).

It was clear from many of the interviews that schools use the Bible as the foundational document and guide in a variety of ways. The following comments from teachers, executives, parents and senior students across a range of schools, illustrate this:

> A lot of planning occurs with biblical principles in mind. A lot of staff refer to the Bible quite a bit. The Bible is upheld by the principal and the deputy at assemblies and when counselling. The Bible is ever present … its there (Interview 37 Teacher).

> I have found staff devotions most useful. … People read a Bible passage and / or share their testimony. This isn't a denominational school which is helpful for me as a Christian. The staff have different backgrounds and yet the Bible is central and it answers needs (Interview 64 Teacher).

> Our school attempts to have a biblically informed curriculum and to apply biblical principles in areas such as relationships. For example, our complaints or conflict resolution policy (Interview 86 Executive).

> Yes, the Bible is central, that comes out pretty well at this school. I am challenged by others about the role and centrality of the Bible. I don't think there is much pragmatism there. I think the Bible is central (Interview 93 Executive)

> As a parent I see everything being based on the Bible and biblical principles (Interview 10 Parent).

> Objectives change over time, but the keys ones don't, for example Christ-centred and Bible-based (Interview 69 Parent).

> Non-Christian kids are comfortable in expressing their opinions. Some are boisterous and some tune out. It is good because we talk about how the Bible applies to life.

> Christian kids talk openly to non-Christian kids. Even when disagreements occur, students accept each others point of view (Interview 65 Senior Student).
>
> The Bible is the basis for all classes (Interview 89 Senior Student Group).
>
> With the Bible being the foundation, the school is open to people considering everything from a Christian perspective (Interview 95 Senior Student).

At a national level, CPCS Ltd. continues to recognise that the Bible is of fundamental importance for the schools. The following statement was composed in 2000, as the CPC school movement considered its identity against a background in which it was considering the possibility of combining with other Christian schools to form one organisation:

> A Christian Parent Controlled school is a Christ-centred and Biblically-based educational community . Therefore, … its teaching and learning is based on the Bible with a view to the development of a biblical world and life view (CPCS Ltd, Biblical Basis and Charter).

Thompson, who has held various teaching and leadership positions in CPC schools since 1980 (including executive director of CPCS Ltd.), made a number of comments regarding the role of the Bible in CPC schools worthy of consideration. Currently employed part-time by a CPC school and by the NICE while undertaking doctoral research focused on the role of the Bible in Christian schools, Thompson has concentrated his attention in particular on the relationship between teachers' (in Christian schools) views of the Bible and their approaches to teaching from a biblical perspective. In response to the question *'Is the Bible important in CPC schools?',* he maintained:

> I have no doubt at all that CPC schools agree on the Bible's foundational importance
>
> … The Bible is traditionally used in three ways in CPC schools -
>
> - Devotionally - where the Bible is used in the context of commitment, worship and prayer.
> - In Curriculum - where the Bible is studied as a separate subject such as biblical studies.
> - Perspectively - where the Bible give perspective to every subject and every aspect of the curriculum. [Personal communication, Thursday, 21 June 2001].

According to Thompson, the 'perspectival' use of the Bible dominates in CPC schools, followed by its use devotionally and then its use as curriculum. In response to *'How well is the Bible used in CPC schools?',* Thompson suggested*:*

> It is not used well - in that perspectival use dominates CPC schools - there is a big assumption that teachers have a good biblical theology, but that is not the case and there is an assumption that maths teachers can apply the Bible to their subject. The

teachers' perspectives are therefore not primarily biblical, they are from Van Brummelen or Weeks [widely used texts on Christian education]. … When teachers are under pressure, given the frantic and urgent nature of life in schools, the perspectival focus quickly dies and teachers fall back on what keeps kids quiet. ...

One of the problems is the lack of theological perspective amongst teachers. In the days when people debated and read the Bible, it was OK to ask what the Bible's view was on Economics, but in the last half century, the breadth of Bible reading has gone. A greater emphasis on the Bible in the Curriculum would assist teachers as well as students, because it would force teachers to read the Bible themselves. We need to look at our teacher training and that is a huge task - we need to assist teachers with training and in-service to develop a biblical theology. ... In good schools, there are strong leaders who have good biblical perspective which they are communicating to staff. The fundamental issue is not that the Bible isn't espoused and loved but that perspectival emphasis can't succeed without teachers being trained. [Personal communication, Thursday, 21 June 2001].

The issues raised by Thompson are significant and need to be addressed by CPC schools if they are maintain the integrity of this foundational value in the life of their schools.

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIB. Christian Curriculum - The Bible as Foremost Guide

Foundational Value IIIB. of CPC schools was *'The Bible should be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling.*

Survey and interview responses indicated regarding this foundational value that the Bible has retained its status as the pre-eminent document in the life of CPC schools and that it is used as a guide to provide perspective in curriculum and other areas of school life. The Bible is widely used by teachers in the classroom, in particular at the junior levels in schools. There is some evidence, however, that many teachers do not possess a thorough or deep understanding of the Bible and might not therefore, be capable of using the Bible effectively or credibly in their classrooms or in other curriculum areas.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIC. Christian Curriculum – The Centrality of Christ

In this study, 'Christ' and 'Jesus' were regarded as being close to interchangeable, with the qualification that 'Christ' was usually used more formally, for example in the designation used in this foundational value and 'Jesus' was used in less formal contexts, for example in the survey questions and some of the interviews. During the interviews, members of the constituent groups also used both terms interchangeably. This use of the terms is consistent with the notion that Christ is a title, rather than a name (Link, 1975, p. 53). Similarly Rengstorf (1975) who suggested that:

> The name Jesus Christ actually consists of a proper name, Jesus, and title, Christ … a formula which expresses the faith of the earliest Christians in Jesus of Nazareth as their master and Lord. … This formula achieved a permanent central significance for all subsequent generations of Christians (p.330).

In Chapter 4, it was established that one of the foundational values of CPC schools was derived from a religious outlook that believed that Christ ought to be central in every area of life including schooling. This section of the study will consider the prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the third foundational value, 'Christian Curriculum', in particular *IIIC. Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities.*

One of the difficulties with categorising the foundational values of CPC schools is that some elements which are separated for the purpose of analysis are not divided easily. This is certainly the case for the importance of the Bible and the centrality of Christ. The following comments by Mechielsen on the occasion of his retirement from the position of Executive Director of CPC schools illustrate this:

> Christian Parent Controlled school communities seek to have and promote a world view shaped by the Bible. … A Christian school is not worthy of the name if it does not seek to ensure the Bible is directive for learning and for the learning community. This means taking God's Word seriously because it reveals Christ for whose purposes the school exists and because it is instructive for learning and life. Our biblical basis says, the Bible is 'the only absolute rule for all faith and conduct, and therefore also for the education of our children at home and at school.' In a world whose message is that

people make their own meaning, we acknowledge that meaning can only be found in Christ. The Bible points to Christ 'in whom all things hold together'. Acknowledging Christ will help our children to make sense of the world in which God has placed them (Mechielsen, 2000).

Mechielsen, who with many of those involved in the CPC school movement, is from the Evangelical - Reformed tradition, speaks of the Bible, which as the Word of God is of fundamental importance for school communities and which reveals and points to Christ. His comments reveal that the motifs of the centrality of Christ and the authority of the Bible in CPC schools are inextricably linked. Hence, while the significance of the Bible and of Christ are dealt with separately for the purposes of this study, they are often considered as interdependent entities by those involved in CPC schools.

Another concern to be considered when dealing with a concept that involves phrases such as 'Christ-centred', is that of discerning meaning, and resisting cliché. Many Christian traditions maintain that their policies and practices are centred on Christ, but what this denotes is not clear. Similarly, CPC schools do not make transparent what is meant when they suggest that Christ is central to their practices or structures. There is no doubt that this value is important to those involved in CPC schools and that it is sincerely sought, but it is not easy to discern or assess. The difficulty here may be due in part to the application of a transcendent value – the centrality and honouring of Christ – to the everyday routines and activities of a school.

Evidence that this foundational value has ongoing importance in CPC schools was found in the survey responses of parents, senior students and graduates, that indicated that all these constituent groups believed that parents sent children to a particular CPC school *'because the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything'. (See Tables 5:4 and 5:5).*

Other survey questions also elicited data relevant to this value. Noteworthy, because of the sharp contrast in outcomes, were the responses of teachers to the statements *'In my teaching, I seek to put Jesus at the centre of everything'* which attracted 91% agreement and *'In my teaching, I refer to Jesus in most lessons'* which received 28% agreement. Teachers appeared to be making a distinction between Christ being central in their approach and Christ being explicitly referred to in lessons. The 91% agreement indicates strong support for the contention that teachers are attempting to maintain

Jesus as central in their classroom practice. See Table 5:13 below. This issue could be further investigated profitably, but it appears that teachers have discerned that Christ does not have to be named in order to be central.

Table 5:13 - The Centrality of Christ			
Survey Items	**Group**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
In my teaching, I seek to put Jesus at the centre of everything	Teachers (n=294)	**A = 91%**	SA = 46% MA = 46% MD = 9% SD = 0%
In my teaching, I refer to Jesus in most lessons. [Jesus is / was referred to in most lessons]	Teachers (n=295)	**A = 28%**	SA = 6% MA = 21% MD = 58% SD = 15%
	Students (n=402)	**A = 34%**	SA = 6% MA = 27% MD = 49% SD = 17%
	Graduates (n=70)	**A = 33%**	SA = 4% MA = 29% MD = 47% SD = 20%
A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree **n** = Number of participants completing particular survey items. Max. possible was 296 teachers, 405 senior students and 70 graduates.			

The following responses which were typical of the approach of parents and teachers, relate to the centrality of Christ in the school, particularly the importance of teachers demonstrating the love and character of Christ through their treatment of students:

> *[What do you understand by Christ-centred education?]* Everything during the day is related to Christ, Christ's Word and God. Everything is related to biblical principles, forming the child's understanding about everything in God's world (Interview 29 Parent)

> *[Do you see any dangers ahead for our schools in maintaining their distinctively Christian approach?]* ... Not everyone realises that the care factor that attracts them to the school is really the Jesus factor, especially the non-Christians (Interview 53 Parent).

> *[What are your expectations of teachers in a Christian school?]* A Christian influence should come through the way that lessons are presented. I expect teachers to be well grounded in Christian perspectives and expect staff to keep bringing these issues to children's minds, keeping kids thinking. … to bring Christ into the classroom. Teachers are critical to a Christian school (Interview 69 Parent).

[What do you understand by Christ-centred education?] The students see the life of Christ through our behaviour - there is no point talking if you are not showing. The teachers as role models should reflect and shine Jesus through God's Spirit (Interview 4 Teacher)

[What do you understand the school's priorities to be?] The school's priorities are giving kids the love of Christ - the relationship aspect. It is not always explicit and it is not always easy. I can see a lot of Christ in the teachers and that is what is most important. Kids must be able to see it (Interview 26 Teacher).

[What do you understand your school's priorities to be?] The school's priorities are to raise kids to be servants of Jesus Christ first. Academics shouldn't be put first, rather servant-hood - how can I serve Jesus and others? (Interview 73 Teacher).

[*What do you understand this school's priorities to be?]-* Christ-centredness in everything we do (Interview 91 Staff - Parent).

Apart from the area of relationships, however, very few of those interviewed were able to articulate how a commitment to the centrality of Christ should apply to curriculum issues. One principal though, made the following observations.

[How does the centrality of Jesus find expression in your school?] I think our motivation and rewards policy is our best expression of this. … Families have withdrawn their children because of this policy and its expression in our lack of academic competition. We are saying to kids that there is no other reward for you in this, but Jesus. There is a nervousness and discomfort in this. … We want first and foremost for kids to be disciples of Jesus and we actually mean this when we say it.

A significant problem for us is the failure of staff to live out what it means to follow Jesus. We are all pretty well off and middle-class and to that extent we are kidding ourselves. It is a bit of a nightmare to think we are training kids to be like Jesus. You live with that tension though. It is heart-warming to see therefore, young [ex-teacher] and his wife [working in a mission for the poor]. They are sign-posts for the rest of us (Interview 94 Principal).

While many CPC school teachers' understanding of the application of a Christ-centred approach to schooling remains undeveloped, it is nevertheless clear that the movement as a whole remains committed to supporting and developing this objective. This is evident in the 2000 Charter for Christian Parent Controlled Schools:

A Christian Parent Controlled school is a Christ-centred and Biblically-based educational community. Therefore, the lordship of Christ is foundational in all its teaching and learning - The lordship of Christ is expressed in its philosophy, policies, curriculum, and approaches to teaching and learning (CPCS Ltd, Biblical Basis and Charter, 2000).

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IIIC. Christian Curriculum - The Centrality of Christ

Foundational Value IIIC. of CPC schools was *'Christ should be central to, and honoured in all school activities'*.

The surveys and interviews of constituent groups in CPC schools indicated almost universal support for this value, that Christ is and ought to be central to everything that occurs in a CPC school. However, there was not a consistent approach on the part of parents, teachers or school leaders concerning the application of this value in the life of CPC school communities. Beyond a personal commitment to Christ on the part of those who were involved in CPC schools, it was not clear what this value meant in practice. It appears that 'Christ-centredness' is primarily a statement of faith for CPC schools, an objective that is revered and acknowledged in most or all aspects of a school's operation, but difficult to identify.

Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IV. Christian Teachers

The employment of Christian teachers was one of the foundational values concerning which there was no ambiguity in the early documents or from the perspective of the pioneers. The presentation of a thoroughly and distinctively Christian curriculum and the modelling of Christian behaviour could only occur if the schools were staffed by Christian teachers. This section of the study will consider the prevailing practice of CPC schools in relation to the fourth foundational value, 'Christian Teachers' - *IV. All courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers.*

Survey Responses

It is evident from Table 5:14 that there was strong agreement from all constituent groups that *this school employs only Christians as teachers.* Even amongst senior students who were noted earlier to be divided regarding their affection for their teachers, exhibited strong support for this item.

