Creating and sustaining a new school: 
the challenges and the issues

Zeffie Nicholas
University of Wollongong


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CREATING AND SUSTAINING A NEW SCHOOL: 
THE CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of 

Doctor of Education

In the Faculty of Education in the University of Wollongong

Zeffie Nicholas
Dip. Teach, B. Ed., M. Ed.

July 2008
CERTIFICATION

I, Zeffie Nicholas, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Education, in the Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Z. Nicholas

Zeffie Nicholas

23 July, 2008
ABSTRACT

New schools open in Australia on a relatively frequent basis. However, there is little literature to inform the establishment phase of a new school. The literature that does exist suggests that new schools begin in a frenetic way. There is much excitement about possibilities and such schools appear to be places where all dreams are possible. Yet the literature has documented that they revert to the norm. This thesis presents a case study of a secondary school during the first two years of its establishment. Specifically it focuses on the challenges and issues that foundation and second year staff faced when establishing a new school. During the first two years of the school's establishment I was the foundation curriculum coordinator, hence my role is that of participant observer.

The purpose of the study was to document the establishment phase of a new school from the perspective of an ‘insider’ and hence relate the issues and challenges that face staff during this critical period. It was hoped that the results might contribute to the literature in the area. The second was to establish what structures are vital when establishing a new school that would result in sustainable practice.

This study employed a method of case study design, and data collection included interviews with all foundation and second year staff, and analyses of observation journal and school archival documentation. Data analysis occurred in three distinct stages and was informed by Carney’s Analytical Ladder of Abstraction (1990). Stage 1 involved sourcing appropriate research on which initial themes could be identified. This search resulted in only a few documented case studies on new schools and several anecdotal descriptions. Stage 1 also involved an analysis of the observation journal to identify issues and themes at the case study school. This resulted in what is termed within this study as internal and external level forces that were in existence in the new school setting.

As research in the area of new schools was modest, Stage 2 of the process involved sourcing appropriate literature on which to further the study. The assumption was made early that a new school would be designed based on an effective school. Hence, literature
in the areas of school effectiveness, school improvement, school reform and sustainability were used. These areas of educational research promised knowledge about not only what constitutes an effective school, but also how a school can become and be sustained as an effective school. A synthesis of this literature resulted in a set of new school design characteristics. This literature also indicated that major educational change and reform innovations are conducted without a theory base of a process. Stage 3 involved an analysis of participant interviews and school documentation, and a comparison of these findings against the internal and external level forces and the new school design characteristics.

During the time that the school has been in existence there has been only one Principal. The school’s original vision embraced principles of a middle school philosophy. The initial structures in terms of pastoral care and curriculum were to be based on these philosophies. After ten years some practices were sustained at the school. Primarily these structures were to do with pastoral care. The curriculum structures have not been sustained but during a recent follow-up interview with the Principal there was an indication that the initial philosophies were being revisited and attempts made to adopt appropriate middle school practices again. The findings of this study revealed challenges and issues in regards to eight critical structures, they were: vision and philosophy; effective decision-making and communication; basic managerial functioning; the wider community; appropriate professional development; clear role definitions; support of staff; and appropriate future planning. Also, the comparison of these eight structures against the internal and external level forces and the new school design characteristics resulted in an integrated set of new school design characteristics. By utilising the most recent literature in the area of comprehensive school reform, principles of design were also developed. The principles provide a framework by which the design principles would be enacted. The design principles refer to: the school as a human system, the clear articulation and acceptance of a vision; a design for the school; rules that govern practice that are specific, comprehensive, coherent and consistent; practices that are implicit and embedded; appropriate, consistent and emergent feedback; support of staff; and structures that disperse control and authority.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing the acknowledgments for this thesis means that I have finished and represents the end of a long journey. Many people have travelled this journey with me. These people have provided an enormous amount of support, guidance and unwavering belief that I would finish. I have named these people ‘the strong women and the gentle men’. I would like to acknowledge these people here.

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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Background and context of the study
This thesis presents a case study of a secondary school during the first two years of its establishment. The school will be referred to as Companion High School\(^1\). This study specifically deals with the challenges and issues that staff members faced during the first two years of Companion High School’s existence. During the period 1999- July 2001, I was the founding curriculum coordinator of Companion High School and hence details of the phenomena experienced are presented from the perspective of an insider. This perspective defined my role as participant observer.

New Schools
In Australia during the period 2000-2006, twenty government schools and eighty three non-government schools opened nationally (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2006). When establishing a new school in Australia, there are mandatory curriculum requirements. These requirements are specific only in terms of subjects, mandatory hours of study and pathways of progression through the compulsory years and the post-compulsory years of schooling. The requirements do not account for the initial establishment phase of the school, including such factors as, curriculum structures, policies, leadership models, decision-making and communication structures, duty rosters and timetables. At the time that this case study was conducted there was no ‘rule book’ that outlined what needed to be done when establishing a new school.

A search of literature relating to the establishment of new schools yielded only a few anecdotal case descriptions in professional teaching journals (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b) and only a few more in-depth case studies (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005). The majority of the literature mentioned above (with the exception of the study undertaken by Eastabrook and Fullan, 1977) focuses on particular educational innovations or phenomena, a new way of doing and thinking, or a new way of structuring, managing and leading. While there is no current coherent research-based body of work

\(^{1}\) Companion High School is a pseudonym.
that describes the totality of the phenomena of new schools, the anecdotal accounts and case studies do provide valuable insights into particular aspects of new schools’ characteristics.

In sourcing appropriate information from relevant literature, work in the area of school effectiveness and school improvement has been cited further within this study. This body of literature is immense and provided valuable insights into schools, however, it is not deeply situated in the development of new schools, or particularly in an Australian setting. More recently, a growing body of literature derived from the New American Schools Program, Comprehensive School Demonstration Program and Charter School movements in the United States is beginning to inform the process of implementing change and reforming schools to a scalable level (Desimone, 2002; Quint, 2002). ‘Scale’ means that the innovation or reform are implemented in a holistic manner across a school, and even possibly across schools (Quint, 2002). The cases cited within this study are specific to the United States and predominantly deal with existing schools, sites and structures.

New schools are unique and the events, processes and products of the establishment period are quite distinct from any other stage of a school’s life. The distinction is based purely on the reality that the time of establishment will never occur again. New schools are also quite distinct in the type of characteristics they portray. Generally, it is during this time that the possibilities of educational innovations seem infinite. The establishment stage can be dream-like in nature, capable of generating frenzied excitement about what could be achieved. The literature (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005) describes new schools as entities with potential for educational creativity, innovation and where there is a great deal of fairly frantic, enthusiastic yet productive work by staff members. There is also a sense of community, where staff members have common goals and directions. Further there is a perception that effective leadership and leadership structures exist, there is open communication and recurring professional dialogue, and these schools are places where human and physical resources and support are readily available (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b). Ultimately they are communities where the focus and intent of creation is about providing the best possible structures, processes and products for quality learning experiences. A disconcerting and
A unfortunate conclusion of the literature is that the creativity and innovations in teaching and learning, organisational structures and processes, and leadership, that define new schools are not sustained over time (Fink, 2000).

Invariably these schools become like those schools from which they sought to depart (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000). A synthesis of the findings of these studies provided some insight as to why new schools frequently revert back to the norm. First, the continual conflict and pressures with and from external stakeholders affected planning and design and staff morale (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977). Second, the continuing challenge of resource allocation and financial support hindered the progress of establishment (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b). Third, the issues of teacher workload and teacher exhaustion affected the process (Margolis, 2005). In some cases, the issues around staff relationships particularly among foundation staff and those hired subsequently resulted in critical masses of foundation staff leaving their schools (Margolis, 2005). There is evidence that there was a decline in staff morale, a change in the school culture and an ever-increasing divergence in the educational philosophies of individual staff members (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Margolis, 2005). The case studies also reported that the exodus of the critical mass of foundation staff made sustaining the schools’ visions and philosophies problematic and in some cases unachievable (Fink, 2000). Fourth, local community support had to be attained and much time was spent on a process of educating parents and caregivers of the different philosophies and approaches adopted by the school (Doremus, 1981a,b). Fifth, it was also noted that the leader and leadership structures in the schools had a direct effect on the successful cycle of the school (Fink, 2000). Leadership practices that displayed uncertainty in decisions, a lack of communication, a lack of commitment to the vision and did not fairly acknowledge the professionalism of the staff, were seen as critical factors in the establishment process that made sustainability difficult (Margolis, 2005). Lastly, the concept of forward planning and the ways in which the schools moved beyond the initial ‘honeymoon’ period was critical (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977). This again reflects on the leadership practices and structures within the school where an ability and commitment to plan a way forward in the design of the school was crucial.
Origins of the study

The origins of this study were influenced by three main factors. First, my position as a foundation curriculum coordinator provided a unique opportunity to document the life of a new school during the first three years. Second, as an employee of the school and stakeholder, I was faced with many of the problems described in the preceding paragraphs that required real and substantive solutions in my workplace. My initial searches for appropriate literature to inform the design of a new school produced only a limited amount of comprehensive research on which to develop my work as curriculum coordinator. Third, new schools open in Australia on a relatively frequent basis and yet there is no comprehensive literature base on which systems, educational leaders and teachers can draw to inform and guide their practice in a new school.

The progression of this study is outlined diagrammatically in Figure 1.1. Steps 1 to 4 occurred over a four year period and steps 5 to 7 occurred over a four year period. The method chapter, Chapter Six, will outline in more detail the design of this study. The literature sourced for this study formed a part of the method and the type and focus of the literature determined the progression of the study and formulation of research questions.
1. Immersion
- Being a part of the day to day life of a new school.
- As curriculum coordinator there were concerns in sourcing appropriate information upon which to base school curriculum design.