		Table 5:14 - The Employment of Christian Teachers	
Survey Items	**Group**	**Agree**	**Distribution of Responses**
This school employs only Christians as teachers	Parents (n=80)	**A = 96%**	SA = 51% MA = 45% MD = 1% SD = 3%
	Teachers (n=296)	**A = 98%**	SA = 90% MA = 8% MD = 1% SD = 1%
	Senior Students (n=401)	**A = 87%**	SA = 53% MA = 34% MD = 9% SD = 4%
	Graduates (n=68)	**A = 96%**	SA = 74% MA = 22% MD = 4% SD = 0%

A = Strongly Agree + Mostly Agree   **SA** = Strongly Agree   **MA** = Mostly Agree **MD** = Mostly Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree
n = Participants completing survey items. Max. possible - 82 parents, 296 teachers, 405 students, 70 graduates.

Interview Responses

This perspective was also strongly supported in the interviews with all constituent groups who agreed not only that the present practice was that only Christians were employed, but also that it was of critical importance to CPC schools that this should continue to be the practice. Parents commented on the importance of Christian teachers:

> *[Are Christian teachers necessary?]* Christian teachers are necessary because I would want to know if my kid went to a teacher, that they would be a Christian role model. I wouldn't want a teacher in private conversation to disagree with my views (Interview 2 Staff-Parent).

> *[Are you aware of dangers ahead that might impact on the school's ability to maintain its distinctive, Christ-centred approach to education?]* An external danger that might impact on this school could be legal, ie, legislation against Christian schools, particularly the Christian schools policy of employing Christian teachers only (Interview 29 Parent).

> *[Do you see any dangers ahead for our schools in maintaining their distinctively Christian approach?]* It is really important that we ensure that all our teachers are

Christians. I know of another Christian school where one of the fathers went on a camp and discovered that not all the teachers went to church. If we are not strong on this, we will be gobbled up. (Interview 53 Parent).

Teachers concurred on this issue with parents:

[*A distinctively Christian curriculum?*] We claim to have a Christ-centred curriculum. Teachers don't just talk curriculum, so we can't let non-Christian teachers loose with our kids - even if they are great teachers with a lot of educational pizzazz (Interview 3 Teacher).

[*Can you see dangers ahead for as Christian schools seek to preserve their distinctively Christian approach?*] The key is board membership and staff appointments. As long as those things are in place, every thing is OK. I can see what has happened in church schools and even in new Anglican schools. They don't seem to realise that you need Christian people in place (Interview 34 Executive).

[*Are there dangers that this school needs to be wary of if it is to maintain its distinctively Christian approach?*] The distinctiveness of a Christian school is to do with the personnel. Whenever you have committed Christian people who have banded together, committed to the educational task of raising kids up for God and good, then that distinctiveness will remain (Interview 46 Teacher).

During the interviews, senior students, even when critical of some of their teachers nevertheless maintained that they were Christians:

[*What kind of relationships do students have with teachers?*] Students can approach any teacher for assistance. Teachers believe the same thing. They are definitely Christians; the interview process ensures that (Interview 16 Senior Student Group).

[*Are all the teachers at [your school] Christians?*] All the teachers are Christians, but some are more than others, both in terms of behaviour and how they talk. A lot of teachers relate everything to Christianity, but some never do (Interview 83 Senior Student Group).

The extent to which employing Christian teachers was important was apparent in the response of one of the principals to the question, *'Is it necessary to have Christian teachers?'*:

You can't have a biblical perspective if you haven't got Christian teachers and therefore you are short-changing kids (Interview 94 Principal).

He was then asked: *'Is it possible for a sympathetic non-Christian to bring a biblical perspective?'*:

> If all the gospel informed at this school was our piety and not our living in the world, then we would be short-changing kids. We would be involved in dualism. We have a purpose. The difference might not always be evident, but we would definitely not accept Marcus Loane's [former Anglican Archbishop of Sydney] dichotomy of 'give me a good non-Christian teacher before a poor Christian teacher'. I say let's get a reasonable Christian teacher and train them! Kids might get a better science mark under Marcus Loane's approach, but what is our goal? And they might not too! (Interview 94 Principal).

The CPCS Ltd Charter summarises this perspective:

> All teachers [in a CPC school], acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, subscribe to the biblical basis, and as his disciples strive to be obedient to His Word in all areas of their lives (2000).

In her research on leadership in Australian Christian schools, Collins (1997) reached a similar conclusion regarding the importance of Christian teachers in Christian schools: "Christian staff are considered to be the key ingredient in ensuring a distinctive Christian school … Staff are generally selected if they can prove themselves to be genuine in their commitment to Christ" (p.12).

These perspectives are consistent with the notion that any explicitly values-based school will employ teachers who adhere to those values. In the case of CPC schools, the values arise from a particular Christian religious commitment. As Ormell (1980) suggests:

> The main rule which it is desirable for teachers to observe is that any special, personal kind of indirect value emphasis they are accustomed to placing in the classroom should be broadly consistent with the prevailing educational value-system of the school, as well as with the school's presupposed first-order social, moral, and aesthetic values. If this rule is not observed, the work of such a teacher ... is likely to be ineffective (p. 87).

Identification –Prevailing Practice of Foundational Value IV. Christian Teachers

<u>Foundational Value IV.</u> of CPC schools was 'All courses should be developed and taught by Christian teachers'.

On the basis of survey and interview responses, it is clear that the prevailing practice of CPC schools in regard to the employment of Christian teachers is consistent with this foundational value. All constituent groups strongly agreed that their schools employed only Christian teachers while some parents and many teachers and executive staff were able to articulate the connection between Christian teachers and other foundational values such as support for Christian families and / or the delivery of a Christian curriculum. This research indicated that CPC schools continue to hold the conviction that it is not possible for a teacher to have a different worldview, particularly a different view of the significance of Christ and the Bible, and teach effectively in a CPC school.

Foundational Values and Prevailing Practices: An Imaginary Reflection

In order to bring the issues raised in the last two chapters into sharp focus, and to consider the relationship between CPC schools' foundational values and prevailing practices, the researcher will endeavour to introduce a mythical pioneer into a contemporary CPC school (which possesses an amalgam of characteristics borrowed from the 12 CPC schools involved in this study). The pioneer has stepped out of a 1969 planning meeting for Rivergum CPC School (the year before it commenced) into the school itself, now 32 years old and is being conducted on a tour of the school by the Principal.

The pioneer, is at first, a little overwhelmed. He had not expected a school of this size. There are about 700 students from pre-school age to matriculation and the buildings are stylish and neat, the grounds well maintained, and the equipment is a 'sight to behold'. There are computers everywhere and so many photocopiers – not a typewriter or an inky 'gestetner' or 'fordigraph' to be seen. The school appears to be so prosperous!

The pioneer is somewhat concerned to learn that not one of the executive staff and only four of the fifty teachers belong to the Reformed Churches of Australia. The student population reflects a similar proportion of students from the RCA. The Principal herself appears to know something of the thinking of Kuyper, but informs the pioneer that only a few of the staff would know who he was.

Over lunch in the staff room, the pioneer is aware that many of the staff lack an understanding of the 'covenant' or of the sovereignty of God. At this stage the pioneer wonders if the values that so many of the Dutch migrants fought for so tenaciously when establishing CPC schools have so quickly been lost.

In the staffroom, the discussion turns to a national conference that many of the teachers are attending which has as its focus the equipping of teachers in Christian schools for their task of preparing young people to be disciples in a materialistic age. When a young teacher sitting across the table describes a course she is taking through the NICE that is concerned with biblical

perspectives on worldviews and teaching, the pioneer begins to feel a little more positive about the fruits of his and his contemporaries' labour.

The principal takes the pioneer on a tour of a few classes after lunch. In the first, a primary class, the teacher is talking about God having created the dinosaurs. There is an animated discussion involving teacher and students about God's goodness and the variety and beauty of the Creation and the Creator. In the next class, senior secondary English, there is also animated discussion. On this occasion the focus is a contemporary Australian novel which the class is preparing for a matriculation exam, but there is no mention of God, the Bible or Christian perspectives.

As he continues to observe and ask questions, the pioneer begins to feel a little more at home in the school. He sees evidence of the values that the CPC school pioneers believed were critical. The school's community relations officer is observed interviewing prospective parents and telling them about the Christian distinctives of the school and of the school's commitment to the concept of parents taking responsibility for their children's education, hence parent control. The parents are asked about their own religious commitment and whether they can give whole-hearted support to a school with an ethos which is explicitly Christian.

The principal informs the pioneer that the school board is composed of Christian parents from a number of denominations who meet monthly and take their responsibility for governing on behalf of other parents quite seriously. Having met some of the teachers over lunch and observing a number of classes, the pioneer is not surprised to hear that only Christians who are supportive of the school's ideals are employed as teachers, even though this means on occasion having to wait to fill a vacancy or asking teachers to teach out of their normal teaching area.

The pioneer concludes that much has changed since CPC schools were first dreamed and planned in the 1950s and 1960s. This school is much more affluent than he had expected, there is an abundance of sophisticated technology and most significantly, the 'Dutch' presence is almost non-existent.

However, the school appears to be engaged in a serious struggle to maintain many of the original values – parents continue to control the direction of the school via the school board, Christian

families continue to be the school's focus via the enrolment policy, Christian teachers are employed and they are encouraged by the school to teach in overtly and intelligently Christian manner, supported by conferences and by financial assistance for post-graduate study through NICE. He is unsettled by the affluence though, is it just a matter of the increased standard of living and the increased government support over the past 30 or 40 years or is it more than that?

Chapter Six

Conclusion and

Recommendations

Chapter Overview

This study of CPC schools has identified four foundational values and has found in general, that the prevailing practices of these schools are consistent with these values. It has also found that there are genuine and determined attempts to maintain these values in a changing cultural and educational context.

A number of issues need to be addressed, however, if CPC schools are to safeguard and cultivate these values. This chapter summarises the relationship between the prevailing practices and foundational values of CPC schools and makes a number of recommendations for the consideration of local (school-based) and national leadership.

Values Worth Fighting For?

Will the Foundational Values Remain at the Heart of CPC Schools?

This study has focused primarily on the values of those involved in Christian Parent Controlled schools in Australia, both the foundational values of the pioneers and early leaders and the values of those currently involved in these schools. The issue under consideration at this point is whether these values will continue to be the values that undergird and determine the character and ethos of CPC schools in the future.

Values are not held by individuals or institutions in a vacuum. They are held in dynamic tension with other individuals or institutions that hold similar or conflicting values or, as is more likely to be the case, an amalgam of both. A typical Christian Parent Controlled school is co-educational, with families that are predominantly of European origin and middle-class. It attracts government funding, undergoes government inspections of facilities and teaching programs, uses and usually adapts government syllabuses and has students who wear school uniform, who sit for external exams or assessments and who are involved in sporting and debating competitions. A typical CPC school conducts award nights for successful students and has teachers who belong to trade-unions and

whose pay and conditions are determined by legislated awards. None of these characteristics or structures are value-free and all impinge to a greater or lesser degree on a CPC school's ability to realize their foundational values.

How can CPC school leadership at national and school level ensure that their schools' practices continue to be determined by their foundational values and that competing values are held in tension as subsidiary values?

<u>Christian Institutions That Have Lost Their Distinctive Values</u>

The question of Christian institutions losing their foundational values is not just a theoretical possibility. In 'The Dying of the Light', Burtchaell (1998) considered a number of colleges and universities in the United States which were founded under the auspices of Christian churches from a number of different traditions, and discovered that most no longer had any relationship with their sponsoring church. He wrote:

> This study also invites reflection on … the dynamics whereby any Christian endeavour can unwittingly be decomposed. It offers enough folly at close range for readers to be stimulated to reflection about the circumspection and canniness we all require to review and renew earlier commitments without forfeiting them unawares. So much that is onward is not upward (xii).

Burtchaell offered a sober warning that any Christian institution can relinquish its purpose and identity. Clearly, Christian schools are not immune from this danger and CPC schools face a range of internal and external pressures that could eventually lead to dissolution of the educational approach which they have based on their foundational values.

In a paper made available at an early CPCS Focus Conference, Courthial (1975) warned:

> The question is asked, and must be asked: how could Christian institutions established by sacrifices of every kind by faithful, confessing Christians, how could they degenerate … and come to minimise, dispute and contest if not actually corrupt and reject the basic principles on which they had been founded? (p.1).

The Catholic tradition has also considered this issue. As noted briefly in Chapter 5, Baker and Riordan (1998) argued that Catholic schools in the USA were on the verge of becoming elite private

schools that educate vast numbers of non-Catholics, children from wealthy families, and increasing numbers of children with no religious background. They maintained that faith was taking second place to academic preparation and that American Catholic schools had drifted from their origins as common schools for all Catholic children. Their assessment was that:

> The eliting of Catholic schools is not just a function of increases in wealthy, white, non-Catholics. Significant numbers of wealthy Catholics and of wealthy families of all races are now sending their children to Catholic schools. … Nothing changes a school more than a large change in the social make-up of its students. And perhaps nothing changes a religiously oriented school more than the presence of large numbers of non-believers. … it is well known that the families of students from higher social classes are more demanding customers and are often very adept at seeing that schools provide what they want. And students and parents from higher socio-economic groups are particularly keen on rigorous academic preparation. As Catholic schools continue to attract and adapt to such students, priorities at the schools change radically (1998, p.19).

Arthur (1995) also expressed concerns regarding the situation in the UK, where "a number of Catholic schools have pursued a line of development which is not in harmony with their founding principles. In effect their governors, parents and teaching staff have lost sight of the Christian principles which support the ideals of Catholic education" (p. 225). He described a holistic Catholic school as one which "commits itself to pursuing the meaning, values and truths specific to the Catholic faith", (p. 253) but he despaired that many Catholic schools were so committed to a pluralistic approach that they had become indistinguishable from other schools.

The issues raised by Burtchaell, Baker and Riordan, and Arthur are pertinent to CPC schools. If colleges in the USA and Catholic schools in the USA and the UK can lose their distinctively Christian values then there is no reason *per se*, to think that CPC schools are impervious to this gradual disintegration of foundational values.

Maintaining the Foundational Values of CPC Schools

The foundational values of CPC schools will not continue to provide impetus and direction to their practices without deliberate intervention. The values face too much competition and are in a sense too demanding, to survive without being nurtured and explicitly promoted and esteemed.

The Pressures of the Marketplace

CPC schools face a range of external pressures, in particular from 'market' forces in conjunction with the pervasive ideology of economic rationalism. Education is increasingly seen as critical to economic competitiveness, to economic reconstruction and to micro-economic reform (Marginson, 1997, pp. 123-124; OECD, 1987, pp. 69-70). Schools in Australia are increasingly employing public relations officers and are using a wide range of media to increase or at least maintain enrolments. How will CPC schools respond to this situation?

If the marketplace assesses the commodity, which is education, on the basis of academic performance and on the physical appearance of students (the way students wear school uniform) for example, and CPC schools make a decision to compete in that marketplace, then they are in real danger of displacing their foundational values. There is no inherent conflict between the foundational values of CPC schools and academic achievement or stylishly presented students. A problem arises, however, when these values are so emphasised in order to compete with other schools, that they become by default, the values that determine school policy and practice.

The Pressures of Middle-Class Priorities

Another, related pressure is that of the priorities of constituent families themselves. A number of years ago, Schaeffer (1976) wrote to an audience composed primarily of evangelical Christians, concerning the danger of adopting the core commitments of personal peace and affluence which he argues would have serious negative impacts on western democracy and political freedom (pp. 205-227). If a desire to live undisturbed by others and the accumulation of an abundance of possessions are amongst the important values of many in western society, including the kinds of Christians who send their children to CPC schools, then a 'Christian' curriculum that endeavours, for example, to engage students with issues of structural injustice will struggle. The pressure on schools to conform to the aspirations of middle-class families was identified in the study of Catholic schools by Baker and Riordan (1998) and it is evident that CPC schools will have to devise ways of resisting an uncritical acceptance of these aspirations if their own foundational values are to remain in place.

Pressures from the Demanding Nature of the Values Themselves

Mechielsen's (1978) comment regarding the difficulty of constructing Christian curricula (p.2) was noted in Chapter 5, and it could be maintained that the whole venture of Christian schooling in a culture which has different values, is inherently problematic.

The fundamental task of implementing the foundational values in a CPC school classroom is conceptually difficult for a start. Preparing students for matriculation exams in Physics or Art while at the same time using the Bible as guide and having Christ as central is a complex and demanding task. It would be easy to underestimate the pressure on teachers to ensure not only that students are ready for an external exam, but that students understand and adopt a faith perspective to the particular issue(s) under consideration. Throughout the school, teachers have the responsibility of assisting students to critically consider all aspects of their culture, including for example, the infatuation of many Australians with sport, their attitudes to commemorations such as Anzac day, and their approaches to festivals such as Christmas. This task of critiquing widely accepted icons requires a great deal of insight and cultural sensitivity.

Similarly, it is not a simple task to communicate, not only to the school community, but also to the wider educational community that the school places greater emphasis on training students to live as discerning disciples of Christ in the area of economics, for example, than it places on the achievement of a matriculation mark which would allow students to enter a tertiary economics course.

Maintaining a fee structure which is 'affordable', while at the same time providing appropriate resources under a regime of partial government funding is another demanding constraint accepted by CPC schools which are seeking to uphold their foundational values. Finally, this study has shown how difficult it is for many schools to be governed or 'controlled' by parents. In many ways it would be much less demanding for school communities to accept the model of other schools in which the major decisions in schools are left to the 'professional' educators.

An Anticipation of Struggle Rather Than Success

The pioneers and early leaders understood that the venture of Christian schools would be a struggle, particularly in the establishment phase. It was noted in Chapter Two that in the first issue of the RCA magazine, *Trowel and Sword* (October 1954), an article was written by a Dutch migrant who upon visiting her child's class was confronted by a disparity in the values being espoused in this government school and her own. While the students were encouraged in a laudable aspiration to *"*make the world a better place to live in", the issue for this woman was that God had no place. She concluded with the rallying call "Shall we, immigrant wives, together fight the fight for the Christian school? For our children and our grand-children?"

It is interesting to note that Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) used similar language in a number of publications such as *What's worth fighting for in education?* in which they consider the values that educators ought to be fighting to maintain. The pressures outlined above, as a result of the 'the market', 'middle-class priorities' and 'demanding values' together with the studies of American Christian colleges and of a number of Catholic schools indicate that the foundational values of CPC schools need to be actively contended for, if they are to survive.

There are indicators that CPC schools believe that their foundational values are worth fighting for. The decision at the annual general meeting (AGM) of CPCS associations, in July 2001, to not join Christian Schools Australia (CSA) was based on their commitment to the principle of parent control and the maintenance of a distinctively Christian curriculum by way of teacher professional development. A decision to join CSA would have had economic and political benefits for CPC schools, but the AGM of CPCS associations considered that their foundational values should not be compromised.

As a result of the preceding discussion, a number of recommendations have been constructed with the purpose of assisting CPC schools maintain their foundational values in a changing educational and social context in which these values are likely to come under increasing pressure. The following section will briefly consider the prevailing practices of the foundational values and then make specific recommendations in relation to these values.

Recommendations for Leadership - Christian Parent Control

Foundational Value I – "Christian parents will control the direction and purpose of each school."

Prevailing Practices

This study identified four foundational values with a number of subsidiary values, but it was the first foundational value, 'Parent Control', that caused the greatest discussion and controversy during the interviews in these schools.

While the study found that 'parent control' as a concept, is strongly endorsed in CPC schools, it also found evidence of concerns with its practice. All eleven principals interviewed for this study, spoke either of their own negative perceptions or experiences of parent control, or were aware of difficulties in other CPC schools. The principals' views ranged from a complete rejection of the parent control model on the basis that "*Parents are not well placed to direct education*" (Interview 5, Principal), through more common and less forthright concerns, such as school boards "*need to be aware that their role is not to run the place but to keep it on the right track*" (Interview 51, Principal), to the qualified support of one principal, "*if you are going to have an educational institution such as a school, then parent control is the best system to allow parents to fulfil their God given responsibilities*" (Interview 94, Principal).

One of the main concerns raised in this study related to the concerns of executive staff, particularly principals, that inexperienced or authoritarian boards produce schools that suffer from a lack of security, stability and clear direction. Related to this was a concern that 'control' was sometimes emphasised at the expense of partnership, the result of which was a lack of consultation with staff who felt undervalued and discouraged. Many respondents regarded the word 'control' itself as problematic, as it implied that parents occupied a position of power, rather than partnership in their relationship with staff. This was more likely to be the case for parents who did not have an understanding of the history and original purpose of the concept of 'parent control'.

Some of the difficulties facing CPC boards are shared by boards of other non-profit organisations, as the suggestions of Carver and Carver (1997) directed to board members indicate:

> Your job is not so much to review last month, keep up with your staff's unending supply of activities, or to be managers at arms length. Your job is to lead, to be spokespersons for meaningful values, to model bigness of spirit, to be a powerful representative of your ownership ... and ultimately to see that tomorrow is created in a better image (p. 186).

Carver (1997) (in a separate publication) argued that vision rather than details, should occupy the time and energy of boards.

> A good governance model should 'hold and support vision in the primary position' ... The focus of the Board needs to be on purpose, not specifics. ... the governing Board is a guardian of organisational values ... [with an] external rather than inward focus ... all functions and decisions should be rigorously weighed against purpose (p. 17).

These comments highlight the importance for school boards of maintaining a focus on values and adopting long-term perspectives rather than concentrating on the routine details of a school's operation, which should be left to staff. It is likely that the situation facing boards of non-profit organisations described above, is exacerbated in CPC schools as a result of the inclusion of the word, 'control', which adds weight and even sacred sanction (as it is based on an interpretation of Scriptural injunctions), to the inclination of boards to involve themselves in the specifics of administration rather than broader values and purposes.

Another concern raised during the research was the widespread and decreasing lack of involvement of parents in CPC schools. A number of respondents attributed this to a changing societal context in which many families had both parents, or the only parent, working. Others suggested that there was a general malaise involving not only parents but staff and that school communities were increasingly passive, uninformed and unenthusiastic about association membership. In addition, most students were generally unaware of the role of parents or the way the 'parent controlled' system works.

Many of the pioneers and early leaders made it clear, particularly during the interviews, that their original focus was not authoritarian control. Hoekzema for example, suggested that 'partnership' rather than 'control', was a better description of the relationship between parents and teachers and that in the establishment of CPC schools many of the foundational values "were forged in relationship between teachers and parents" (Pioneer Survey 5). These issues lead to the first recommendation.

> ### *Recommendation I - Partnership*
>
> That an emphasis on partnership be affirmed at all levels of the teacher - parent relationship in CPC schools, from consultation between parents and teachers at board level, through to the involvement of parents in the classroom.

CPC schools need to ensure that relationships within the school community are based on mutual respect and clear understandings of roles and responsibilities. The expertise and experience of teachers should be acknowledged, including the invitation to give advice and to be involved in board committees.

Teachers for their part, need to include and encourage parents wherever feasible, in their planning, in classroom activities such as reading, tutoring, and in 'out of school' activities such as sport, excursions and camps. It is important that teachers adopt an attitude of 'welcome' toward parents if healthy partnership is to be forged and maintained in CPC schools.

One of the schools that formed part of the study holds a biennial 'partnership conference' involving parents and staff, the purpose of which is to involve parents in discussions with teachers over educational issues. This school was concerned that teachers alone, were receiving significant input regarding Christian education and wanted the parents to participate with teachers in discussing values, purposes and practices in Christian education. Such a conference or some alternative forum to encourage parents and staff to discuss the broader purposes of Christian education could be considered by all CPC schools.

> ### *Recommendation II - Communication of the Foundational Values*
>
> That school leadership, including school boards and executive staff, promote 'parent control' to their school communities as control by parents of their school's purpose and vision, rather than a control of daily procedures and practices.

In conjunction with this, it is important that school leadership emphasise that the purpose of this control is to ensure that the school provides a thoroughly and distinctively Christian education and that the relationship between teachers and parents is primarily one of partnership. Particular strategies also need to be devised in order to inform non-teaching staff and students of their school's foundational values and vision.

It is noteworthy that the leadership of Kuyper and Van Prinsterer, whose worldview and vision have had a significant impact on the identity and character of CPC schools in Australia, were men who put a premium on the clear articulation of Christian values and on their development and implementation in education and the wider society of their time. If the foundational values of CPC schools are to continue to impart energy and life to these schools, to their policies and practices, then they also need to be clearly articulated, frequently revisited and reinterpreted, and regularly conveyed to succeeding generations of CPC school communities.

Recommendation III - The Induction of New Members

That induction programs, focused on the foundational values and tailored to the needs of particular groups, are developed for new members of each school community (parents and staff), and for those recently elected or appointed to positions of responsibility, including association members, board members and executive staff. A simple induction into the life of the school, its values and ethos should also be organised for new students at the beginning of each school year.

Given the critical role of the school board, it is essential that CPC schools appoint appropriate people to their school boards. It is equally important that an induction process be put in place for these board members. In the light of earlier comments, it is critical that board members understand their role in terms of guardians of the school's vision, rather than as managers of particular issues and daily routines. In conjunction with this, school boards need to have a clearly delineated relationship with the principal, so that the principal knows without ambiguity, where his or her responsibility starts and ends. Carver (1997) also suggests that this is a generic concern for the boards of non-profit organisations. He uses the language of 'accountability leakages' and 'diffuse authority' where

boards that have established a CEO, (or principal in the case of a school), continue to relate in their official capacity with other staff and do not have a clear relationship with their CEO in terms of each other's authority (p. 10). This issue has resulted in the following recommendation.

Recommendation IV - The Responsibilities of the Principal and the School Board

That an education program based on the findings of this research be initiated to establish a harmonious working relationship between the school board and the principal.

The relationship between the board and the principal, particularly their respective areas of responsibility and authority need to be established and adhered to. In particular, members of school boards should communicate in an official capacity with school staff only through the school principal.

Recommendation V - A Change of Name to Reflect a Change in Reality.

That Christian Parent Controlled Schools (CPCS) change their name to Christian Parent Governance Schools (CPGS) or Christian Parent Coordinated Schools (CPCS).

This recommendation arises from the difficulties that a number of schools face as a result of an over-zealous application, or misunderstanding of 'parent control' and should be considered in conjunction with previous, related recommendations such as I, II and IV in particular.

The effect of *Recommendation V* is that the word *'control'* is replaced by a more appropriate and contemporary term, *'governance'*, which emphasises the responsibility of parents to concern themselves with the more significant, global issues as they seek to guard their school's values and vision or the term, *'coordinated'* which acknowledges the responsibility of parents in their children's education but removes the negative connotations associated with 'control'.

Recommendations for Leadership - Christian Families

Foundational Value IIA) "Christian Parent Controlled Schools should support Christian families in the task of educating their children."

Foundational Value IIB) "Christian Parent Controlled Schools should be affordable for Christian families."

Foundational Value IIC) "Christian Parent Controlled Schools should provide a protected environment for children in which the beliefs and values of Christian families will not be undermined".

Prevailing Practices

The research indicated that the population of CPC schools remains primarily children from Christian families (of the Protestant tradition) and that these families continue to look to the school to support their Christian beliefs and values. During the interviews, parents generally indicated that their school succeeded in providing an environment which encouraged and protected their family's beliefs and values. The only exceptions to this were the concerns expressed by a small number of parents that an increasing proportion of children from non-Christian families was having a negative impact on students' behaviour and on their attitudes to Christianity.

It was also evident from the research that most Christian families can afford to send their children to CPC schools, largely as a result of the willingness of those on lower incomes to 'sacrifice' and/or avail themselves of the various forms of fee relief that are provided by CPC schools. However, the concerns of a number of parents and teachers, which were given greater import by the comments of two of the pioneers, together with the experiences of other faith-based educational institutions, led credence to the view that unless CPC schools are intentional in their approach, it is likely that they will not be able to resist the pressures to drift into the provision of an education which has as its focus, middle-class and upper-middle class (Christian) families. This approach would likely result in the adoption of conservatism and elitism at the expense of a radically Christian approach to schooling and would eventually lead to the exclusion of those in the Christian community who are

on lower incomes. When CPC schools were established in the 1960s and 1970s, their priorities, many of them 'religious', ran counter to those held by the wider community. There is a danger that the increased acceptance of CPC schools by the wider Australian community and the subsequent rapprochement will lead to increased acceptance by CPC schools of the values of the wider Australian community and thus to a gradual erosion of their own Foundational Values.