2. Issues
- Why was there not a permanent school site for the opening of the school?
- What are the most appropriate curriculum structures and pedagogies needed to cater for students in a middle school environment?
- How do we best support staff to embrace the philosophies of the school in terms of curriculum and ensure appropriate implementation?
- How do we as a new school forge our place in the system and establish a relationship within the system, and the wider educational bodies?
- How do we establish and foster a positive relationship with the school community and wider local community?
- Are the leadership structures the best for establishing a new school?
- Are the management structures of the school appropriate and effective?
- How do relationships between staff, between staff and students, and between staff and the wider community effect the establishment of the school?
- What are the most effective structures and processes to promote effective decision-making and communication?
- How do you involve all members of the school community in the design of the school?
- How do you build vision and share it amongst all members of the community so that they have ownership?
- Do we have the most appropriate resources, human and physical, to implement the necessary curriculum and pastoral care structures?

3. Study Coursework
- Actively reflecting on coursework to find possible focus for my study from coursework.
- Using the questions above to find appropriate literature base.

4. Study Literature
- In attempting to find appropriate literature have, I begin reading about:
  - new schools
  - curriculum design on middle school principles
  - learning organisations
  - educational change
  - educational leadership
  - school effectiveness, improvement and reform

5. Framing the Case Study
- A decision is made to focus on the school as a case for the purposes of my doctoral work.
- My role as participant observer role is defined.
- Reading on case study research is undertaken.
- Initial research questions are articulated.
- Methods of data collection are employed.
- Interviews conducted with foundation staff.
- Literature evolves as part of method.
- Research questions further refined as a direct result of reflections about literature read.
- Emergent themes from literature read, interview and archival school documents are established using Carney's Ladder of Analytical Abstraction.
- Literature base is further refined.
- Research questions formalised.

6. Literature as a part of the Method
- Initial questions, review of literature and reflection on literature, observations, experiences and interview questions frame the study

7. The Case Study
- Based on the process of reflection and refinement stated in points 2 to 6, a theory of process for establishing a new school is presented. Data is analysed against this framework.
Characteristics framework

Given the state of the literature and the needs and challenges that face the staff of a new school, an organising framework was needed to interpret the phenomena observed at Companion High School. To achieve this goal, the research questions and subsequent interview questions (see Appendix 1) were derived from my initial observations and experiences. Those questions were defined by internal and external level forces (definitions follow below). In order to validate initial observations and experiences, and develop a characteristics framework for this study, the literature in the area of new schools was reviewed. A preliminary synthesis produced a set of traits that were evident in a new school. These characteristics alone could not inform this study as they did not provide sufficient detail about the mechanisms and processes in a new school setting. As noted in Figure 1.1 Step 4 this began the search of a more extensive research base in order to provide a substantial base of knowledge for the study. It is at this stage that relevant literature on schools in general was sought.

Following this step, literature on school effectiveness and school improvement were sourced, and this body of literature provided extensive data on what characterised an effective school and also what a school that was improving looked like. Through a process of reading and reflection it was obvious that this literature alone could not provide details about the mechanisms and processes necessary to establish a school. At this stage, literature on school reform was consulted as it provided the most current and comprehensive knowledge base. Using a synthesis of key findings from the aforementioned bodies of literature, a characteristics framework was developed as a benchmark to interrogate data from this study. The characteristics framework is presented at the end of Chapter Three New Schools, and then further developed in Chapter Four School Effectiveness and School Improvement. A final development of the framework is undertaken in Chapter Five School Reform.

As mentioned previously, the starting point for this study began with the observed internal and external level forces at Companion High School. From my initial observations, I define internal forces as emanating from within the school and school community. These
forces are defined as the dynamic in existence when establishing structures, procedures, conditions and characteristics in regards to:

- curriculum, pedagogy and assessment;
- pastoral care;
- leadership-including decision-making and communication processes;
- management including day to day issues such as timetabling, discipline, extra-curricular activities;
- staff issues including interactions, planning time, knowledge, capacity and professional development;
- resourcing; and
- technology.

Observing the dynamic among these factors is important because apart from the histories and experiences of staff, the school and what is developed within begins with a ‘clean slate’. There is nothing physical in existence, nothing to change. Developing structures and procedures for sustained success presents a considerable challenge both philosophically and pragmatically. When a new school is being established, primarily human forces are in play. The system leaders have established the need to build a new school; they, in turn, employ the foundation Principal who then is responsible for the establishment of the school proper. These original key players all come with predetermined histories and experiences, and obviously exert pressure on the internal forces.

The external level forces are defined as the effects of positive and negative interactions emanating from:

- the wider educational community;
- regulatory government bodies;
- the system;
- the local community; and
- the school community.
At the external level, forces in regards to building the school (this would include locating a site, designing the school, employing building contractors, overseeing the building of the school and resourcing the school), staffing, community acceptance, implementing the mandatory curriculum, acceptance of the school within the educational community and building a student population base, are at the fore in the minds of the foundation staff.

The challenge presents itself when attempting to deal with both levels simultaneously. The external and internal forces coexist and should work in harmony to establish the school. In one sense there are outside pressures that must be supported and acted upon, and at the same time the growing presence of issues and needs from within the school also must be supported and treated appropriately.

**Purpose of the study**

There were two purposes of this study. The first was to document the establishment phase of a new school from the perspective of an ‘insider’ and hence relate the issues and challenges that face staff during this critical period, and in doing so contribute to the modest literature in the area. The second was to establish what structures are vital when establishing a new school that would result in sustainable practice.

**Research statement and questions**

To achieve the purposes of this study a research statement and research questions were developed. The statement and questions stated below are the final iteration of a process that spanned eight years.

**Research statement**

An investigation of the issues that face staff members in conceptualising, planning, developing, implementing, maintaining and sustaining a new school.

**Major research question**

1. What structures, procedures and resources are vital in establishing a new school that will result in sustainable practices?

**Minor research question**
2. What evidence existed of a theory of process for starting Companion High School?

**Significance of the study**

New schools open in Australia on a relatively frequent basis (ABS, 2006) and yet there is no comprehensive literature base on which systems, educational leaders and teachers can draw to inform and guide their practice in a new school.

The significance of this study is the provision of a reference in the form of scholarly documentation for leaders and teaching staff when establishing a new school, and also insight into how structures and procedures in new schools can be sustained over time.

**Structure of the thesis**

This thesis is based on research conducted while I was foundation curriculum coordinator of Companion High School.

Chapter Two is a contextual statement that explains my role within the school and also my role as a participant observer. It also details several other elements significant in contextualising and understanding data and discussions in subsequent chapters. The school’s beginnings are outlined and historical aspects are discussed. Issues and details around the school site, the teaching staff and initial events and processes are outlined.

Chapter Three provides a review of literature which details the processes, structures and products of new schools as described in the available literature. The beginnings of a characteristics framework are articulated based on initial themes emerging from the literature.

Chapter Four outlines and reviews literature in the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement. As a result, the characteristics framework is further developed. Chapter Five outlines and reviews literature in the area of school reform. This process further provides information about new schools. The final iteration of the characteristics framework is also presented.
Chapter Six explains the research methods utilised. The benefits of using case study research are discussed. Included are details about the site and participants and issues about my role as participant observer. A more detailed account of the stages of the study is outlined. Data collection and analysis processes are explained.

Chapter Seven presents the results of the research, organised around the themes which emerged from the data.

Chapter Eight, the final chapter, presents the discussion, a range of conclusions and implications and ends with recommendations based on the findings from this research.
This chapter will provide a contextual statement about my role in the study. Also, an account of significant contextual factors specifically relating to Companion High School follows.

My role
I was the founding curriculum coordinator of Companion High School and my research role in the study was that of a participant observer. As the founding curriculum coordinator I was an ‘insider’. This unique position provided a way of documenting and seeing (Wolcott, 1999) and an opportunity to consider the issues and challenges at play during the stages of conceptualisation, planning and implementation. Because of this unique position, it was appropriate to adopt methods of case study research. The dynamic, sometimes delicate, situations and interactions in a school’s foundational years are not always open to scrutiny from external agencies. As a participant observer, however, I had access to all aspects of the school’s foundational years. Also, because of the dynamic nature of schools, this method provided the possibility of a flexible approach that allowed for unexpected occurrences and development of emerging themes.

During the first three years of Companion High School’s existence, I witnessed the important ‘typical’ factors of school life come into play and these have been defined in Chapter One as the internal and external level forces. The observations and experiences could easily have formed the basis of the literature review of this study as separate entities. The literature related to what I had observed is vast, relating to the major focus areas of educational research over the past four decades. The purpose of this study was not to retrace such well-documented research paths, but to attempt to make sense of data through a different filter. The recognition and acknowledgment of the internal and external level forces provided an opportunity to initially analyse the many phenomena occurring and to develop a characteristics framework by which data from this study would eventually be interrogated.
Three months prior to the school opening all executive foundation staff members were employed and given tasks in terms of design and responsibilities. The Principal (who had already been employed for fifteen months) had begun research into the community that the school would serve and into broader educational literature available at the time upon which the school’s design would be based. The initial underlying design premise was that both curriculum and pastoral care structures had to reflect and cater for students with extremely diverse backgrounds. This was presented to foundation staff in terms of varying academic achievement and ability, and varying socio-economic status. The second premise was that the school was to be designed in light of the literature about schools in the twenty first century; here the focus was on the growing knowledge society and technology. The third premise was that research-informed structures on the middle years of schooling had to be employed. Foundation executive staff members searched for and utilised literature in these areas and specifically focused on organisational structures and procedures, the young adolescent and schooling, methods of pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, pastoral care structures, leadership and management structures, and the effective use of technology.

Initial discussions with the Principal eventuated in my search for appropriate literature in the area of curriculum design focusing on the middle school years and the development and implementation of such structures in a new school. Concurrently I was beginning to identify a focus for my doctoral work and began to reflect about the beginning stages of the school and the interaction between key factors and players. The search for appropriate literature did yield information on middle school practices (see Beane, 1999; Beane & Lipka, 1987; Mizelle, 1999; Oerlemans & Jenkins, 1998; Scales, 1996; Stevenson, 1992) but it did not specifically focus on this type of curriculum development in a new school.