Recommendation VI - Enrolment Policy

That CPC schools maintain an enrolment policy that focuses on and supports their traditional constituency, ie, Christian families.

Recommendation VII – Affordability

That school communities consciously and deliberately establish strategies and policies to enable lower income earners in the Christian community to access education for their children in CPC schools.

Recommendations for Leadership - Christian Curriculum

Foundational Value IIIA) "The school curriculum will be thoroughly and distinctively Christian."

Foundational Value IIIB) "The Bible will be the foremost guide in all areas of schooling."

Foundational Value IIIC) "Christ will be central to, and honoured in all school activities."

Prevailing Practices

Thoroughly and Distinctively Christian Curriculum

The significant expenditures of time, effort and money devoted to enabling staff to develop and implement Christian curriculum by way of in-services, pupil-free curriculum weeks, national and regional conferences, and a tertiary teacher training institution (NICE) are all evidence of CPC schools' commitment to this Foundational Value. This has not resulted however, in a coherent or systematic approach to Christian curriculum either between, or even in individual CPC schools. Commitment to school-based curriculum development rather than a centralised system has also influenced this.

In Chapter Two, a number of concerns were expressed with the effectiveness of translating the values of Christian schools into curricular practices and the subsequent impact on the faith of students. Concerns were expressed for example, with the 'deep structures' of traditional schooling (Hull, 1993) the compulsory and institutionalised nature of schooling (Hill, 1978) and the commitment of many Christian schools to tradition rather than Christian conviction (Boerema, 2000). In conjunction with these issues, the response of 93 of the 388 students (24%) who responded to the question '*What do you enjoy least about this school?*' with 'teachers' or matters related to teachers informs the following recommendation.

> ### *Recommendation VIII – Overcoming the 'Deep Structures of Traditional Schooling'.*
>
> That CPC schools are creative and adventurous in their approach to curriculum in order to maintain their foundational values and overcome some of the negative implications of the 'deep structures of schooling', particularly the involuntary nature of institutionalised schooling.

Programs and approaches need to be developed, both within and outside the classroom that promote the schools' values to students in compelling and effective ways. Approaches that CPC schools are already employing to engage students and promote their values include: overseas mission trips, indigenous learning incorporating a visit to an indigenous community, camping (leadership, city and

survival camps), interstate excursions, service learning (service week or service activities incorporated into the regular program), student (servant) leadership, peer mediation, older student 'buddies', cooperative learning, non-competitive assessment, portfolio assessment, student-led conferencing, middle-schooling and a 'non-reward' motivation policy. The importance of alternative approaches was emphasised by one of the principals who suggested that in order to turn out educated disciples who are going to have an impact on their culture, that CPC schools "need to continue to be rat-bag radicals" (Interview 94 Principal).

The Bible as Foremost Guide

While there were inconsistencies across and within schools regarding the Bible's use in the classroom, it continues nevertheless, to be regarded by all groups as the guide in all areas of schooling. The explicit use of the Bible in the classroom diminishes as students move from junior to senior sections of their school.

Thompson's perspective (see Chapter 5), needs to be considered. He suggested that the Bible was not used well in CPC schools because on the whole, teachers did not possess a comprehensive biblical theology; hence it was unlikely that they would be able to apply the Bible competently in their teaching. He suggested further that the Bible should to be taught as a separate subject in schools and that teachers needed training to understand, use and teach the Bible effectively.

Recommendation IX - Use of the Bible as Guide

That a professional development program be developed for teachers on the use of the Bible as indicated in the research.

A shallow understanding and application of the substance and principles of the Bible significantly compromise a CPC school's ability to maintain its foundational values. School communities need to equip teachers to use the Bible accurately and effectively in different contexts, for example in classroom (subject) teaching, in 'devotions', and in deriving principles for pedagogy or discipline policies. Schools may need to spend professional development time, including time at Focus Conferences enabling teachers to understand and apply the Bible. The NICE should also offer at least one core unit in the Bible for all teachers, involving biblical theology and hermeneutics.

The Centrality of Christ

The research indicated that CPC schools espoused a commitment to developing an educational worldview in which Christ was central. Teachers maintained that they sought to put Jesus at the centre of their teaching and parents asserted that they sent their children to CPC schools because the school sought to put Jesus at the centre of everything. Most of those involved in CPC schools, however, find it difficult to articulate what this value means in practice.

At a school level, time and finances need to be employed to support teachers in this task. In addition, the biennial Focus conference should continue to receive support and the National Institute for Christian Education (NICE) should be regarded as a fundamental priority. Consideration could also be given to state-based curriculum development, possibly coordinated by NICE which could subsequently feed into a biennial national curriculum summit using the personnel involved in the state-based committees and held in conjunction with the Focus conference.

Recommendation X - The Centrality of Jesus Christ

That priority is given by leadership to working out the implications of CPC schools' commitment to honouring Jesus and maintaining an approach in which Christ is central.

While this value is upheld sincerely as a statement of faith, its expression as an educational purpose is quite complex. Unless these implications are seriously considered, the phrase "Christ centred" is at risk of degenerating into cliché and becoming discredited.

Given the complex and difficult task of implementing a distinctively Christian curriculum with the Bible as guide and Christ central, substantial assistance needs to be given to teaching staff.

Recommendation XI - Professional Development of Staff

That support for teachers in their task of developing and implementing distinctively Christian curriculum continues to be given high priority in all CPC schools and by the national organisation.

Recommendations for Leadership - Christian Teachers

Foundational Value IV – "Christian teachers will be employed to develop and teach all courses."

Prevailing Practices

The research shows that there is little doubt that CPC schools regard the employment of Christian teachers as an imperative. Policies and practices have been put in place to enable schools to employ teachers who are Christians and whose understanding and experience of the Christian faith is in harmony with the schools' values and theological positions. Most schools also have policies that non-teaching staff must also be Christians.

Recommendation XII - The Employment of Christian Staff.

That in order to maintain their distinctive character and ethos, CPC schools maintain a fundamental commitment to the employment of Christian teachers.

Christian teachers are essential for the development and presentation of Christian curriculum and the maintenance of a Christian ethos in a school. In view of impending teacher shortages in Australia, schools may need to consider creative ways of attracting appropriate Christian staff, such as offering teacher scholarships to suitable graduates from their own school. *Recommendations III* and *VIII*, involving induction and professional development, impact on the quality of Christian teachers and are also relevant here.

Recommendations for Leadership - Principals

As an addendum to Foundational Value IV, the researcher has added recommendations regarding the principals of CPC schools because of their crucial position in CPC schools. School principals represent and act as advocate for the parents and the school board to the staff and also assume this

responsibility in reverse. The principal fulfils a critical role in these schools and an effective principal requires insight, sensitivity and courage.

CPC schools need principals who possess knowledge of CPC schools' foundational values and practices because it is the school leader who puts the policies and procedures in place that will or will not reflect those values and who directs the school on a daily basis in a myriad of areas. It is the principal who sets up programs through which staff are inducted and who meets new parents and introduces them to the school's values and ethos.

Principals also need the courage to resist market pressures and enrolment demands in order to be faithful to the school's values and vision. Leadership in a CPC school involves leadership in an area that gives priority to theological or transcendent values which require translation into a schooling context. It also involves leadership under the authority of a school board which necessitates the acumen to know as particular issues arise, whether positive and decisive leadership (in line with foundational values) is required, or whether consultation with and deference to the school board is appropriate.

Recommendation XIII - Principals.

That resources are allocated to ensure that an appropriate person is chosen as principal and that ongoing support and professional development is provided.

The resources of the national office of CPCS Ltd. and/or the resources of other Christian schools such as another respected principal should be utilised in the selection of a principal. This person's most important attribute should be a strong commitment to the school's foundational values. *Recommendation IV* is also an important aspect of a school's support for a principal and in the context of the preceding comments regarding their difficult role, it is important that the principal receive tangible signs of support from their school board.

Further Research

This research has raised a number of issues which CPC schools could profitably research if they wish to strengthen a values based education focused on those commitments made by pioneers and early leaders.

Principals and Boards

As a result of the disquiet expressed in this study, particularly by principals, of the ways in which parent control is given expression in many CPC schools, it is clear that there would be value in research which considered the roles and relationships of principals and school boards. The purpose of such research would be to assist this schooling movement to manage more competently and with greater integrity (in relation to their foundational values) an area of considerable importance, but presently also, evident tension.

Graduates

Another study that would provide valuable feedback for CPC schools would be a deeper probing of the relationship between their foundational values and the values of their graduates. Graduates' choice of career, their attitudes to others in their community, their personal values and their perception of the influence of their school in shaping their own attitudes and values could be considered. Benefit might also be derived from a comparison of the values and attitudes of graduates and senior students of CPC schools with graduates and senior students of other schools in order to consider the particular influence that CPC schools are having on their students.

Teachers and Students

Another fruitful area of research is the operation and conduct of classrooms in a CPC school. The relationship between a teacher and a student is the critical juncture in which the aspirations of CPC schools are actually realised or fall short and the classroom is the most common setting in which this relationship finds expression. A consideration of the Christian character of the curriculum, with a

particular focus on lesson content, classroom structure and pedagogy employed by the teacher, would provide valuable feedback in assessing the extent to which the foundational values of CPC schools are being fulfilled. The strong response, both negative and positive of senior students toward their teachers (see Tables 5:6 and 5:7) is another indicator that this is an important area that could provide valuable information for CPC schools as they seek to give expression to foundational values such as those which focus on Christ-centred relationships.

The Final Questions

The issues being addressed in this chapter regarding the foundational values and the future of CPC schools can be encapsulated in the following questions:

Will CPC schools remain at the periphery of Australian culture, celebrating many of the values of the wider community, but at the same time resisting and challenging middle-class, materialistic values that are in conflict with their own foundational values?

Will CPC school communities remain committed to an educational system in which Christian parents control the direction and character of their children's schooling?

Will CPC school communities remain committed to supporting Christian parents fulfil their educational responsibility before God?

Will CPC schools continue to employ Christian teachers to develop and deliver a thoroughly and distinctively Christian curriculum, guided by the Bible, with the fundamental purpose of providing an educational environment in which Christ is honoured?

Bibliography

References

Adler, P.A. and P. (1991). Stability and flexibility - Maintaining relations within organized and unorganized groups. In W. Shaffir, and R. Stebbins, (Eds.), Experiencing fieldwork (pp. 173-183). Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.

Akers, G. (1997). Book Reviews. Journal of Research on Christian Education, 6(2), 283-289.

Arthur, J. (1995). The ebbing tide: Policy and principles of Catholic education. Leominster, Herefordshire, UK: Gracewing.

Austin, A. (1963). Selected documents in Australian education 1788-1900 Carlton, Victoria: Pitman Publishing.

Austin, A. (1972). Australian education 1788 – 1900: Church, state and public education in colonial Australia (3rd ed.) Carlton, Victoria: Pitman Publishing.

Babbie, E. (1986). The practice of social research. (4th ed.) Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing.

Bagnall, D. (1999, August 24). Values-added education. The Bulletin (with Newsweek), 117 (6188), 20-25.

Baker, D. and Riordan, C. (1998, September). The eliting of the common American Catholic school and the national education crisis. Phi Delta Kappan, 16-23.

Barcan, A. (1980). A history of Australian education Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

Barcan, A. (1988). Two centuries of education in New South Wales Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press.

Barkley, A. (1972). Secular education in Australia. Vox Reformata, 17-24.

Barkley, A. (1990). Parent control – Voices from the past. Nurture 24 (1), 14.

Barnett, K. (1990). A study of the implementation of the Christian perspective in the curriculum at a conservative evangelical Christian school Unpublished master's thesis, University of New England, Australia.

Bartsch, M. (1998). The dialogue of theology and education: Clarifying the role of Lutheran confessional theology for Australian Lutheran school education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Ascot Vale, Victoria.

Beare, H., Caldwell, B. and Millikan, R. (1989). Creating an excellent school. London: Routledge.

Beare, H. and Slaughter, R. (1993). <u>Education for the twenty-first century</u>. London: Routledge.

Beck, L. (1994). <u>Reclaiming educational administration as a caring profession.</u> New York: Teachers College Press.

Behr, A. and MacMillan, R. (1966). <u>Education in South Africa</u>. Pretoria, South Africa: Academia.

Bentley, P. (1997, September). Non-government schooling in Australia. <u>Pointers: Bulletin of the Christian Research Association, 7(3),</u> 4-6.

Berkhof L. (1958, reprint 1971). <u>Systematic theology</u>, London: Banner of Truth Trust.

Blomberg, D. (1980a). Toward a Christian theory of knowledge. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 41-59). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Blomberg, D. (1980b). Curriculum guidelines for the Christian school. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 111-122). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Blomberg, D. (1980c, July). If life is religion, can schools be neutral? <u>Journal of Christian Education, 67</u>, 5-20.

Blomberg, D. and Lambert, I. (1998). <u>Reminding: Renewing the mind in learning.</u> Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Macquarie University.

Boerema, A. (2000). <u>Educating faithfully: Is it possible in schools?</u> Unpublished discussion paper - Issues 2000, Conference at High Leigh, England.

Bongers, G. (1974). <u>The organisation of a school.</u> Paper presented at the 2nd "Education in Focus" Conference in 1974. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Bouma, G. (Ed.). (1997). <u>Many religions, all Australians: Religious settlement, identity and cultural diversity</u>. Kew, Victoria: The Christian Research Association.

Connell, W., Debus, R. and Niblett, W. (Eds.). (1966). <u>Readings in the foundations of education</u>.