Becoming a part of a new school and a part of the initial decision-making processes and school design required knowledge in the areas of how new schools are established, curriculum design for the middle school years and how to establish structures that would be inclusive of all staff that would follow. The preliminary literature search to guide my thoughts in these areas resulted in a six-year process that eventually became a part of the
method of this study. This activity also helped to refine ideas and themes in regards to what I had initially observed.

**A new school: initial events and processes**
The leadership team held many discussions on the initial school structure. It was then the responsibility of the Assistant Principal and the Curriculum Coordinator to develop initial models and policies by which the foundational staff of the school would commence the academic school year. The Principal, Assistant Principal and Curriculum Coordinator made decisions regarding the timetable, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment structures. Research into the curriculum and structures appropriate to middle schooling was conducted and a model developed for the initial phase of the school, based on the vision and ideals of the Principal and school community.

As founding Curriculum Coordinator, I was charged with the task of developing and implementing curriculum, pedagogy and assessment structures. The ideas of what we would teach and how we would teach it were driven by an idealistic and holistic view of what education in schools should be about, based on providing the best education for every student. The initial structures were based on work that was being done in the area of middle schooling (see Beane, 1999; Beane & Lipka, 1987; Mizelle, 1999; Oerlemans & Jenkins, 1998; Scales, 1996; Stevenson, 1992). These structures were grounded in sound educational curriculum that worked in harmony with strong pastoral structures to provide quality experiences. These structures meant that traditional views of what the curriculum in the broadest sense should ‘look like’ and how it should be organised played only a minimal role in how structures and subjects were organised. It was a time when a ‘clean slate’ was provided and all dreams were possible. The structures included longer time frames for teaching and subjects that were not necessarily organised in key learning areas. The organisation of curriculum was based on a thematic integrated approach. The pastoral care structures were such that every teacher in the school would develop a close relationship with a group of students and would play a significant role in the students’ development for the duration of their time at the school.
A new school: the site
In 1998, a Catholic systemic, coeducational, comprehensive secondary school began in the metropolitan west region of Sydney. The establishment of this school began in 1995. At a diocesan level, demographic data about the expansion of the western region of Sydney was considered and, as a result, it was decided that another secondary school would be needed to serve the need of parishioners in this part of Sydney. During 1995 and 1996, a search for appropriate sites to house the new school was undertaken. In 1996, diocesan church and system leaders earmarked a particular parcel of land for the new school site. Access to this parcel of land and potential development of the site were problematic. Ownership of the land lay with the Commonwealth and there was a covenant upon it to not be developed in any way. Approaches were made to secure the sale of the site during 1996 and 1997. These initial approaches were unsuccessful because at the same time there was a proposal to heritage list the land. The heritage listing was completed and diocesan church and system leaders began to look for another site to build the school.

In 1997, as the negotiations were occurring to secure a site for the new school, planning was simultaneously occurring to employ the foundational Principal and also enrol the first cohort of students to begin the following year. The first cohort comprised thirteen year 7 students and they began their secondary school lives at a neighbouring school in 1998. At this time there was still no potential permanent site for the school. Also, the only permanent member of staff was the Principal. With a background in English curriculum, the Principal provided some classes for this cohort, but their instruction was provided predominantly by the staff at the school at which they were being accommodated.

Multilevel negotiations were occurring on two fronts. The first was to pursue the permanent site issue. The second was to find a temporary site in which to house the growing population. The future projection was that in 1999 there would be a year 7 cohort of 120 students and the existing cohort would be increased to forty students.

With regard to the permanent site, negotiations began in 1997 between diocesan church and system leaders and the state government to secure the original parcel of land. A
partnership was established and the proposal was put to the Commonwealth government
to excise this parcel of land for the school. To ensure the successful excise, a regional
environmental development plan had to be researched and completed. This process took a
period of three years. In late 2001, the land was secured as the site for Companion High
School. The next part of the process was to gain council approval by submitting
development applications. After another year of negotiations, construction work began on
the permanent site in 2002. It was not until July 2004 that half of the school population
was moved to the permanent site. The remainder of the school population did not move
onto the permanent site until the beginning of 2005.

During this time and throughout the period of my study, the school was established on a
temporary site. One of the diocesan primary schools had excess land and the decision was
taken to build a temporary school behind the primary school. This decision caused much
angst within the local community. Local parishioners and also non-church community
members were concerned that there would be a growing population of adolescents having
to travel through the primary school grounds every day, as well as the increase in
transport facilities that would be needed to support the school. Coupled with this, was the
fact that as the school grew so would the staff size grow. This had implications in terms of
traffic congestion, parking facilities, and the obvious need to expand the number of
buildings on the site. Nonetheless, diocesan church and system leaders had decided that
this would be the most appropriate place to build the temporary school.

In February 1999, the school opened its doors with two cohorts of students, thirteen
teaching staff and four administration staff. Unfortunately, the temporary site had not
been completed and for the first three weeks of the school year, students and staff were
bused to other local facilities to begin classes. The temporary school was “state of the
art”. No expense was spared in terms of providing new technology and plentiful
resources. Classrooms were demountables but they were double the size of normal
secondary classrooms. Each room was fully networked in terms of technology and there
were class sets of computer laptops for everyday use.
A new school: the staff

In undertaking the decision to establish a school, the educational system leaders responsible formed a steering committee whose first priority was to employ a Principal. The Principal was appointed in 1997. The Principal’s professional experiences were as a curriculum coordinator and an Assistant Principal in two beginning high schools. The Principal was the only foundation staff member that had experience in establishing a new school.

It was the Principal’s responsibility to facilitate the foundation and development of the school. The immediate priority was to employ the teaching staff and from mid-1998 to December 1998 all foundational teaching staff were employed. Conscious decisions about the type of teaching staff were made by the leadership team. Staff had to demonstrate support of the initial school structures. These structures were guided by an underpinning middle school philosophy, with an integrated curriculum, incorporating best practice in both the academic and pastoral roles of the school.

The Assistant Principal had prior experiences as a Religious Education coordinator, general coordinator (administrative role), and as a Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) teacher, but it was his first appointment at this level. An information services manager was also employed in mid-1998 to facilitate resources for the school library. The Religious Education coordinator came with experiences in welfare and as a classroom science teacher. The Information Technology coordinator came with experiences as a mathematics, computing studies and history teacher. I was appointed as the Curriculum Coordinator and came with experiences from the three education systems, as a mathematics head teacher in the state and independent systems, and as a classroom teacher in the state and Catholic systems.

All schools are provided with ‘points’ for promotional positions. These points may be allocated to management and leadership positions within the school at the Principal’s discretion. The initial decision about point allocation was made by the Principal and the Assistant Principal. The majority of the points were used for executive members of staff, that is, curriculum coordinator (three points) and information technology coordinator
(three points). Then, as an executive team, a decision was made to employ a two-point pastoral care coordinator. This role was seen as integral to the development of the school as the pastoral care system would involve all teaching staff in an integrated approach to student welfare. The other coordinators (two points) employed were in the areas of technology and applied studies (TAS) and creative arts. It is important to note that the only foundational staff members who had held similar positions of responsibility prior to appointment to the school were the TAS Coordinator, the Pastoral Care Coordinator and the Teacher and Learning Coordinator of English.

The remainder of staff comprised experienced English, Science and Music teachers, as well as beginning TAS and PDHPE teachers. A part-time special education teacher and a part time Languages Other Than English (LOTE) teacher were also employed.

**Initial themes**

During the first two years at Companion High School I began to reflect upon what I was observing and began to read widely on relevant topics. My initial reflections originated from observing the Principal. In the case of Companion High School, it was the responsibility of the Principal to set the original vision of the school, employ staff, oversee the construction of new school buildings, negotiate with system leaders, the local community, the wider educational community, and regulatory and government agencies. Each of these factors required the capacity to manage many things at once, and initially all appeared to be equally important. It was my observation that the Principal’s ability to successfully manage and negotiate these factors determined future practice.

Also, I witnessed a negative effect of the external level forces on foundation staff. During 1999, foundation staff dealt with such issues as the location of the school site, expectations of the local community (our design and direction were very different from what our clientele were familiar with), the lack of support from the feeder primary school that played host to the school while a permanent site for the school was found, and also being part of a process of actually designing what the new school would look like. There were also growing internal pressures in terms of accountability (there were no structures in place for any aspect of the daily running of a school), and planning and implementing
curriculum in a manner that adhered to the principles underlying middle school practices (the design adopted a thematic integrated approach to curriculum as well as block scheduling with seventy-five minute periods, and no staff member had worked in this type of environment before). The employment of second year staff also impacted on foundation staff. Comments from foundation staff focused on the fact that we would lose our vision and have to start again, there was a sense of needing to protect what they believed was theirs. The result was an observable decrease in staff morale and also some staff began to show the signs of exhaustion. As curriculum coordinator my concerns were purely for pragmatic reasons, the staff had to be positive in their attitude and willing to engage with the type of educational innovations we were asking them to employ. It was at this stage that I began to think about whether we could sustain what we had started.

These initial thoughts and issues directed the literature I would read and this was guided by the focus questions for the study that emerged from the internal and external level forces. The focus questions are articulated in Figure 2.1.

The themes also formed the basis for the interview questions that were asked of staff and are articulated in Chapter Six. In order to find information to further my knowledge about these areas, the first intensive period of investigation of literature focused on new schools. Chapter Three follows with the review of literature in the area of new schools.
Figure 2.1 Focus questions and themes

1. Are the leadership structures the best for establishing a new school?
2. What are the most effective structures and processes to promote effective decision-making and communication?
3. How do you involve all members of the school community in the design of the school?
4. How do you build vision and share it amongst all members of the community so that they have ownership?
5. How do we best support staff to embrace the philosophies of the school in terms of curriculum and ensure appropriate implementation?
6. How do relationships between staff, between staff and students, and between staff and the wider community effect the establishment of the school?
7. Are the management structures of the school appropriate and effective?
8. What are the most appropriate curriculum structures and pedagogies needed to cater for students in a middle school environment?
9. How can technology best be utilised in a new school?
10. Do we have the most appropriate resources, human and physical, to implement the necessary curriculum and pastoral care structures?
11. How do we as a new school forge our place in the system and establish a relationship with the system, and the wider educational bodies?
12. How do we establish and foster a positive relationship with the school community and wider local community?
13. Why was there not a permanent school site for the opening of the school?

1. What impact does the local community have when starting a new school?
2. How do the system, a wider educational community, affect the starting of a new school? How important is acceptance by these communities to starting a new school?
3. What is the best way in planning for all the accountability issues when starting a new school?
Chapter Three

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

NEW SCHOOLS

The purpose of this chapter was to review literature in the area of new schools in order to build a knowledge base about establishing a new school. This chapter begins with a presentation of documented cases of new schools. Then this is followed by references to some anecdotal work in the area of new schools.

New Schools: cases

The focus within this section will be on three case studies by Eastabrook and Fullan (1977), Fink (2000) and Margolis (2005) respectively. They were chosen because at the time of preparing this thesis, they were the most comprehensive research-based studies available.

Case One: Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) and Bayridge

Eastabrook and Fullan (1972) were commissioned by the Ontario Institute into Studies of Education (OISE) to examine the innovations of a new secondary school. The study analysed the planning and implementation of a new secondary school, Bayridge Secondary School, in Ontario. The project began in 1973 one year before the school opened. It documented the planning of the school from 1970 to 1974. The purpose of the study was to analyse the planning phase of the school with the view to link the findings to problems of implementation. The importance of this work to this study is that it reported on the pre-opening stage of the school and highlighted initial decisions and how they were made.

Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) used a multi-method approach for the study. They hoped that their methods would provide other schools with the means to analyse their own situations. They gathered data from committee and board meetings, reports and newspaper accounts. Observational techniques were also utilised where participant observers and non-participant observers also gathered data. The analysis of
documentation and observations were supplemented through interviews with each staff member and surveys of two of the stakeholder groups, the parents and students.

Conceptually, Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) outlined their orientation to data gathering and analysis in Table 3.1 *A Paradigm for the Analysis of Change*, below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DYNAMICS</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEMPORAL STAGES</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social Perspectives</strong> (demographic, economic values) (supporting and impeding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Phase I: Problem Identification or Goal Statement 1969-1973</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Phase II: Operationalizing the Problem/Goal 1973-1974</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation 1974-1975+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes 1975+</td>
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The approach taken by Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) acknowledges the complexity of new schools by focusing on social perspectives, social roles and strategies. The focus on these three categories provided the opportunity to document the initial stages of the school and take into account the human and physical issues associated with starting a school.

Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) described the time prior to opening the school in detail. Their initial discussions and data gathering were centred on the committee that was charged with the task of designing the school. This committee was responsible for drafting the original educational philosophy and physical building design of the new school. The district superintendent was central to this initial process and was seen as the driving person behind the planning process. Eastabrook and Fullan commented that he “was responsible for the early vision of the school” and was a man “with a definite educational philosophy, [who] wanted to design a new school which would offer viable alternatives to some of the deficiencies of many current secondary school programs” (p.
11). He was known to continually involve the committee in the planning process and was seen as being successful in the committee sharing and adopting his ideas. Eastabrook and Fullan commented that his “style of leadership and his somewhat charismatic personality combined to make him into the strong force which shaped the school’s development” (p. 13).

The educational vision of the school was based on a philosophy where students and staff would work collaboratively, where the climate would allow for cooperative activity, where there was respect for each individual, where academic learning was valued, where the social and human factors of learning were recognised, and where the school environment was open and characterised by a recognition of the worth and dignity of the school community. The organisational structure of the school included the following: it would be a K-13 site; there would be a “flattened hierarchy and differentiated” (p. 21) staff structures; there would be varied class size teams and team teaching; the curriculum would be interdisciplinary; there would be many course offerings; timetabling would be semesterised and involve flexible scheduling; and the community would be involved both educationally and recreationally.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, these types of structures were also the basis for Companion High School’s beginnings. In the Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) study it is important to note that all of these decisions were made prior to any foundational teaching staff being employed.

The committee believed that while the vast majority of the initial planning of the school and structures were in place, they had set broad enough parameters within which the new school staff, students and parents could begin to work and then further develop. Immediately this process would be of concern because not even the foundational principal had been employed and while the district superintendent appeared to have the right intentions in mind, the question of how the foundational principal progressed with the development and implementation of such plans is critical. This method of initial planning was problematic as it raised the question of ownership of the design and the guiding vision and philosophies that would underpin all further processes.
Prior to the school opening (1973) the original district superintendent left the district and the planning process began to slow down. A new area superintendent was appointed and toward the end of this planning phase the committee began the process of hiring the school’s first Principal. The predetermination of the educational vision, how this vision would manifest itself into the school curriculum and the design of the buildings would subsequently cause problems during Planning Phase II and the Implementation phase, as they were not the ideas of the foundation staff employed. The new Principal had articulated many of the ideas of the initial planning committee during his employment interview. When he eventually began during Planning Phase II, he had a time frame of one year to get the school started. He did not go any further with planning and the original committee was disbanded. The Principal believed that he should wait for the “users” (p. 31) of the school to be identified before any further planning progressed. He commented that:

Lasting change must involve…the users and they have to be involved right from the start, and if we can in this school get everybody involved, the parents the students as well as the teachers and administration, then I think that the changes that are made will be effective and lasting. (p. 31)

The Principal’s recognition of some of the factors that would affect successful implementation of innovations supports the fact that staff in a new school must be part of the planning process, as well as developing and progressing the vision of the school.

The Principal also wanted to develop structures that moved away from a traditional approach to leadership and decision-making. He wanted “to let the leadership emerge from below” (p. 31). He wanted to break down the traditional views about structures and committees within schools and also the role that he would play. His style of leadership was characterised by involving a wide representation from the community and ensuring that no individual or group felt alienated. Much of the time during 1974 involved building relationships with the local community and beginning to involve them in the decision-making process. This highlights the fact that he considered the school as a community and that all members needed to be involved.
Also of importance was the issue of adequate time for staff to plan and to embrace the vision and many innovations that were a part of Bayridge’s make-up. The Principal’s approach to these factors was developmental, cautious and slow. Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) commented that “there had not been a complete linking between the planning phases and the practices which would be in effect when the school opened” (p. 119) and the Principal believed that embarking on all innovations simultaneously might cause them to fail. This factor of adequate planning time is critical in a new school where there are no structures, procedures and curriculum material in existence. The decision to not tackle all innovations at once is an intuitive one that demonstrates the Principal’s ability to recognise the crucial factor of not only adequate time, but also staff ownership.

At the time of opening, the school site was not completed. Bayridge opened in the grounds of another secondary school. Starting a school without a permanent site is problematic. It means that establishing processes and structures and basic day-to-day procedures is nearly impossible because of the restrictions placed on you by the host school. Further to this, Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) described their initial perceptions of the school by commenting:

The school and its program are interesting from several perspectives. In the early stages of its inception, the school program was planned to provide for participation not only by teachers but by parents and students as well. The building itself was designed for optimum flexibility in accommodating different types of learning environments. Administratively, there was a flat staffing structure, i.e., no vice-Principal or department heads. The centrality of the student in the learning experience was to be emphasized. Parents were to become highly involved in the program. The curriculum was to be developed by staff and to include experimentation, although it would start in a relatively conventional way. (p. 2)

Attempting to put such ideas into place would have been a difficult task even within the settings of the school’s own site. The only innovations that could be developed would be the ones that were not bound or pre-determined by the host school. Unfortunately, though,
not having the permanent site ready when the school opened its doors did pose a problem for foundational staff members in starting the school with their initial ideals. The staff had to begin teaching using different methods and within different structures that were less than ideal. Also they had to contend with external forces, such as, school building design, resourcing of the permanent and temporary sites and external pressures from the system and other outside organisations.

Reflecting on the planning phases, Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) identified several factors that affected the innovations of the new school:

- the Principal was not part of the early development and articulation of the educational philosophy and practices of the new school;
- the majority of staff were not part of initial planning and consequently did not have clear ownership and expectations about the goals;
- the teaching staff at the time of hiring was absorbed with the responsibilities of their current positions and had little opportunity to consider the program for the new school. The little time that was available was absorbed with the immediate practicalities of obtaining resources, and there was a tendency to hold fast to previous practices and to follow conventional methods of teaching, or alternatively they sought and expected specific direction from recognised authorities (e.g. the Principal) in pursuing new approaches;
- the sharing of facilities with the host school, rather than beginning in the new building was a constraint on the development and practice of new techniques;
- there must be a direct attempt to link early planning with later planning and ensure that appropriate mechanisms were established to do this;
- the change in leadership of the district superintendents was crucial and system level leaders would need to have a contingency plan to ensure the progression of the school;
- the Principal should have attempted to link the previous planning by the committee and superintendent to his own planning;
• during the critical final planning year the Principal should have allowed for a collective forum for continued development and planning;
• mechanisms needed to be enacted to ensure that the majority of staff, who were not part of the planning, receive specific orientation or opportunity to develop their own approaches as professionals prior to the school opening; and
• structures and processes needed to be developed that would ensure that parents and students shared the vision and philosophy of the school.