Bratt, J. (1998). <u>Abraham Kuyper: A centennial reader</u>. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Bratt, J. and Wells, R. (1997). <u>Piety and progress: A history of Calvin College</u>. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans. In R. Hughes and W. Adrian (Eds.), <u>Models for Christian higher education:</u>

strategies for success in the twentieth-first century (pp. 141-162). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Brooks, J. (1976). Christian education – In retrospect. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1976. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Burgess, R.G. (1991). Sponsors, gatekeepers, members, and friends - Access in educational settings. In W. Shaffir, and R. Stebbins, (Eds.), Experiencing fieldwork (pp. 43-52). Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.

Burns, R. (1997). Introduction to research methods. (3rd ed.). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Burnswoods, J. and Fletcher, J. (1980) Sydney and the bush - A pictorial history of education in NSW. NSW Department of Education.

Burtchaell, J. (1998). The dying of the light - The disengagement of colleges and universities from their Christian churches. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans.

Carrick, J. (1995, April). Towards the year 2000 - Directions and challenges in education. Paper presented to annual meeting of NSW Chapter of Australian College of Education.

Carver, J. (1997). Boards that make a difference: A new design for leadership in non-profit and public organisations. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Carver, J. and Carver, M. (1997) Reinventing your board: A step by step guide to implementing policy governance. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Castle, E. (1961). Ancient education and today. Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books.

CCSL. (1995). What is Christian community schooling? (I &II): Effective Christian education. Wentworthville, NSW. CCSL publication.

Christian Community Schools Limited. (1993). What is Christian community schooling? Introductory lectures. Pendle Hills, NSW: CCSL publication.

Christian School Reporter 1 (3) - December 1967.

Clark, M. (1989). Beyond turbulent emptiness. In A. Watson and J. Relich (Eds.), Education towards 2000: Common values in a diverse society (pp. 17-23). Sydney: NSW Institute for Educational Research.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1989). Research methods in education. London: Routledge.

Collins, V. (1997). <u>The integrity of leadership: Being a principal in a Christian school</u>. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of New England, Armidale, Australia.

Congregation for Catholic Education. (1988). <u>The religious dimension of education in a Catholic school: Guidelines for reflection and renewal</u>. Australian edition. Homebush, NSW: St Paul Publications.

Connell, W., Debus, R. and Niblett, W. (Eds.). (1966). <u>Readings in the foundations of education</u>. Sydney: Ian Novak.

Connell (1980). <u>A history of education in the twentieth century</u>. Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre.

Courthial, P. (1975). <u>Threats to the Christian character of the Christian institution</u>. Paper presented at the International Reformed Conference, Potchefstroom University, September 1975, and distributed at Christian Parent Controlled Schools' "Education in Focus" Conference, December 1976.

CPCS Ltd. (January, 1966) <u>Memorandum and Articles of Association</u>.

CPCS Ltd. (National Curriculum Summit). (1992). <u>Transforming Christian Education</u>. Monograph.

CPCS Ltd. (October 1994). Your school for your child. In <u>On Being Magazine</u> (p. 10). Australia.

CPCS Ltd. (September 2001). <u>Reinvigoration Taskforce</u> - discussion paper.

Cresswell, J. (1994). <u>Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches</u>. Thousand Oaks, California, USA: SAGE Publications.

Crooks, J. (2001). <u>What is your destination</u>? Unpublished paper by the Chairman of Southern Cross Educational Enterprises.

Curry, N. (1978). Anglican educational enterprise. In J. Cleverley, (Ed.), <u>Half a million children: Studies of non-government education in Australia</u> (pp. 47 - 76). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Danner, D. (1997). The University of Portland: Center of Christian humanism? In R. T. Hughes and W. B. Adrian (Eds.), <u>Models for Christian higher education: Strategies for success in the twentieth-first century</u> (pp. 47-68). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Deakin, R. (1989). <u>The new Christian schools.</u> Bristol, UK: Regius Press.

Deakin, R. (1997). 'Opting In' under the 1993 education act: A case-study. In K. Watson, C. Modgil and S. Modgil (Eds.), <u>Educational dilemmas: Debate and diversity. Vol. 3: Power and responsibility in education</u> (pp. 254-263 and 266-268). London: Cassell.

Dean, J. (Ed.). (1987). Calvin Christian School 1962 -1987: The first twenty-five years. [Calvin Christian School publication].

De Boer and Oppewal (1997). American Calvinist day schools. In D. Oppewal (Ed.), Voices from the past: Reformed educators (pp. 265-291). Maryland, USA: University Press of America.

Deenick, A. (1985). A union of schools. Nurture 19 (2), 13-15.

Deenick, A. (1989). Christian Parent Controlled Schools Pty Ltd. Nurture 23 (3), 4-6.

Deenick, A. (1991). Church and School. In J. Deenick (Ed.), A church en route - 40 years Reformed Churches of Australia (pp. 237-251). Geelong, Victoria: Reformed Churches Publishing House.

Deenick, J. (1972, June). Letters to the editor The Christian School Reporter 6 (3), 11.

Deenick, J. (Ed.). (1991). A church en route - 40 years Reformed Churches of Australia (pp. 237-251). Geelong, Victoria: Reformed Churches Publishing House.

Deenick, J. (1985). Christ centred education. Nurture 19 (2), 16-17.

De Graaf (1971, June). Because we disagree with Pilate. The Christian School Reporter 5(2), 4-7.

De Graaf (1973, March). The Bible in the classroom. The Christian School Reporter 7(2), 4-11.

De Graaf (1973, June). The Bible in the classroom (II). The Christian School Reporter 7(3), 8-11.

De Graaf (1977). Creation and – or creation versus redemption. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1977. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

De Jong, L. (1976). Parent involvement in the school. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1976. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

De Jong, N. (1979). Education in the truth. New Jersey, USA: Presbyterian and Reformed.

De Jongste, H. and Krimpen, J. (n.d). The Bible and the life of the Christian (H. E. Runner, Trans.). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Groen Van Prinsterer Society. (Later published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., New Jersey, USA).

De Ruiter, G. and Hoekzema, R. (1967, Dec.). Synodical report of deputies for Christian education. The Christian School Reporter 1(3), 18-19.

De Ruyter, D. (1999). Christian schools in a pluralistic society. Interchange 30/2, 213-233.

Dickson, L. (Ed.). (1995). Maranatha Christian School: To be continued - A history of Christian education. Doveton, Victoria: Association for Christian Education of Dandenong.

Donvale CPC School (circa 1974). (Brochure). A Christian School - Now What Is That? - Box Hill Christian School Association, published before the Donvale CPC School commenced in 1975.

Dooyeweerd, H. (1979). Roots of western culture. Toronto, Canada: Wedge Publishing Foundation.

Doyle (1992). Preface. In C. Leavey, M. Hetherton, M. Britt and R. O'Neill (Eds.), Sponsoring faith in adolescence. Newtown, NSW: E.J. Dwyer.

Duyker, E. (1987). The Dutch in Australia. Melbourne: AE Press.

Dwyer, B. (1993). Catholic schools - Creating a new culture. Brunswick, Victoria: E. J. Dwyer and David Lovell Publishing.

Edlin, R. (1998). The cause of Christian education (2nd ed.). Northport, Alabama, USA: Vision Press.

Education for Social Justice Research Group. (1994). Teaching for resistance. Adelaide, South Australia: Texts in Humanities and the Centre for Studies in Educational Leadership.

Fackerell, E. (1972, September). Qualifications essential for a Christian teacher. Christian School Reporter, 6(4). 4-6.

Fackerell, E. (1973). Teaching science in a Christian perspective. Paper presented at the 1st "Education in Focus" Conference in 1973. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Fackre, G. (1983). Evangelical, evangelicalism. In A. Richardson and J. Bowden (Eds.), A new dictionary of Christian theology (pp. 191-192). London: SCM Press.

Fahy, P. (1992). Faith in Catholic classrooms. Homebush, NSW: St Paul Publications.

Flynn, M. (1985). The effectiveness of Catholic schools. Homebush, NSW: St Paul Publications.

Flynn, M. (1993). The culture of Catholic schools. Homebush, NSW: St Paul Publications.

Flynn, M. and Mok, M. (2002). Catholic schools 2000: A longitudinal study of year 12 students in Catholic schools 1972-1982-1990-1998. NSW: Catholic Education Commission.

Fowler, S. (1972, June). The questions about an educational creed. The Christian School Reporter, 6(3), 14-16.

Fowler, S. (1973a). <u>The creed and the school</u>. Paper presented at the 1st "Education in Focus" Conference in 1973. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Fowler, S. (1973b, June). Coping with contemporary thought. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 7(3)</u>, 4-7.

Fowler, S. (1973c, December). New or old? <u>The Christian School Reporter, 7(5)</u>. 4-5.

Fowler, S. (1976a). <u>Christian educational distinctives</u>. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1976. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Fowler, S. (1976b, November). The Dutch influence: For better or for worse? <u>Trowel and Sword</u>, 8-10. Geelong: Reformed Churches of Australia.

Fowler, S. (1980a). Foundations. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 1-39). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Fowler, S. (1980b). The Bible in the school. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 131-137). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Fowler, S. (1990). <u>Christian schooling: Education for freedom</u>. Potchefstroom, South Africa: Potchefstroom University,

Fowler, S. (Ed.). (1996). <u>Equipping teachers for curriculum change in post-compulsory years: Research report.</u> Christian Schools National Consultative Group: Canberra.

Fowler, S. (1998). Christian Education at the end of the twentieth century. In D. Blomberg and I. Lambert (Eds.), <u>Reminding: Renewing the mind in Christian education</u> (pp. 182-199). Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Macquarie University.

Frisken, R. (2000). Lecture notes on <u>Christian education in Australia.</u> Seven Hills, NSW: CCSL.

Garber, S. (1997). <u>The fabric of faithfulness: Weaving together belief and behaviour during the university years</u>. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Geelong News (1976, April 6). <u>Geelong parents break from system: New 'church school'</u>. Pp. 1, 49. Geelong, Victoria.

Geelong Association for Parent Controlled Christian Education (circa 1975).

Gilson, W. (date unknown) <u>The history of Seventh Day Adventist education in Australia and New Zealand</u> (manuscript held in Ellen G. White Research Centre at Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW).

Godden, S. (1996). <u>Founding Anglican schools: A study of agents and events which influenced the formation of five Anglican schools within the diocese of Sydney.</u> Unpublished master's thesis, University of New England, Australia.

Goetz, J. and LeCompte, M. (1984). <u>Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research</u>. New York: Academic Press.

Gordon, D. (1988). <u>An ethnography of teaching from a Christian perspective</u>. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of New England.

Granquist, M. (1997). Religious vision and academic quest at St Olaf College. In R. T. Hughes and W. B. Adrian (Eds.), <u>Models for Christian higher education: Strategies for success in the twentieth-first century</u> (pp. 82-96). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Greenleaf, R. (1991). <u>Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness</u>. New York: Paulist Press.

Groen van Prinsterer, G. (1975). <u>Unbelief and Revolution</u>: Lectures VIII and IX (H. Van Dyke, Trans. and Ed.). Amsterdam: The Groen Van Prinsterer Fund. (Original lectures delivered during European winter of 1845/46).

Groome, T. (1980). <u>Christian religious education - sharing our story and vision</u>. San Francisco: Harper Collins.

Groome, T. (1996). What makes a school Catholic? In T. McLaughlin, J. O'Keefe and B. O'Keefe (Eds.), <u>The contemporary Catholic school: Context, identity and diversity</u> (pp. 107-125). London: Falmer Press.

Gubrium, J.F. (1991). Recognising and Analysing Local Cultures. In W. Shaffir and R. Stebbins (Eds), <u>Experiencing fieldwork</u> (pp. 131-141). Newbury Park, California: SAGE.

Halstead, J. and Taylor, M. (Eds.). (1996). <u>Values in education and education in values.</u> London: Falmer Press.

Hammersley, M. (1992). Some reflections on ethnography and validity. <u>Qualitative studies in education 5 (3)</u>, 195-203.

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (1998). <u>What's worth fighting for in education?</u> Buckingham, UK: Open

University Press.

Harkness, A. (2000a, May). Editorial. Journal of Christian Education, 43 (1), 3-4.

Harkness, A. (2000b, May). De-schooling Christianity in the new millennium. Journal of Christian Education, 43 (1), 51-61.

Harney, P. (1997). Values in independent schools: Demonstrating that special difference. Unpublished paper.

Harvey, P. (1986). Effective Christian education. (Booklet). Wentworthville, NSW: Christian Community Schools Ltd.

Heerema, E. (circa 1970). Brochure - What school for our children? Laingholm Central, N.Z.: Scripture Press. (A pamphlet originally distributed in the USA and revised "for distribution and use in our crusade for Christian (Parent controlled) schools in Australia and New Zealand").

Hellwig, M. (1997). What can the Roman Catholic tradition contribute to Christian higher education? In R. T. Hughes and W. B. Adrian (Eds.), Models for Christian higher education: Strategies for success in the twentieth-first century (pp. 13-23). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Henry, G. (1990). Practical sampling. Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.

Henry, M. (1992). School rituals as educational contexts: Symbolizing the world, others, and self in Waldorf and College Prep. schools, Qualitative Studies in Education 5(4), 295-309.

(The) Herald (1975, January 21). The school to believe in. p.2. Melbourne, Victoria.

Heslam, P. (1998). Creating a Christian worldview: Abraham Kuyper's lectures on Calvinism. Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans.

Hewitt, I. (1994). An exploratory study into teacher's inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Canberra.

Hill, B. (1978, November). Is it time we deschooled Christianity? Journal of Christian Education, 63, 5-21.

Hill, B. (1982, November). Christian schools: Issues to be resolved. Journal of Christian Education, 75, 5-17.

Hill, B. (1983a, July). Going into all the World ... of Education. Journal of Christian Education, 77, 38-50.

Hill, B. (1983b, November). Free, compulsory and secular: A slogan revisited. Journal of Christian

Education, 78, 63-77.

Hill, B. (1991) Values education in Australian schools. Hawthorn, Victoria: The Australian Council for Educational Research.

Hill, B. (1997). Alternative Christian schooling: A search for meaning. In K. Watson, C. Modgil and S. Modgil (Eds.), Educational dilemmas: Debate and diversity. Vol. Three - Power and responsibility in education (pp. 280-287). London: Cassell.

Hill, B. (1998). Facts, beliefs and values: Which am I teaching? The Journal of the College of Christian Higher Education, 3, 3-17.

Hodder, I. (1994). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Hoeksema, T. (1991). A study of Dutch Calvinist school distinctiveness. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of California.

Hoekzema, R. (1966, December). The federal election in retrospect. The Christian School Reporter, 1(1), 2-3.

Hoekzema, R. (1969, December). Editorial. The Christian School Reporter, 3(2), 4-5.

Hoekzema, R. (1979). Address on the occasion of the opening of Tyndale School, Blacktown, 26 May 1979. In Tyndale News, (School newsletter), July 1979.

Hoekzema, R. (July, 83). Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - origin, basis and organisation. The Journal of Christian Education, 77, 75-83.

Hoekzema, R. (1988). Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - origin, basis and organisation. Nurture 22 (1), 4-7 &22.

Hoekzema, R. (January, 1990). Unpublished paper presented to Tyndale Christian school staff.

Hofman, O. (1966, December). Calvin school – Australia's first Parent Controlled Christian School. The Christian School Reporter, 1(1), 4-5.

Hofman, O. (1969, June). In search of an educational creed. The Christian School Reporter, 3(1), 3-4.

Hofman, O. (1969, December). United effort. The Christian School Reporter, 3(2), 20-21.

Hofman, O. (1970, October). A comparison of aims. The Christian School Reporter, 4(2), 5-7.

Hofman, O. (1971, March). Our urgent mission. The Christian School Reporter, 5(1), 4-6.

Hofman, O. (1990). Parent control – Voices from the past. Nurture 24 (1), 14.

Hogg, A. (1980, July). Christians and schools. Journal of Christian Education, 67, 5-20.

Holmes, A. (1975). The idea of a Christian college. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Holmes, M. and Wynne, E.A. (1989). Making the school an effective community: Belief, practice and theory in school administration East Sussex, UK: Falmer Press.

Hughes, R. (1997). Introduction. In R. Hughes and W. Adrian (Eds.), Models for Christian higher education: strategies for success in the twentieth-first century (pp. 1-9). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Hughes, R. and Adrian, W. (1997). (Eds.). Models for Christian higher education: strategies for success in the twentieth-first century. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Hull, J. (1993). Christian education and the deep structure of schooling. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Toronto.

Judd, S and Cable, K. (1987). Sydney Anglicans. Sydney: Anglican Information Office.

Jupp, J. (1988). The Australian people. North Ryde, NSW: Angus and Robinson.

Kaldor, P., Bellamy, J., Powell, R., Castle, K., & Hughes, B. (1999). Build my church: Trends and possibilities for Australian churches. Adelaide, South Australia: Openbook.

Kalsbeek, L. (1975). Contours of a Christian philosophy - An introduction to Herman Dooyeweerd's thought. Wedge Publishing Foundation: Toronto, Canada.

Keane, R. and Keane, L. Quality assurance and Catholic schools. In R. Keane and D. Riley, (Eds.), Quality Catholic schools: Challenges for leadership as Catholic education approaches the third millennium (pp. 1-8). Brisbane: Archdiocese of Brisbane, Catholic Education

Kellehear, A. (1993). The unobtrusive researcher - A guide to methods. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Kelley, D. (1999). Measurement made easy: A research approach using qualitative, quantitative and quality improvement methods. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Kleinig, J. (1982). Philosophical issues in education. London: Croom Helm.

Knight, G (1989). Philosophy and education: An introduction in Christian perspective. (2nd ed.). Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA: Andrews University Press.

Koole, C. (1996) Education, vocation and training: Structuring Christian schools for justice and human integrity. In I. Lambert and S. Mitchell (Eds.), <u>Reclaiming the future</u> (pp. 57-65). Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University, NSW: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity.

Krathwohl, D.R. (1998). <u>Methods of educational and social science research: An integrated approach</u> (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.

Kumar, R. (1996). <u>Research methodology: A step by step guide for beginners</u>. Melbourne: Addison Wesley Longman.

Lambert, I. (1993). <u>The new Christian schools' movement in Britain</u>. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Cambridge University.

Lambert, I. (1996) Australian society, education and the Christian school movement. In I. Lambert and S. Mitchell (Eds.), <u>Reclaiming the future - Australian perspectives on Christian schooling</u> (pp. 11-19). Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Macquarie University.

Lambert, I. (1997). Alternative Christian schooling: The historical and contemporary context of the Australian experience. In K. Watson, C. Modgil and S. Modgil (Eds.), <u>Educational dilemmas - Debate and diversity. Vol. 3: Power and responsibility in education</u> (pp. 268-279). London: Cassell.

Lambert, I. and Mitchell, S. (Eds.). (1996). <u>Reclaiming the future - Australian perspectives on Christian schooling</u>. Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Macquarie University.

Lambert, I. and Mitchell, S. (Eds.). (1997). <u>The crumbling walls of certainty - Towards a Christian critique of postmodernity and education</u>. Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Macquarie University.

LeCompte, M. and Goetz, J. (1982). Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research. <u>Review of Educational Research 52</u> (1), 31 - 60.

Lederle, H. (n.d.). <u>Christian education in South Africa</u>. (pp. 30-40). (At the time of the undated report, circa 1970, Henry Lederle was a graduate student in philosophy at the University of the Orange Free State).

Lindsay, A. (1978). <u>The influence of Ellen White upon the development of the Seventh Day Adventist school system in Australia, 1891 - 1900.</u> Unpublished master's thesis, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, NSW.

Link, H. (1975). Glossary of technical terms. In C. Brown (Ed.), <u>The new international dictionary of new testament theology, Vol. 1</u> (pp. 49-72). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

Long, R. (1996). The development of themelic schools in Australia. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Western Sydney.

Lutheran church of Australia and its schools. Adopted by the Board for Lutheran Schools and the General Church Council of the Lutheran Church of Australia and presented to the General Synod of the Lutheran Church of Australia in October 1997.

Luttrell, J. (1996). Worth the struggle: Sydney Catholic schools. 1820-1995. Sydney: Catholic Education Office.

McLaughlin, D. (Ed.). (2000). The Catholic school: Paradoxes and challenges. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications.

McLaughlin, T., O'Keefe J. and O'Keefe B. (1996), The contemporary Catholic school: Context, identity and diversity. London: Falmer Press.

Madaus, G., Airasian, P. and Kellaghan, T. (1980). School effectiveness - A reassessment of the evidence. New York: McGraw Hill.

Maguire, J. (1975). Dutch Reformed migrants in post-war Australia and the movement for parent controlled Christian schools (Unpublished Paper).

Maguire, J. (1980). A biblical framework for education. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia (pp. 93-102). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Marginson, S. (1997). Educating Australia: Government, economy and citizen since 1960. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Marr, D. (1998, December 5). Divine intervention. The Sydney Morning Herald, [Spectrum Features], pp. 1-5.

Maslen, G. (1982). School ties: private schooling in Australia. North Ryde, NSW: Methuen.

May, T. (1997). Social research: Issues, methods and process (2nd ed.). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Mechielsen, J. (October, 1978). Mount Evelyn Christian School. Unpublished paper.

Mechielsen, J. (1980). A community for learning. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia. (pp. 61-71). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Mechielsen, J. (Ed.). (1980). <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Mechielsen, J. (1991). Whole school, whole students. <u>Nurture</u>, 25(1), 4-6.

Mechielsen, J. (2000). Parents and Christian schooling - Is there a future? <u>Nurture</u>, 34(2), 12-13.

Miles, M. and Huberman, A. (1994). <u>Qualitative data analysis</u>. (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.

Miller, S. (1973, September). The new education: A bird's eye view. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 7(4)</u>, 8-9.

Miller, S. (1980). From the ground up. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 103-110). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Moerman, R. (1989). History of the association - Serving the Lord with gladness. <u>Tyndale Contact</u>. (Occasional magazine).

Mol, J. (1968). The effects of denominational schools in Australia. <u>Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology (iv) 1,</u> 18-35.

Morse, J. (1994). Designing funded qualitative research. In N. Denzin, and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), <u>Handbook of qualitative research</u> (pp. 220-235). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

Nachmias, D. and Nachmias, C. (1981). <u>Research methods in the social sciences</u>. New York: St Martin's Press.

Nederhood, J. (circa 1970). <u>A beautiful thing.</u> (Brochure). A broadcast of 'The Back to God Hour' of the Reformed churches of Australia and New Zealand. P.O Box 95, Fairy Meadow, NSW, 2519.

Nederhood, J. (circa 1971). <u>Parental choice and education.</u> (Brochure). A broadcast of 'The Back to God Hour' of the Reformed churches of Australia and New Zealand. P.O Box 95, Fairy Meadow, NSW, 2519.

Nichols, A. (1973, February). Crises in education. <u>The Christian School Reporter 7(1),</u> 4-7

Nichols, A. (1990). Parent control – Voices from the past. <u>Nurture 24 (1),</u> 14.

Noddings, N. (1992). <u>The challenge to care in schools - An alternative approach to education</u>. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nyhouse, J. (1980). Why we need Christian schools: A parent's view. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 79-84). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Octigan, D. (1980). She'll be right mate. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 73-77). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). (1987). <u>Structural adjustment and economic performance</u>. Paris, pp. 69-70.

O'Hear, A. (1995). Education - history of the philosophy of. In T. Honderich (Ed.), <u>The Oxford companion to philosophy</u> (pp. 213-216). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Ormell, C. (1980) Values in education. In R. Straughan and J. Wrigley (Eds.), <u>Values and evaluation in education</u> (pp. 71-95). London: Harper and Row.

Parks, S. (1986). <u>The critical years: young adults and the search for meaning, faith and commitment</u>. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

Patterson, R. (1967, July). Christian teaching in practice. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 1(2)</u>,   3-4. ('The Christian School Reporter' is now called 'Nurture')

Patterson, R. (1970, October). The order of the grain of mustard seed. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 4(2)</u>, 3-4.

Patterson, R. (1971, June). Editorial. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 5(2)</u>, 3.

Patterson, R. (1971, October). Salty or savourless. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 5(3)</u>, 3.

Patterson, R. (1972, January). Editorial. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 6(1)</u>, 3.

Patterson, R. (1972, March). Many members make schools grow. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 6(2)</u>, 3.

Patterson, R. (1972, September). Editorial. <u>The Christian School Reporter, 6(4)</u>, 9.

Patterson, R. (1982, November). The alternative Christian school: A response. <u>Journal of Christian Education. 75,</u> 31-37.

Pellicaan, E. (1973, December). Is a Christian high school desirable? <u>The Christian School Reporter 7 (5),</u> 10-11.

Pellicaan, P. (1972, June). Government aid to independent schools. <u>The Christian School Reporter 6 (3),</u> 4-6.

Peters, R. (1970). <u>Ethics and education</u>, London: Allen and Unwin.

Peters, R. (1973). <u>Philosophy of education</u>, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Plato. <u>The republic of Plato</u>. Trans. Cornford, F. (1941) Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Potts, A. (June, 1998). <u>Official perspectives of some Australian fundamentalist schools,</u> International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning. 2(5). Available on http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll/volume2/Potts2_5.html

Prinsen, P. (2000). <u>"That old Dutch disease" – The roots of Dutch Calvinist education in Alberta.</u> Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alberta.

Purpel, D. (1989). <u>The moral and spiritual crisis in education: A curriculum for justice and compassion in education</u>. New York: Bergin and Garvey.

Rehoboth Christian School (n.d.) <u>The Christian school - why?</u> (Brochure). Perth.

Rengstorf, K. (1975). Jesus Christ. In C. Brown (Ed.), <u>The new international dictionary of new testament theology, Vol. 2</u> (pp. 330-348). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

Richardson, J.T. (1991). Experiencing research on new religions and cults - practical and ethical considerations. In W. Shaffir and R. Stebbins (Eds.), <u>Experiencing fieldwork</u> (pp. 62-71). Newbury Park, California: SAGE.

Ridgway, I. (1980). Tea 'n toast – working with curriculum guidelines. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), <u>No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia</u> (pp. 123-129). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Riding, C. (1996). <u>Maintaining the Christian ethos in low-fee independent Protestant Christian schools - A case study of participant perceptions.</u> Unpublished master's thesis, University of South Australia.

Roberts, A. (1980). <u>Australia's first hundred years: The era of Christian schools</u>. Baulkham Hills, NSW: The Australian College of Christian Education.

Rockwell, G. (1985). A parent's view – Christian education (Joan Schouten and Barbara McLaren interview Graham Rockwell, a parent from Covenant Christian School). <u>Nurture 19 (2),</u> 6-7.

Runia, K. (1966, November). State aid to Christian schools. <u>Trowel and Sword,</u> 3-5.

Rushdoony, R. (1981). <u>The philosophy of the Christian curriculum</u>. Vallecito, California: Ross House.

Ryan, M. (1997a). Foundations of religious education in Catholic schools: An Australian perspective. Wentworth Falls, NSW: Social Science Press.

Ryan, M. (1997b). Respectable citizens and better Catholics: Maintaining Catholic schools in Victoria 1872-1885. Wentworth Falls, NSW: Social Science Press.

Sapon - Shevin, M. (1991). Schools as communities of love and caring. In R. Miller (Ed.), New directions in education: Selections from the holistic review. Brandon, Vermont, USA: Holistic Education Press.

Schaeffer F. (1976). How should we then live? The rise and decline of western thought and culture. Old Tappan, New Jersey, USA: Fleming H. Revell.

Schenk, R. (1973, December). The Karmel report. The Christian School Reporter 7 (5), 6-8.

Schuman, H. and Presser, S. (1996). Questions and answers in attitude surveys: experiments on question form, wording and context. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Schwartzman, H.B. (1993). Ethnography in organizations, Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.

Sergiovanni, T. (1994). Building community in schools. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. (1996). Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sharpe, F. (1989). The future of education in NSW. In A. Watson and J. Relich, (Eds.), Education towards 2000: Common values in a diverse society (pp. 31-36). Sydney: NSW Institute for Educational Research.

Shaw, G. (1978). Patriarch and Patriot: William Grant Broughton 1788-1853 – Colonial statesman and ecclesiastic. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Sheerman, R. (1989). To what extent can a distinctive Christian perspective be presented in a curriculum designed by a secular system? Unpublished master's thesis. University of New England, Australia.