An interesting feature of this study was that the school Principal and new district superintendent, staff and the wider community did articulate a vision and desire for innovation similar to that of the original planners. But the translation of these ideas into practice was not thought of. Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) commented that this did not mean to imply that there was a simple solution to any of the problems stated. Rather, the opportunity presented in the study was to identify factors that are “usually neglected” (p. 126) and to pose questions about whether organisations have “explicit mechanisms for continually addressing these factors” (p. 126). Eastabrook and Fullan commented that this was even more important in a school like Bayridge because it had as its focus a “more long-term strategy to social change” (p. 126). This ‘long-term strategy’ had potential to be sustained in the school. Unfortunately the study did not continue past the initial implementation phase and hence information was not presented on the long term outcomes of the initial innovations.

Nevertheless, Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) have presented a list of key factors and issues that should be considered during the initial establishment phase of a school.

These include:

• leadership;
• decision-making and communication;
• educational vision and philosophy;
• staff ownership;
• teachers’ professional lives;
teachers’ capacity and knowledge;
adequate time for planning;
resourcing; and
staff turnover.

Case Two: Fink (2000) and Lord Byron
The second case was conducted by Fink (2000) of a secondary school established in Canada during the early 1970s. Part of his doctoral work, the research was a “study of the 25 year history of a new and purposefully innovative school, Lord Byron” (p. xii). Fink was a foundational staff member of Lord Byron. This case is of obvious significance to my study as it was undertaken from the perspective of not only an insider but also a foundational staff member of a new school. This position articulates clearly with that of my own.

Fink was hired as the foundation chair of social sciences and described the initial time at Lord Byron as “a time when the opportunity to innovate was limited only by a person’s imagination” (p. 20). He discussed the fact that during this initial period, his life was totally focused on the school. He described a lack of balance between his school life and personal life, but could not see it at the particular time. He stated, “I had finally arrived in a situation that was congruent with my values and beliefs about education and the treatment of people. I was totally, almost obsessively involved” (p. 20). This statement draws our attention to the possible issue of staff exhaustion.

Lord Byron opened in 1970, with its initial development being based on creativity and experimentation. There were different structures for curriculum time, students were grouped differently, the focus of instruction placed the emphasis on the student at the centre, and the curriculum design had to be meaningful and relevant to the students. However, as time progressed, both internal and external forces began to change the direction and focus of the school from creativity to one of survival. Fink (2000) raised an important aspect about this example of progression in a new school’s life and reflected on
“why a school that started out with more advantages than virtually any other secondary school in Canada lost its innovative momentum and experienced an attrition of change” (p. xiii).

Fink (2000) then raised the questions:

Is there a ‘life cycle’ to new and innovative schools that contributes to the attrition of change? If such a life cycle exists within such schools, what are its stages and characteristics? Are there identifiable danger points and perspectives, internal and external to the school that contribute to the attrition of change within it? (p. xiii)

These questions foreshadow not only the obvious problems with establishing a school but also raise the issue of sustainability. Fink (2000) used the concept of change to investigate, analyse and offer possible explanations to these questions. He integrated the change concept with “six interrelated lenses or frames…context, meaning, leadership, structure, culture, and teachers’ work and lives” (p. 6). As well as this, his examination involved looking at these areas at an internal, district and state level. He believed that an examination of a new school could not be done in isolation, but that external factors obviously were in play at the time of the school’s initial design and progression. Fink (2000) also divided the history of the school into three distinct periods. The first period was that of “creativity and experimentation” (p. 11), the second period was that of “overreaching and entropy” (p. 11), and the third period was that of “survival and continuity” (p. 11).

The period of ‘creativity and experimentation’ lasted for about eight years, from 1970 to 1978. Teaching was to be student-centred and the focus was to be on curriculum as a whole rather than specific discipline areas. Structures and processes within schools were to be modeled on principles “that were positive, supportive, and non competitive, and that communicated with students and parents in a spirit of openness and mutual support” (p. 14). At a wider level, there was also restructuring occurring. The school districts were amalgamated into larger central districts to administer education. The district in which
Lord Byron was located was eager to embrace change and look for ways “to better educate students” (p. 16). The foundation Principal of Lord Byron was employed during this time to be part of a group that investigated better ways to teach students. He was employed a year prior to Lord Byron opening and was instrumental in developing its initial philosophical basis. Lord Byron was seen as a “lighthouse” (p. xii) school in its district. It secured a great deal of support from district level in its initial stages. Lord Byron appeared to have begun in an idyllic environment, that is, the initial design of the school was progressive in many ways and the school had support from external structures. The partnership that is formed between a new school, its members and the external forces, in this case the system, is crucial to the progression of a new school. It is crucial because it meant external support and recognition.

Lord Byron was initially designed on a semester-based system. Students studied four subjects per five-month semester. Each subject lasted for ninety hours, which equated to approximately five hours of instruction in each of the four subjects per week. Each day was divided into six 60-minute periods and each subject was studied each day. This meant that students had one free academic period as well as a lunch break. Teachers had similar timetables. Fink (2000) commented that the longer period structure allowed teachers to use a “variety of teaching strategies to engage students” (p. 17). Classes were mixed ability and professional development was provided for staff to embrace this approach. Departments were organised in a cross-disciplinary manner. Teachers designed and taught cross-disciplinary integrated units of work. This approach to structure meant that there were monetary savings in the number of teachers needed to staff the school. The savings were then used to support teachers by providing clerical support, teacher aides, laboratory assistants, and occasional experts such as professional musicians, and a variety of extra physical resources. Adequate time has been previously raised as a crucial factor in establishing a new school and the fact that this was recognised and some allocation of resources to teaching staff to enact the vision of the school was seen as positive.

The cross-disciplinary structures also provided a change to traditional approaches to administration and management. This approach resulted in approximately halving the amount of “formal leaders” (p. 18). The leaders of the departments were known as
“department chairs” (p. 18) and were in charge of discipline and administration, as well as being curriculum writers. They offered support to teaching staff in not only writing material, but also releasing teachers to write curriculum materials. The department chairs also formed the “Principal’s cabinet” (p. 18). This type of structure demonstrates that, organisationally, leadership and decision-making processes were different from the beginning stages of the school and that there was a real attempt to change.

The physical structures of Lord Byron were also different. It was designed on an open plan and there were “few doors, air conditioning for year round use, and the system’s first main frame computer” (p. 19). These few aspects would have been crucial to foundational staff as it would have meant comfortable conditions and emphasised that technology was to be integral to teaching and learning. The library was known as the resource centre and was the centre of the school. The naming of the library as the resource centre was also forward thinking and placed obvious emphasis on knowledge and sources of knowledge. Open teaching spaces were designed for an interdisciplinary approach. The open plan design was a challenge for staff and Fink (2000) reported that when building additions were to be made in 1975, staff requested some “strategically placed walls” (p. 19). It would seem that staff were not ready to embrace an open plan environment in their pedagogical approaches.

Fink (2000) stated that the next phase began in about the mid 1970s and was a period of ‘overreaching’. During this time there were so many innovations occurring that staff had difficulty in coping with them all, and the community’s ability to support and understand the school was declining. This issue raised the question of staff exhaustion. Not only were staff attempting to adhere to the innovations that were put in place which involved much time and planning, but they were beginning to have to deal with a lack of understanding from some external forces as to their practices. This would have placed enormous pressures on the staff and at this stage of establishing a new school this factor should have been dealt with accordingly. Simultaneously, a period of ‘entropy’ was occurring. During this period monetary resources were scarce as funding of innovations had reached a low point. Coupled with this was an increased movement within the province, primarily by the teacher education union, to revert back to a more centralised curriculum that was
administered by the province and did not have the flexibility to cater for individual students. This push also received support from tertiary institutions that were dissatisfied with secondary education in the province and wanted a more rigorous approach to schooling. Obviously the initial ‘honeymoon’ period of monetary and resource allocation had ended at Lord Byron, as well as the external pressures emanating from the system and tertiary institution about the type of ‘ready’ students they were preparing for future study. From within the school there were issues of staff exhaustion and these were in direct interaction with issues emanating from external forces, that is, the local community, the system and other outside agencies. These pressures and issues of accountability had a direct impact on the staff and subsequently the way in which they engaged with their core business of teaching and learning.

There were also several other factors that affected Lord Byron at this time. Fink (2000) commented that the founding Principal’s “departure…was a major turning point in Byron’s history” (p. 25). Also, during the first four years, four of the original department chairs also left the school. The founding Principal had spent time with the department chairs and worked with the concept of “succession planning” (p. 25) and they were all successfully replaced. Unfortunately though, “succession planning” (p. 25) for the Principal was an external responsibility. He was seen as “such a revered and admired figure that virtually any successor would find it almost impossible to replace him” (p. 25). The school was also undergoing increase in numbers from 900 to 2000 students. This, in turn, meant teacher recruitment would be increased. Teacher employment at this stage was crucial. Fink (2000) described how the “careful selection that characterized the recruiting of initial staff was lost by the sheer urgency of adding staff” (p. 52). Many of the new staff did not share the same philosophy as those initially employed and some ended up at Lord Byron as “perspectived transfers” (p. 52). This highlights a significant factor in establishing a new school, that is, staff turnover. Fink (2000) documented that there just was not staff turnover (which would be seen as a natural process in any human system) but rather that there was an ‘exodus’ of staff. The ‘exodus’ of staff was not due to their being unhappy but they had been recognised as educational leaders and it was hoped that these staff would have a widespread effect on improving school outcomes in many schools. Stability of staff in a new school is seen as a crucial factor. The staff increased in
size, and one immediate effect was that there was less communication through whole staff meetings and more communication through the department level. Having a majority of foundational staff leave the school so soon after it was established meant that recruitment of new staff was critical. It is at this stage that new staff would need to begin a process of becoming entrenched in the philosophy of the school and also be provided with the opportunity to add their experiences to what was occurring.

During 1975 Lord Byron was evaluated by a committee of independent educators and researchers. The report indicated that Lord Byron was a good school with staff always trying to do better. The report also identified issues of “inordinate pressure and staff workload, lack of communication among staff and students as the school grows, responsibility and self-discipline of a few students who gave the school a bad image, and a rift that might grow between original and new members of staff” (p. 20). During the late part of the 1970s the district also adopted a fairly conservative approach. The autonomy was to disappear by the late 1970s and early 1980s. School districts prescribed the curriculum and assessment and Lord Byron had based only forty percent of its final assessment grade on an examination. It was required to change to a higher percentage that would allow predictability and control. Districts were also making decisions on funding, and even prescribed a traditional management structure within schools. For Lord Byron this meant that the cross-disciplinary department chair structure would be abolished. The freedom that Lord Byron’s staff initially had experienced was replaced by a highly centralised system that decided what they were going to teach and how they would teach it. Further, the original leadership and decision-making structures were abolished. This period of entropy had a negative impact on Lord Byron.

A further issue was that the new Principal was seen to use the language of the philosophy of the school, but was not seen to truly believe in it. The new Principal believed that original staff could not separate their bond with the founding Principal to the actual underlying philosophies of Lord Byron. After the second Principal left Lord Byron, he made an insightful comment on educational change: “Change has to be built into the process. Change identified with a person has roots in its own destruction. There has to be loyalty to broader issues” (p. 26). The recognition of the importance that leadership plays
in maintaining, supporting and sustaining innovations in such situations is made here and the detrimental effects that this would have on school practices was evident.

The final phase, ‘survival and continuity’, spanned a period from the mid 1980s to mid 1990s. During this period the school joined the “mainstream of secondary schooling in the district and in the province” (p. 11). There were changes in government and hence changes in educational policy. There was a decrease in funding of the public sector, which had a direct effect on districts and schools. The leaders who were to be employed during this time attempted to recapture what Lord Byron had been. There were decreases in student enrolment, and as a result there were decreases in staff. In order to counter the decline of student enrolments and the erosion of the philosophy of the school, new leaders attempted to make Lord Byron the centre of some of the district’s new innovations. There were always issues surrounding the new Principal, but fewer original staff existed and these problems became less apparent. During this period, one of the Principals was described as being “much more directive and decisive, he…clarified decision-making processes and lines of reporting in the school as well as streamlining procedural issues” (p. 33). During this time it was also necessary for key players within the school to try to reorient the community’s perceptions of the school. Towards the end of this period the Principal, who had been a pre-service teacher at Lord Byron in its initial years, still believed that the type of curriculum and programs that Lord Byron offered were quite “unique” (p. 33). The school experienced yet another downturn in enrolments during the mid 1990s and was struggling for its survival.

In response to the question “Is there a ‘life cycle’ to new and innovative schools that contributes to the attrition of change” (p. xiii), Fink (2000) concluded “that there was a very definite and definable pattern in Byron’s evolution” (p. 149).

Fink’s (2000) findings suggest that there are major factors that played a part in the erosion of change:

- the fluctuation of the external climate politically, that directly affected Lord Byron’s policies, support and finances;
• the decrease in community support and the community’s perception of “good schools and real schools” (p. 150);
• a loss of the initial “critical mass” (p. 150) of staff with the guiding philosophy;
• the employment of staff who did not share the same philosophical basis as the foundation staff;
• the early departure of the first Principal;
• the breakdown in decision making balance between the management and staff;
• the physical structural walls that ended a period of openness and timetable structures that became more rigid;
• the departure of staff to less stressful environments that were not so exhausting;
• the perceived lack of support from administration as the school evolved;
• the original young staff eventually had outside “familial” (p. 152) commitments; and
• indications that many initial staff were showing the signs of burnout from “years of experimentation and innovation and lack of respect for their efforts” (p. 152).

These contributing factors support the external and internal level forces defined in Chapter One and in summary raise issues that pertain to:

• staff conditions;
• adequate time for planning and preparation;
• the need to acknowledge the effort of staff;
• decision-making is a critical component;
• planning for the departure of a ‘critical mass’ of foundational staff, including the Principal needs to be thought of at the design stage;
• a change in educational philosophy as the school grew and the need to plan for the reculturing of staff subsequent to the foundation year;
the critical importance of maintaining positive relationships and open communication with the local community; and

- the need to plan so that external pressures are able to be accounted for and managed effectively.

Case Three: Margolis (2005)

Margolis (2005) conducted a study on a new charter school examining the case at two levels, the school level and the individual teacher level. Margolis aimed to provide a different type of data on charter schools instead of replicating the work of others in arguing for or against the charter school movement. Also, a majority of the research conducted into charter schools was predominantly quantitative and he wanted to provide detailed accounts of a charter school from an insider’s perspective. This case study was not available at the time that initial reading of literature was undertaken. However, the issues and findings of Margolis’ work support that of the others cited within this chapter and also reflect the types of questions and issues that I had observed.

Margolis (2005) provided detailed accounts of the lives of four teachers. These accounts are valuable insights into how the establishment process and policies of a new school affected the professional lives of these teachers. On a teachers’ long term commitment to the new school, Margolis found that the attraction of being a part of a new school setting was initially enticing to the teachers. However, he found that while preference and competition (salary was negotiated and not on a common scale) lured some teachers to charter schools, in the end it was not enough to keep teachers at the school. Teachers were promised that they would be part of “creating a new school focused on correcting social inequities” (the vision) (p. 105). This philosophical standpoint was one that the teachers strongly supported and they wanted to be a part of a school that had this idea as its foundation. However, Margolis concluded that because the school was basically run like a business, not enough attention was given to enacting the vision.

Margolis (2005) also found that there was not enough time allocated to teachers for critical aspects of their work, such as planning. This resulted in not enough attention being paid to developing curriculum materials and the necessary support structures to
implement the curriculum were non-existent. Margolis reported that many of the teachers did not voice their concerns to the administration because salaries and higher positions were a negotiated commodity.

The teachers in the case study were overwhelmed, exhausted and felt little professional and self worth during the time they were at the school. Many of them became ill due to stress-related conditions. Only seven of eighteen foundation staff returned to start the second year at the school, which is considered a high attrition rate. Of the four case study teachers only one lasted beyond the initial three year period. The teachers reported that they encountered “cultural dissonance, emotional exhaustion, and a lack of support structures” (p. 95).

One of the other teachers reported that she “longed for structured reflection to help process the difficulties associated with realizing…visions” (p. 97). One of the teachers reported that she looked for times to “rest” (p. 100) and to reflect about the “small successes” (p. 100). This teacher also was involved in conflict with one of the other case study teachers. The conflict eventuated because they were both competing for the same promotional position and only one of them was successful. Also, this teacher had not been able to negotiate a salary rise while others around her did. In her mind this did not validate her as a person or a professional. The last case study teacher reported “feelings of inadequacy, an increasingly pessimistic outlook, and perceived lack of validation from the administration for her hard work” (p. 105).

Margolis’ (2005) account of the four teachers’ experiences at a new school has captured one of the major focus areas of this study, that is, issues around staff. In doing so, he has articulated a crucial component of any school change, reform or establishment process, which is that teachers are an integral and important part of the process and product.

The conclusions presented by Margolis (2005) are very clear, and are:
• establishing a new school requires leaders to be aware of and construct processes and conditions that account for issues in regards to adequate time for the preparation of curriculum materials;
• the issue of adequate and appropriate resources to support staff;
• processes whereby teachers’ professional lives are validated;
• there is adequate time built into the day that provides time for teachers to reflect on their work;
• structures that takes into account the frantic nature of a new school and ensures the issue of staff exhaustion is combated;
• structures that can account for the intricacies of staff relationships; and
• real time is spent on the sharing of and building of vision.

Lessons learned from the profession

There is an increasing amount of anecdotal accounts appearing in professional literature about new schools. The stories chosen to be cited here are from the perspective of a district superintendent who was in a supervisory role of two schools at the time of their establishment. The narrations provide rich descriptions from an insider’s point of view about the central themes emerging at the establishment phase of a new school.

Doremus (1981), a district superintendent in the United States, undertook an investigation of schools that were established during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. He chose to investigate the schools because of personal interest in their initial design. He wanted to ascertain whether the schools, which were seen at the time as educational innovations, had practices that were institutionalised and were making improvements to student learning, or whether they had “died” (Doremus, 1981a, p.199). He described the establishment phase of a new school as providing the foundational members an extraordinary opportunity to “enact wholesale change” (p. 202).

One of the schools described by Doremus (1981a) was John Adams High School, which was built in the early 1970s. Its educational design was based on a four year general curriculum. Many of the initial teaching staff were Harvard graduates who wanted to play a role in furthering the education of the unmotivated students who lacked basic skills.
Students had to meet for only ninety minutes a day for instruction and then the rest of the time was spent on solving problems that were interdisciplinary, and dealt with current social issues.

The school experienced problems from the outset. One of the initial issues was that few of the original administrators and teachers had experience in new schools. This fact would cause difficulties in such a setting because the staff did not know what to expect, what issues may arise and hence could not adequately put in place processes and structures to deal with such factors.

One of the issues that Doremus (1981a) related was that the physical design of the school was predetermined by district administrators, and hence there was no ownership of the building of the school by staff. The physical structures were different and the school had been branded an “experimental school” (p. 200). This fact had caused confusion within the local community and because of this there was little community support.

The teachers who had previous teaching experience were described as “outstanding”, but as Doremus explained, “many… perhaps too many…had been superstars in their original schools” (p. 200). A lack of administration experience also meant that while the educational philosophy and design of the school were clearly articulated, there was initially little focus on the “nitty-gritty of school operation – attendance, scheduling, and discipline” (p. 200). All of these factors are critical in a new school. It assumed that not many teachers would have experience in establishing a new school and hence their expectations cannot be guided by some sort of pre-determined criteria. Again staff ownership is raised as a critical issue, as here the administrators had already made decisions about the school and not included staff in the decision-making processes. Having so many teachers that were seen as “outstanding” in their previous schools could have been used as an advantageous factor, but Doremus (1981a) purports that this was not the case and alludes to the issue of human ego and how this would play out in staff relationships. The management of day-to-day issues has not been raised thus far and is central to establishing a new school successfully. Practices and procedures need to be put in place that allow all staff, whether they be teaching or administrative, to do their jobs to
the best of their abilities. If such support structures are not in place in a new school this just would add another level of work-related pressures.