Shellard, J. (1983, July). The Christian component in colonial education: Some perspectives on the development of public education in New South Wales, Journal of Christian Education 77, 61-74.

Sietzma, J. (1976). Christian education - A parental responsibility. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1976. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Sietzma, A. (1988). Parents and teachers in partnership. Nurture 22 (4), 4-6.

Skillen, J. (1974). The development of Calvinistic political theory in the Netherlands, with special reference to the thought of Herman Dooyeweerd. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Duke University, USA.

Solberg, R. (1997). What can the Lutheran tradition contribute to Christian higher education? In R. T. Hughes and W. B. Adrian (Eds.), Models for Christian higher education: Strategies for success in the twentieth-first century (pp. 71-81). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Standish, C. (1978). Seventh-day Adventist education in Australia. In J. Cleverley (Ed.), Half a million children: Studies of non-government education in Australia (pp. 165-188). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Starratt, R. (1994). Building an ethical school: A practical response to the moral crisis in schools. London: Falmer Press.

Starratt, R. (1996). Transforming educational administration: Meaning, community and excellence. New York: McGraw Hill.

Steensma, G. and Van Brummelen, H. (1977). Shaping school curriculum - a biblical view. Terre, Haute, Indiana, USA: Signal Publishing.

Stoll, L. and Fink, D. (1996). Changing our schools. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques. Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Stronks, G. and Blomberg, D. (1993). A vision with a task: Christian schooling for responsive discipleship. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books.

Stronks, G. (1995, June). Myths and realities in Christian education. Pro Rege, XXIV (4), 1-11. Sioux Center, Iowa: Dordt College.

Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation. (2000). Report to synod. [Brochure].

Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Board. (1995). Sydney Catholic schools towards 2005: Strategic management plan. [Brochure].

Townsend, T. (1996). School effectiveness and improvement initiatives and the restructuring of education in Australia. School effectiveness and improvement, 7 (2), 114 -132.

Tyndale Christian School (1979, July). Publication accompanying opening of new school.

Ungoed-Thomas, J. (1997). Vision of a good school: The good school in the good society. London: Cassell.

Van Brummelen, H. (1986). Telling the next generation - Educational development in North American Calvinist Christian schools. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Van Brummelen, H. (1988). Walking with God in the classroom: Christian approaches to learning and teaching. Burlington, Ontario, Canada: Welch Publishing.

Van Brummelen, H. (1994). Steppingstones to curriculum: A biblical path. Seattle, USA: Alta Vista College Press.

Van Brussel, W. (1968, Dec.) What's going on in South Australia? The Christian School Reporter, 2 (2), 11-12.

Vanden Berg, F. (1960). Abraham Kuyper. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Van Der Laan, H. (1977). Out of concern for the Christian school. Paper presented at the "Education in Focus" Conference in 1977. Sponsored by the National Union of Associations for Parent Controlled Christian schools.

Van der Schoor (1991). Crooked nails and straight lines. Nurture 25 (4), 6-7.

VanderStelt, J. (1972). The struggle for Christian education in western history. In J. Vriend (Ed.), To prod the slumbering giant (pp. 45-65). Toronto, Canada: Wedge Publishing Foundation.

Van Dyk, J. (1997). Letters to Lisa: Conversations with a Christian teacher. Sioux Center, Iowa: Dordt Press.

Van Essen, J. and Morton, H. (1990). Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer: Selected studies. Ontario, Canada: Wedge Publishing Foundation.

Van Zetten, R. and Deenick, J. (1991). The foundational years: 1951-1960. In J. Deenick (Ed.), A church en route: 40 years Reformed Churches of Australia (pp. 20-51). Geelong, Victoria: Reformed Churches Publishing House.

Vriend, J. (Ed.). (1972). To prod the slumbering giant. Wedge Publishing Foundation: Toronto, Canada.

Vryhof, S., Brouwer, J., Ulstein, S., Vander Ark, D. (1989). 12 Affirmations: Reformed Christian schooling for the 21st century. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

Vryhof, S. (1994). Between memory and vision: Reformed Christian schooling in America. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Chicago University.

Walford, G. (1997). New Christian schools: A question of balance. In K. Watson, C. Modgil and S. Modgil (Eds.), Educational dilemmas: Debate and diversity. Vol. 3: Power and responsibility in education (pp. 247-253 & 264-265). London: Cassell.

Walker, R. (1985). Doing research: A handbook for teachers. London: Routledge.

Wallace, T. (1998) Beliefs, values and attitudes: Exploring the connections - a biblical case study, The Journal of the College of Christian Higher Education, 3, 3-17.

Wardekker, (2001) School and moral education: Conformism or autonomy? The Journal of Philosophy of Education, 35 (1), 101-14.

Weeks, N. and Schwarz, M. (circa 1975). A statement on Christian education. Unpublished paper.

Weeks, N. (circa 1975). Unpublished discussion paper.

Weeks, N. (1980, July). In defence of Christian schools. Journal of Christian Education, 67, 21-29.

Weeks, N. (1988a). The Christian school: An introduction. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust.

Weeks, N. (1988b). Parent control: The second debate. Nurture 22 (4), 10-11.

Weeks, N. (1998). Christian school basics: The struggle for Christian education. (Newssheets 98:02). CPCS Ltd. - NSW State Council.

Westendorp, (2000, May 28). Covenant education (1). The Blacktown Bulletin Board: Newsletter of the Blacktown City Reformed Church, 43 (18), 1.

Westerhoff, J. (1976). Will our children have faith? East Malvern, Victoria: Dove Communications.

White, J. (1995) Problems of the philosophy of education. In T. Honderich (Ed.), The Oxford companion to philosophy (pp. 216-219). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Wilmot, E. (1989). Educational values and the future of the lucky country. In A. Watson and J. Relich (Eds.), Education towards 2000: Common values in a diverse society (pp. 25-30). Sydney: NSW Institute for Educational Research.

Witham, T. (1999). Do Anglican schools make Christians? National Outlook, 21 (6), 16-18.

Wolterstorff, N. (1980) Educating for responsible action. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Wolterstorff, N. (1983). Until justice and peace embrace. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Wolterstorff, N. (1997) Preface. In I. Lambert and S. Mitchell (Eds.), The crumbling walls of certainty:

Towards a Christian critique of postmodernity and education (pp. 6-7). Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University, NSW: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity.

Yallop, C. (1980). Reforming our English. In J. Mechielsen (Ed.), No icing on the cake - Christian foundations for education in Australia (pp. 139-149). Melbourne: Brookes-Hall Publishing Foundation.

Zorn, R. (1968, December). Our children and God's covenant blessing. The Christian School Reporter, 2(2), 4-6.

Zorn, R. (1970, June). Can we afford to have the Philistines sharpen our tools? The Christian School Reporter 4 (1), 5-8.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Survey Questions – Pioneers – Stage 1

Christian Parent Controlled Schools (CPCS) schools were established to encourage students to:

1. *understand the major themes of the Bible,*

2. *acquire a Christian perspective on the world,*

3. *develop values in harmony with biblical principles,*

4. *live out Christian values,*

5. *develop all their gifts and talents to the utmost,*

6. *achieve academic excellence,*

7. *live in close relationships with God,*

8. *be actively involved as Christians, in all aspects of culture,*

9. *acknowledge the sovereignty of God in every realm of life*

10. *live as thoughtful Christians in everything they do,*

11. *acquire skills which lead to employment,*

12. *share the faith of their parents,*

13. *transform their society according to biblical principles,*

14. *lead lives of service to God and humanity,*

15. *challenge the injustice of the surrounding culture,*

16. *accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.*

CPCS schools were established with the expectation that parents would:

17. *fulfil their responsibility before God for the upbringing of their children for a life in God's service,*

18. *ensure that all school activities are in harmony with the Word of God,*

19. *scrutinise all decisions made by staff in their school.*

CPCS schools were established with the expectation that teachers would:

20. *encourage students to serve God faithfully in all areas of life,*

21. *be committed to all aspects of their students' development – physical, spiritual, emotional and academic,*

22. *model behaviour based on biblical principles and the life of Christ,*

23. *devise a curriculum consistent with Christian principles,*

24. *see themselves as servant-leaders,*

25. *be motivated by their own relationship with Christ,*

26. *understand their task as unfolding the truth about Christ in the universe*

The wider school curriculum of CPCS schools was designed to:

27. *honour Christ in every facet of education,*

28. *challenge dualistic conceptions of the Gospel,*

29. *train students to transform their culture for Christ,*

30. *reject secular educational practice,*

31. *reflect to a significant degree, the dictum of Abraham Kuyper, to "claim every square inch of the Universe for Christ",*

32. *protect children from negative influences,*

33. *give central place to the Bible,*

34. *assist students to understand their culture,*

35. *acknowledge that the person and work of Jesus is central to an understanding of reality,*

36. *provide students with opportunities for service.*

Open-ended Questions

- From your own involvement in the establishment of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia, are you aware of other foundational aims, objectives and values? Please describe.

- Please add any other comments you would like to make regarding the foundational or original aims, objectives and values of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia.

Appendix 2 – Participant Permission - Surveys – Stage 2

Australian Catholic University

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values and Prevailing Practice

NAME OF RESEARCHER: Charles Justins.

Dear *[senior student / graduate/ parent of a senior student / staff member]*

I am a teacher of over twenty years experience in Christian Parent Controlled (CPCS) Schools, (most of these at Tyndale in Blacktown, NSW) with an interest in the effectiveness of our schools. As a result of this interest, I am undertaking research on CPCS schools in Australia, and would greatly appreciate your assistance. My purpose in this research is:-

1. *to establish the foundational aims, objectives and values of CPCS schools in Australia.*

2. *to assess the extent to which these foundational aims are currently finding expression in CPCS schools.*

3. *to consider the effectiveness of CPCS schools in the light of 2. above.*

4. *to make recommendations regarding the development and continuing operation of Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia.*

One of my purposes in conducting this research is to provide CPCS schools with a clearer understanding of their foundational aims, objectives and values. As a result of this, I hope to consider the effectiveness of CPCS schools and make recommendations regarding their development and continuing operation. It is my hope that the quality of education provided for the 20 000 plus students of our schools will be advanced.

As a *[senior student / graduate/ parent of a senior student / staff member]* you have first hand experiences of the operation of "X" Christian school. It would be valuable for this research if you could take the time to respond to the survey questions which follow. This will enable me to assess the effectiveness of our schools and to highlight those strategies, approaches and policies that have been most successful in fulfilling our original purposes. It is anticipated that this should take no more than half an hour.

Any questions that you might have regarding this research - *Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values and Prevailing Practice* can be directed to the researcher, Mr Charles Justins at Tyndale Christian School - 02 9621 2111 or at home - 02 9831 3416, and / or to the supervisor, Professor D'Arbon, on 02 9739 2100 in the School of Education, Mount Saint Marys Campus, 179 Albert Rd, Strathfield, NSW, 2135.

In the event that you have any complaint about the way you have been treated during the study, or a query that the Researcher or Supervisor has not been able to satisfy, you may write care of the nearest branch of the Office of Research:

> *Chair, University Research Projects Ethics Committee*
> *C/o Office of Research*
> *Australian Catholic University*
> *Mount Saint Marys Campus*
> *179 Albert Rd Strathfield, NSW, 2135*

Any complaint made will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you do not wish to complete this survey, please do not feel compelled to do so. Research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify you in any way. This study has been approved by the University Research Projects Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University.

[graduates / parents] Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided, at your earliest convenience.

*[senior students / teachers]* Please return the completed questionnaire to [*nominated staff member or school office*] at your earliest convenience.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated. All responses will be treated confidentially. If you would like a copy of the results of this research, please let [*nominated staff member*] know and he/she will pass them on to you when they are completed.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Justins

Appendix 3 – Participant Permission - Interviews – Stage 2
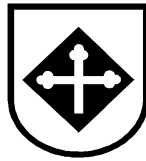
Australian Catholic University

Dear _____ (Participant),

Thank-you for agreeing to participate in an interview which, as part of a national research project is considering the values and effectiveness of Christian Parent Controlled (CPCS) Schools in Australia. The interview will take about 45 minutes. Your first hand experiences of the customs and culture of your school will provide valuable data for the project. It is my hope that feedback from this project will assist schools in their planning for the next century. This study has the support of your school and of the national office of Christian Parent Controlled Schools Ltd.

The researcher has been a teacher at Tyndale Christian School in Blacktown, NSW for over 20 years and the research is being conducted at doctoral level, under the auspices of the Australian Catholic University in Sydney.

Any questions that you might have regarding this research - *Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia - Foundational Values and Prevailing Practice* can be directed to the researcher, Mr Charles Justins at Tyndale Christian School - 02 9621 2111 or at home - 02 9831 3416, or to the supervisor, Professor A. D'Arbon, on 02 9739 2100 at the School of Education, Mount Saint Marys Campus, 179 Albert Rd, Strathfield, NSW, 2135.

In the event that you have a concern or complaint regarding this study, or a query that the Researcher or Supervisor has not been able to satisfy, you may write care of the nearest branch of the Office of Research:

> *Chair, University Research Projects Ethics Committee*
> *C/o Office of Research*
> *Australian Catholic University*
> *Mount Saint Marys Campus*
> *179 Albert Rd Strathfield, NSW, 2135*

Any complaint made will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you do not wish to have your child involved in this research, please do not feel compelled to do so. Research data collected may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify your child or school in any way. This study has been approved by the Australian Catholic University's Research Projects Ethics Committee. Your assistance and your child's cooperation is greatly appreciated. All responses will be treated confidentially. The national results of this research will be published in Nurture magazine when it is completed.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Justins.

Appendix 4 – Informed Consent Form

Australian Catholic University

Informed Consent Form

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: CHRISTIAN PARENT CONTROLLED SCHOOLS IN
AUSTRALIA - FOUNDATIONAL VALUES AND PREVAILING PRACTICE

NAME OF RESEARCHER: CHARLES JUSTINS

I .... (the participant) have understood the information provided in the Letter to
the Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in
this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be
published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT   ....
(block letters)

SIGNATURE ....