Doremus (1981a) also described how many of the foundational staff claimed that “the school lacked leadership” (p. 201). They believed that there was a philosophy of “shared decision-making” (p. 201), but when needed the Principal was unable to say, “This is the way it has to be” (p. 201). The staff are referring to a critical aspect of leadership which is that of a leader being able to be decisive when necessary.

Another critical factor that Doremus (1981a) alluded to is that of the pace of implementation of the proposed innovations. Staff believed that too much was being done too quickly. This could account for staff exhaustion and the ability to maintain the innovations over time. This also raises questions about leadership and how leadership personnel could best support and maintain practices in a new school.

During the first ten years of the school’s existence it experienced many problems due to the examples cited previously. Staff during this period made “herculean efforts to recoup their original losses” (p. 201), but after twelve years of operation, and continual community and district pressure, the school was closed. The “lack of school leadership” (p. 201) has been highlighted previously in the other cases cited and is re-acknowledged here as a critical factor in establishing a new school. The ‘leadership’ factor is critical because the initial enacting of structures and processes needs to begin somewhere and it is obvious that this is crucial in a new school setting.

Doremus concludes his description of John Adams High School by saying,

The opening of a new school presents the innovator with a rare opportunity to enact wholesale change. To move too slowly is to risk losing the opportunity. On the other hand, if the innovator moves too quickly, chaos may result. (p. 202)

The other case, Nova High School, designed its curriculum based on a team teaching approach. Doremus (1981b) describes the school, as one of the most “widely hailed
educational innovations of the 1960s” (p. 274). The vision of this school was to become a multi-campus site that provided education from elementary to tertiary levels. The school was to have a research expectation and focus. This school was based on a 220 day trimester model. There were five 70 minute periods a day, and classes were based on a vertical ungraded approach. The physical structure of the school provided technology in every room, that is, overhead projectors and screens at every “teaching station” (p. 274), the library was decentralised into resource areas, teaching spaces were shaped as either trapeziums or triangles with tiers, there were specialist electronics areas, the school was fully air conditioned, and there were no traditional office spaces. The design of the buildings meant that the resource centre was in the middle of each building. Teaching and conference spaces were situated around the resource centre.

The curriculum consisted of traditional academic subjects, but the teaching of these subjects adopted a generalist approach. The science coordinator at the time noted, “We have no chemistry teachers, no physics teachers, and no biology teachers. All of our teachers are science teachers” (p. 274). Doremus (1981b) described the approach to teaching and the curriculum as being a “laboratory approach” (p. 274). All curriculum areas undertook this approach and the issue of staff knowledge and capacity to work within this environment was questioned. This approach attempted to rethink the way teachers identified with a particular curriculum area. Many secondary teachers, by the nature of their education, are ‘specialists’ in curriculum areas and even within particular curriculum areas, as the science example highlights. This would have been an unfamiliar approach to organisation at the time and staff did feel uncomfortable about their knowledge base.

Teachers at Nova High School were well rewarded. They worked 11 months of the year but received extra pay. During the initial stages, they were also relieved of classroom work so that they could develop curriculum materials. It was noted that one of the most important achievements of the school was “the large numbers of unsupervised student groups and individual students at work in all the buildings and common areas” (p. 275).
Nova High School was popular with the community, and provided a rigorous curriculum. The school population was highly motivated, and frequently “Nova skimmed much of the academic cream off the student body” in the district (p. 275). The school became a site with an elementary to tertiary focus but not all innovations were sustained. There were some initial research initiatives undertaken, but as the school progressed they became less frequent. The school year was shortened and the length of the school periods became twelve 30 minute periods a day. At the time of writing the article, Doremus (1981b) noted that there was “talk of phasing out Nova High” (p.275) with the idea that it would become a traditional district area school, and not one that had an elementary to tertiary focus. The principal at the time of Doremus’ investigation had been a teacher at the school when it first opened. He described Nova High School as “an exciting place then” and commented that he would “like to see it that way again” (p. 276).

Both cases cited by Doremus (1981a, 1981b) provide insights into the establishment phase of a school and highlight critical factors that need to be considered, which are:

- leadership is critical;
- adequate planning time is necessary;
- communication and decision-making structures are vital;
- teacher efficacy is important to initial vision building;
- the pace of innovation implementation is critical;
- teacher relationships affect implementation; and
- management structures adopted need to support staff.

**Chapter summary and conclusion**

In summary, the case studies and accounts provided a description of the characteristics from the perspective of insiders. The main issues articulated in this chapter make reference to issues such as:

1. design planning (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000);
2. financial planning (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977);
3. site development (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977);
4. curriculum planning (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
5. decision-making and communication processes (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
6. leadership (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
7. employment of appropriate staff (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000);
8. staff relationships (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
9. staff turnover: pressures from reform /change can result in an exodus of staff (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977);
10. vision and philosophy: staff that do not realise the vision are not part of the team (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
11. staff exhaustion (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
12. staff capacity and knowledge, staff efficacy, staff feelings of inadequacy (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
13. adequate planning time (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005);
14. interactions within and between external forces and local community involvement (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000);
15. adequate reflection and professional dialogue time (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Margolis, 2005);
16. validation of staff work from leadership structures (Margolis, 2005); and
17. detail given to basic structures such as adequate time, curriculum material and resources management issues and support (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005).

The seventeen observed characteristics cited from the three case studies and anecdotal descriptions presented within this chapter were further synthesised and categorised. By reflecting on the seventeen characteristics articulated in the new schools literature five
major categories emerged, they are: leadership; planning; management; staff issues and resourcing, and have been presented in summary form in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Categories emerging from the New Schools Literature

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
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<tr>
<td>5, 6, 10 &amp; 16</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>2, 3,&amp; 17</td>
<td>Management and resourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 &amp; 15</td>
<td>Staff Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>External Pressures</td>
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The literature presented within this chapter provided information about the issues raised by the focus questions and defined within the external and internal level parameters. Through the process of reviewing this literature the issues and challenges that were occurring day to day at Companion High School were validated in the experiences of other schools. However, what was absent in the literature were deeply considered and detailed insights about the necessary mechanisms and processes needed to address the issues and questions raised. Also, when considering the initial focus questions (see Chapter Two, page 29) the review of the new schools literature did not provide sufficient information in order to answer the questions adequately. For example, we know that decision-making and communication processes are important. But what was not made explicit was how to implement structures in a new school that would make these processes effective, or even which models would best suit a new school. The same observation can be made of each of the seventeen factors stated at the beginning of this section of this chapter.

Through reviewing the literature, clearer focuses of the many issues pertaining to a new school have been articulated. What was not evident in these works were two issues that I observed at Companion High School in relation to technology and pastoral care. This could be due to the fact that in terms of technology, the majority of cited cases within this chapter preceded the period where technology, in the sense of computer and information technologies, had become an everyday issue in teachers’ practice. Also, internal pressures
in terms of *pastoral care*, has not been explicitly cited in the literature. This is not to say that the issue of pastoral care would not have been a focus of the leaders and teachers of the school cases cited within this chapter. This factor could have been an issue that would have been acted upon in parallel to all other issues that would have been faced. Pastoral care was a significant aspect at Companion High School and the implementation of any structure at Companion High School had to account for issues to do with young adolescents and their needs.

Reflecting on the nature and scope of the issues raised here, it was necessary to source literature that not only dealt with what characteristics would/should be obvious in a new school, but also the processes needed to ensure these traits came into being and were maintained. This began the next stage of the study where literature from the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement were reviewed. These two areas of educational research were to provide the detail about what an effective school should look like and how a school may become like that. Given the paucity of intervention-oriented direction in the new schools literature, the work on school effectiveness and improvement represented a likely and promising source of direction for addressing the issues and challenges associated with the internal and external forces.

Chapter Four follows with a review of literature in the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement.
Chapter Three outlined the literature available in the area of new schools. That literature provided some insights into characteristics present when establishing a new school, but did not provide a comprehensive base of information about the processes of establishing a new school. In order to fulfil the purposes of this study it was necessary to identify not only the characteristics that should be evident in a new school, but also find information about the processes that a new school could or should use during its establishment. Therefore, a deliberate decision was made to focus on the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement. These literatures are seen as cornerstones in the field of educational research in terms of all aspects of schools. While this literature relates to existing schools it is still pertinent to this case study because of the vastness of the areas of educational research it encompasses. This literature provided information on areas such as educational leadership, change processes, decision-making and communication, curriculum design, implementation and evaluation, school structures, and professional development. All of these areas are relevant to a new school. Reviewing and synthesizing this literature, necessary information about critical school issues, practices and processes were identified.

The areas of school effectiveness and school improvement are presented separately followed by a synthesis of findings pertinent to this study. In the absence of comprehensive literature on what a new school should look like the lessons learned from the aforementioned areas provided an insight into what factors have been deemed as effective school improvement efforts.

School effectiveness and school improvement: an introduction

Both the school effectiveness and improvement literatures represent vast areas of educational research. Within each of these literatures there are many more specific areas that relate to schools, for example, leadership, management, administration, school culture and staff professional development, and each of these areas has its own documentation. In
this chapter, seminal research in school effectiveness and school improvement have been used to identify those factors that comprise an effective school and the areas identified over the last three decades that constitute foci for the improvement of existing schools. The factors deemed relevant for the improvement of schools represent an important reference for efforts to create a new school.

Efforts to reform schools in order to improve the educational outcomes of students began over one hundred years ago (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Investigations in the areas of school effectiveness and improvement have been the focus of much educational research over the past four decades. The school effectiveness movement started during the late 1960s, early 1970s. This was then followed by the school improvement movement in the late 1970s.