DATE......................................

Appendix 5 – Survey Questions – Senior Students / Graduates – Stage 2

1. How old are you?

a) 18 - 20   b) 21 - 23   c) 24 - 26   d) 27 - 30   e) older than 30

2. What class / grade were you in, when you started at this school?

a) Kindergarten   b) Years 1-3   c) Years 4-6   d) Years 7-9   e) Years 10-12

3. About how often do you attend church?

a) once each week or more often   b) about once each fortnight   c) about once each month d) less than once each month   e) not at all

4. Which Christian church do you belong to?

a) None   b) Anglican   c)Baptist   d) Reformed   e) Other

(If 'Other', go to 5., otherwise go to 6.)

5. **a**) Pentecostal **b**) Uniting   **c**) Catholic   **d**) Presbyterian   **e**) Another Christian Church

----

Senior students / Graduates were asked to respond with either Strongly Agree, Mostly Agree, Mostly Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the following questions

6. My parents chose this school for me because all of the teachers were Christians

7. My parents chose this school for me because the Bible was of central importance to everything that happened

8. My parents chose this school for me because of dissatisfaction with local state schools.

9. My parents chose this school for me because of the emphasis on discipline

10. My parents chose this school for me because they thought I would have better   employment opportunities

11. My parents chose this school for me because the school sought to put Jesus at the centre of everything

12. My parents chose this school for me because they wanted to keep me safe

13. This school was for children from Christian homes.

14. This school challenged students to accept the gospel

15. This school focused on the importance of academic excellence

16. This school taught students to understand the Bible

17. This school equipped students to change their society for Christ

18. This school thoroughly prepared students for work or university

19. This school emphasised the ability of the Gospel to transform all aspects of Australian society

20. This school encouraged students to understand that God was in control of all things

21. This school placed a high priority on evangelism of students

22. I can explain the purposes of education at my school to other people

23. It is impossible to understand life without Jesus

24. Teachers at my school present lessons from a Christian perspective

25. Parents have too much say in the running of the school

26. Parents could be more involved in the school

27. Parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process with teachers

28. Teachers at my school were all Christians

29. Teachers considered preparation of senior students for exams as their top priority

30. Teachers were often too busy to teach from a Christian perspective

31. Students who achieve good academic results are honoured by the school

32. Students who are successful at Sport are praised and admired

33. Students are encouraged regardless of their ability

34. The Bible is essential for students to understand Science

35. The Bible is necessary for people to understand human society

36. The Bible was often used in my English class

37. Jesus is in control of all things

38. Jesus was referred to in most lessons

39. Jesus doesn't really have a lot to do with Mathematics

Open-ended Questions

1. What did you enjoy most about your school?

2. What did you enjoy least about your school?

3. What values did you see the school emphasising?

4. Did your school have any impact on your choice of career? If yes, please explain.

5. How did your school acknowledge student achievement in sport and academics (school-work)?

6. Would you send your own children a school like this? Why or why not?

7. Other comments

Appendix 6 – Survey Questions – Parents – Stage 2

1. How old are you?

   a) 20 - 30 **b**) 31 - 40 **c**) 41 - 50 **d**) 51 - 60 **e**) 60 +

2. How many years have you been associated with this Christian school?

   a) 0 - 2 years **b**) 3 - 5 years **c**) 6 - 10 years **d**) More than 10 years

3. About how often do you attend church?

   a) once each week or more often **b**) about once each fortnight **c**) about once each month
   d) less than once each month **e**) not at all

4. Which Christian church do you belong to?

   a) None **b**) Anglican **c**)Baptist **d**) Reformed **e**) Other
   (If 'Other', go to **5**., otherwise go to **6**.)

5. **a**) Pentecostal **b**) Uniting **c**) Catholic **d**) Presbyterian **e**) Another Christian Church

6. Are you a school Association member?

   a) Yes **b**) No

   (Parents were asked to respond with either Strongly Agree, Mostly Agree, Mostly Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the following questions)

7. I send my children to this school because there are Christian teachers

8. I send my children to this school because I believe that the Bible is of central importance to all things

9. I send my children to this school because of dissatisfaction with local state schools.

10. I send my children to this school because academic standards are high

11. I send my children to this school because there is good discipline

12. I send my children to this school so that they will have better employment opportunities

13. I send my children to this school because the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything

14. I send my children to this school because I wanted my children to be safe from non-Christian influences

15. I send my children to this school because the Lordship of Christ is emphasised in every area of the school's practice

16. I send my children to this school because I believe that parents are responsible for their children's education

17. This school is for children from Christian homes.

18. This school focuses on the importance of academic excellence

19. This school emphasises the ability of the Gospel to transform all aspects of Australian society

20. This school teaches children that God is in control of all things and all circumstances

21. This school still has a lot of work to do in working out what it means to provide a distinctively Christian education

22. This school teaches students to understand the Bible

23. This school thoroughly prepares students for work or university

24. This school places a high priority on evangelism of students

25. This school is still directed by the vision of the original pioneers

26. This school should be more conscious of the financial difficulties faced by parents on low incomes

27. As a parent, I am involved in making decisions about the broad direction the school should head

28. As a parent, I often help in classrooms

29. As a parent, I have too little to say in the running of the school

30. As a parent, I could be more involved in the school

31. As a parent, I feel like a partner in the educational process with teachers

32. As a parent, I am encouraged to be involved in all aspects of school life

33. As a parent, I need more education in the school's values and vision

34. Teachers at this school all appear to be Christians

35. Teachers are free to do as they choose in their own classrooms

36. Students who achieve good academic results are honoured by the school

37. Students are encouraged regardless of their ability

38. Jesus doesn't really have a lot to do with Mathematics

39. The Bible is essential for students to understand Science

40. The Bible is essential for people to understand the world

41. I can explain the purposes of education at this school to other people

42. It is impossible to understand life without Jesus

43. Income prevents some parents from sending children to this school

44. I am aware of the vision of the school's founders

45. The governance of the school by parents reflects the God-given authority of the home in the education of children

46. The moral dangers of the Internet outweigh any potential benefits

47. Scholarships for academically talented students are an appropriate way of encouraging excellence in a Christian school

Open-ended Questions

1. What values do you see the school emphasising?

2. What does your school do to support the concept of parent control?

3. A successful student is someone who ... (please complete).

4. From Section 1 - **I send my children to this school because ...** , please list the three most important reasons and the three least important. If your reasons were different to those listed in Section 1, please list them instead.

5. What is distinctively Christian about this school?

6. Other comments about this school or Christian education?

Appendix 7 – Survey Questions – Teachers – Stage 2

1. How old are you?
   a) 20 - 30   **b**) 31 - 40   **c**) 41 - 50   **d**) 51 - 60   **e**) 60 +

2. How many years have you been teaching at this Christian school?
   a) 0 - 2 years   **b**) 3 - 5 years   **c**) 6 - 10 years   **d**) More than 10 years

3. About how often do you attend church?
   a) once each week or more often   **b**) about once each fortnight   **c**) about once each month
         d) less than once each month   **e**) not at all

4. Which Christian church do you belong to?
   a) None   **b**) Anglican   **c**)Baptist   **d**) Reformed   **e**) Other
   (If Other, go to 5., otherwise go to 6.)

5. **a**) Pentecostal   **b**) Uniting   **c**) Catholic   **d**) Presbyterian   **e**) Another Christian Church

6. What is your highest academic qualification?
   a) Certificate / Diploma   **b**) Bachelor   **c**) Post - graduate   **d**) Doctorate

7. Which section of the school do you teach in?
   a) Infants   **b**) Primary   **c**) Secondary   **d**) Middle School   **e**) Administration

----

(Parents were asked to respond with either Strongly Agree, Mostly Agree, Mostly Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the following questions)

8. This school focuses on the importance of academic excellence

9. This school thoroughly prepares students for work or university

10. This school is intended for children from Christian homes

11. This school continually challenges teachers to teach from a Christian perspective

12. This school employs only Christians as teachers

13. This school places a high priority on evangelism of students

14. This school provides sufficient support for teachers in their task of teaching from a thoroughly Christian standpoint

15. This school regards parents as responsible for their children's education

16. In my teaching, I emphasise the ability of the Gospel to transform all aspects of Australian society

17. In my teaching, I seek to put Jesus at the centre of everything

18. In my teaching, I teach children to understand that God is in control of all things

19. In my teaching, I still have a lot of work to do in understanding what it means to teach from a distinctively Christian perspective

20. In my teaching, I consider preparation of senior students for exams as my top priority

21. In my teaching, I am often too busy to teach from a Christian perspective

22. In my teaching, I am free to do as I choose in my own classroom

23. In my teaching, I have not really been adequately prepared to teach from a completely biblical perspective

24. In my teaching, I refer to Jesus in most lessons

25. Parents make decisions about the broad direction the school should head

26. Parents regularly help in classrooms

27. Parents have too much to say in the running of the school

28. Parents are encouraged to be partners in the educational process with teachers

29. Parents could be more involved in the school

30. Parents need more instruction in the school's values and vision

31. Students who achieve good academic results are honoured by the school

32. Students who are successful at Sport are praised and admired

33. Students are encouraged and commended regardless of their academic ability

34. The Bible is essential for students to understand Science

35. The Bible is necessary for people to understand human society

36. The Bible is often used in my class

37. Jesus doesn't really have a lot to do with Mathematics

38. I can explain the purposes of education at my school to others

39. The vision of the pioneers continues to drive the direction of this school

40. I am aware of the educational vision of the pioneers of my school.

41. Christian schools run by parents reflect the God-given authority of the home in the education of children

42. It is impossible to understand life without Jesus

43. Teaching Programs at my school are all written from a Christian perspective

44. Scholarships for academically talented students are an appropriate way of encouraging excellence in a Christian school

45. I am familiar with at least some of the thinking of Abraham Kuyper

46. The most important use of the Bible in the school is in challenging students with the gospel, rather than its application in normal lessons

47. "Education in Focus" Conferences have been successful in helping teachers keep their attention on distinctively Christian education.

48. If I were to do further study, my first option would be the National Institute for Christian Education.

Open-ended Questions

1. What values do you see your school emphasising?

2. A successful student is someone who ... (*please complete*)

3. What was the educational vision of the founders of your school?

4. What do you see as the biggest threat to your school's ability to achieve its goals?

5. What does your school do to assist teachers in their task of teaching in a distinctively Christian way?

6. Other comments regarding your school or Christian education in general?

Appendix 8: Chi-squared Tests - Reasons Parents Send Their Children to CPC Schools - Student and Parent responses.

Table C1

Chi-squared test ‐ *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools – 'because the school seeks to put Jesus at the centre of everything'*

	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Row sub-total
Parents	62 *E= 9300/200=46.5*	24 *E=6300/200=31.5*	10 *E=2700/200=13.5*	4 *E=1700/200=8.5*	100
Senior Students	31 *E=9300/200=46.5*	39 *E=6300/200=31.5*	17 *E=2700/200=13.5*	13 *E=1700/200=8.5*	100
Col. sub-total	93	63	27	17	200

$\chi 2$ **= 20.6.**   df = (2-1)(4-1) = 3

A significant difference exists for parents and senior students at the 0.001 level.

Table C2

Chi-squared test ‐ *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools – 'because there are Christian teachers'*

	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Row sub-total
Parents	63 *E= 7700/200=38.5*	33 *E=8900/200=44.5*	3 *E=2200/200=11*	1 *E=1200/200=6*	100
Senior Students	14 *E=7700/200=38.5*	56 *E=8900/200=44.5*	19 *E=2200/200=11*	11 *E=1200/200=6*	100
Col. sub-total	77	89	22	12	200

$\chi 2$ **= 57.2.**   df = 3

A significant difference exists for parents and senior students at the 0.001 level.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6">

Table Q3

Chi-squared test - *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools* – *'because the Bible is of central importance to all things'*

</td></tr>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Row sub-total</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>70
E= 9393/201=46.7</td>
<td>17
E=6060/201=30.1</td>
<td>10
E=3030/201=15.1</td>
<td>4
E=1818/201=9.0</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Students</td>
<td>23
E=9300/201=46.3</td>
<td>43
E=6000/201=29.9</td>
<td>20
E=3000/201=14.9</td>
<td>14
E=1800/201=9.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. sub-total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</table>

$\chi 2$ = **43.7**   df = 3

A significant difference exists for parents and senior students at the 0.001 level.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6">

Table Q4

Chi-squared test - *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools* – *'because of dissatisfaction with local state schools'*

</td></tr>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Row sub-total</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>28
E=5353/200=26.8</td>
<td>29
E=5757/200= 28.8</td>
<td>26
E=5454/200=27.3</td>
<td>18
E=3636/200=18.2</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Students</td>
<td>25
E=5247/200=26.2</td>
<td>28
E=5643/200=28.2</td>
<td>28
E=5346/200=26.7</td>
<td>18
E=3564/200=17.8</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. sub-total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</table>

$\chi 2$ = **0.226**   df = 3

A significant difference does <u>not</u> exist between the responses of parents and senior students.

Table Q5

Chi-squared test - *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools – 'because there is good discipline'.*

	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Row sub-total
Parents	33 *E=4100/200=20.5*	57 *E=8900/200=44.5*	10 *E=4800/200=24*	0 *E=2200/200=11*	100
Senior Students	8 *E=4100/200=20.5*	32 *E=8900/200=44.5*	38 *E=4800/200=24*	22 *E=2200/200=11*	100
Col. sub-total	41	89	48	22	200

χ2 = 60.6   df = 3

A significant difference exists for parents and senior students at the 0.001 level.

Table Q6

Chi-squared test - *Reasons Parents Send Their Children to Christian Parent Controlled Schools – 'so that students will have better employment opportunities'*

	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Row sub-total
Parents	7 *E=1800/200=9*	49 *E=7900/200=39.5*	31 *E=6600/200=33*	13 *E=3700/200=18.5*	100
Senior Students	11 *E=1800/200=9*	30 *E=7900/200=39.5*	35 *E=6600/200=33*	24 *E=3700/200=18.5*	100
Col. sub-total	18	79	66	37	200

χ2 = 8.96 which is significant at the 0.05 level but not the 0.02 level.   df = 3