The literature in school effectiveness initially provided information about how to identify an effective school (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979). As this domain developed, research efforts began to provide details of what characteristics are evident in schools that have been determined as effecting positive student educational outcomes. The literature in school improvement focused on the dynamics, processes and structures necessary to make schools effective. Studies in these areas have attempted to address the fundamental issue of improving student performance and learning.

**School Effectiveness**

The school effectiveness literature essentially states that some schools are more effective than others and that these schools have an impact on student learning and performance. This area of educational research is relevant to this case study because foundational staff members of a new school would want to understand those factors or characteristics that make schools more or less effective.

School effectiveness is about those factors that exert a positive influence on student performance and learning, and the characteristics and conditions that provide opportunity for this improvement. Reynolds (1985) purported that educational research in the 1960s was quite explicit in descriptions of every aspect of a student’s life and stated that “it
seems extraordinary that studies went into such detail on the quality of the plumbing in people’s houses…..but measured so very little about their children’s schooling” (p. 3). Reynolds, reflecting on British educational research at the time, provided some insight into why schools and the effectiveness of schools were not the focus of educational research and reasoned that you could define these into three focus areas: “the intellectual insecurity of educational research…, the nature of …sociology of education; and the sheer volume of practical problems” (p. 3). The “intellectual security of educational research” (p. 3) is derived from the tendency of leading academics at the time to use psychology as a source of explanation for what they were researching. The majority of these academics were psychologists. Also, the sociology of education affected research at the time as there was a prominent belief that “the school was independent of its intakes” (p. 4) and that what occurred outside a school directly impacted on student learning. The third determinant is that, pragmatically, it is difficult to take on school-based research at scale. To add to the complexity of this there was no theoretical framework to further such research, that is, no methodological frameworks by which to work with schools in measuring the effects of the school on student learning (Reynolds, 1985).

Some of the initial work in the area of school effectiveness was completed by reanalysing data collected from earlier work, such as, Coleman (1966), Jencks (1972), Plowden (1967) and Weber (1971) (Reynolds, 1985). Studies by Brookover and Lezotte (1979), Edmonds and Frederiksen (1979), and Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston (1979), for example, formed some of the foundations for future work in the area of school effectiveness.

The seminal studies presented here have been chosen because they represent large-scale projects and between them draw on major contributory work in school research conducted in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The two focus studies are Edmonds and Frederiksen’s (1979) “Search for Effective Schools”, and Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston’s (1979) “Fifteen Thousand Hours”. These studies were a reaction to findings from sociological studies conducted in both Britain and North America in the 1960s that stated that schools had little or no effect on student performance and learning. Both studies draw upon critical work conducted by Coleman (1966) which concluded that student
achievement was basically independent of schooling and that sociological reasons could alone explain why students in some schools were performing and improving, and in other schools students were not. Jencks (1972), in analysing data from previous studies, reported that trying to minimise the differences between schools would not lead to a significant improvement in student learning outcomes. Similarly, the Plowden Report (1967) from Britain concluded that influence of schools on their students was limited and that factors attributed to the students’ home were far more influential on student performance and learning. Primarily, the Edmonds et al. (1979) “Search for Effective Schools”, and the Rutter et al. (1979) “Fifteen Thousand Hours” studies pursued the question of whether some schools were more effective than others, and tested the hypothesis that these schools were effective because of contributing factors within the school and not purely sociological reasons.

The Rutter et al. (1979) study focused on investigating the “broad patterns of life in schools and about the kinds of environments for learning” (p. 22). The following questions, “Do a child’s experiences at school have any effect; does it matter which school he goes to; and which are the features of a school that matter?” (p. 1), were presented as the overall focus questions of the study. As mentioned previously, this work originated from earlier work (see, for example, Coleman, 1966) that stated that schools had little effect on student learning and performance. Rutter et al. paid particular attention to the results of earlier studies that created “the impression that education made little difference” (p. 3). Rutter et al. attribute the failure of earlier work to establish that schools did play a significant role in the performance and learning achievement of students, on the particular standardised tests used, the extent to which the students and schools varied on the tests, and the particular statistical analysis tools employed. The standardised tests were not appropriate as they tended to test items that did not align with the curriculum being taught. The schools and individual students did vary on the tests, but the primary factor that was examined as a probable cause for this was the aspect of resources, both human and physical. Previous work in this area had concluded that resources did not contribute significantly to the achievement level of students. Rutter et al. also proposed that much of the earlier work did include data from the students’ primary schools. Consequently, there were no benchmarks and no way of studying the effects of schooling over a prolonged
period of time taking into account the past schooling experiences of the students. The intent of the Rutter et al. work, then, was to address the shortcomings stated above and to identify what effects schools did have on student learning and performance.

The original work began in 1970 with a comparative study of a group of ten year olds from inner London and the Isle of Wight. The study focused on assessing the children’s intellectual ability and reading attainments. Information was collected on the children’s behaviour, attendance at school and family circumstances. Data were also collected on specific school features, that is, physical and administrative features of the school, school processes and ecological influences. The study concluded that there were significant differences between individual children based on the data gathered on behaviour and reading achievement levels. Also, there were significant differences between children’s achievement and family differences. What was most significant from this work was that not only did the differences occur between individual students, but the researchers found significant differences between the schools based in the inner London area and those based on the Isle of Wight, as well as a difference between the schools just in the inner London schools. These data gave the researchers the initial benchmarks needed from a primary school perspective and subsequent work tracked these students. All students were then retested in 1974. The students at this stage were in their third year of secondary school and their locations were greatly dispersed, with a majority of the students being located in twenty non-selective schools in three educational districts, and the rest either moving into a selective setting or to a school out of the focus area. Also tested in 1974 were the students that entered the same secondary school settings as those in the tracked group but were not from the studied primary schools. This was undertaken to establish whether there were differences among the students from all the feeder areas. They found no significant differences between the tracked students and non-tracked students. There were significant differences among four of the schools out of twenty. This gave rise to not only focusing on student differences but also school differences. Twelve schools were selected from the non-selective cohort to continue the study. The design of the study enabled the assessment of student outcomes after taking into account variations in student intake. This provided the opportunity to make a recommendation as to whether student performance was based solely on student intake or whether the school and factors within
the school had an effect. Rutter et al. (1979) found substantial variations among schools in student performance, that such difference could not be completely accredited to different intakes of students and that the correlations between student performance and school quality were greater at exit than at entry.

In summary they found ten significant outcomes, which are:

- Schools in inner London differed markedly in the behaviour and attainments shown by their pupils;
- Schools differed in the proportion of behaviourally difficult or low achieving children they admitted, but these differences did not wholly account for the variations between schools in their pupils’ later behaviour and attainment;
- Variations between schools in different forms of ‘outcome’...were reasonably stable over periods of at least four or five years;
- Schools performed fairly similarly on all the various measures of outcomes...schools which did better in terms of ...behaviour...tended also to do better...in terms of examination success;
- The difference in outcome between schools were not due to physical factors such as size, ... age of the buildings, ...space available....nor were they due to broad differences in administrative status or organisation;
- The differences between schools in outcomes were systematically related to their characteristics as social institutions. Factors as varied as ...academic emphasis, teacher actions in lessons, the availability of incentives and rewards, good conditions...the extent to which children were able to take responsibility;
- Factors outside the teachers’ control such as academic balance in the intakes to the schools...examination success tended to be better in schools with a substantial nucleus of children of at least average intellectual ability, and the delinquency rates were higher in those with a heavy preponderance of the least able;
- The effect of the balance stated in point seven was most marked with respect to delinquency and not to classroom behaviour and elsewhere about the school;
• The cumulative effect of the various social factors was considerably greater than the effect of any of the individual factors on their own; and
• Children’s behaviour and attitudes are shaped and influenced by their experiences at school and, in particular, by the qualities of the school as a social institution. (pp. 177-179).

In summary, the Rutter et al. (1979) study provided evidence that some schools were more effective than others. Their analysis took into account various aspects of a school and its student population. They considered such issues as behaviour, ‘delinquency’, the physical and human resource issue, teacher expectations, student intelligence, and the school as a social institution, as significant in determining whether a school was effective or not. The factor that they found most influential in determining the effectiveness of a school was the “cumulative effect of the various social factors” (p. 178). In establishing a new school, then, it would be relevant for foundational members to address such factors as those mentioned here. The results present a case for foundational staff in a new school, when developing both pastoral and curriculum models, to be grounded in the needs of the individual students of the school. Further, the school as a social institution, its operations, processes, teachers and their expectations and relationships are all significant when establishing a new school.

Edmonds et al.’s. (1979) “Search for Effective Schools” project was primarily based on reanalysing data gathered from earlier studies, that is, Coleman (1966) and Jencks (1972). The purpose of the Edmonds et al. project was to critically examine the earlier studies of school effectiveness “that have concluded that pupil performance is principally a function of pupil background characteristics” (p. 9). Their intention was to identify “instructionally effective schools” (p. 5) specifically for poor children. Initially, Edmonds et al. drew on data from the previously cited sources to identify effective schools. Two types of basic skills tests were used to ascertain what an effective school was. Initially the schools selected were racially homogeneous but later they expanded the study to include racially diverse schools. This allowed control of the different school populations on the basis of sociological determinants and the ability to focus on the effects of difference emanating from within the school. The second phase of the study involved the reanalysis of earlier
work conducted by Frederiksen (1975). This provided the opportunity to expand the data
source, but specifically this stage involved focusing on considering the “effects of schools
on children having different social background” (p. 8).

The design of the study was based on attempting “to relax past assumptions that may have
obscured relationships between school characteristics and school performance” (p. 14). In
doing so they based their design on the following premises:

- Schools are not uniformly effective for all pupils who attend them;
- Pupil social class and family background have two aspects…characteristics of the individual student…and…they represent characteristics of a set of students attending a given school;
- Conclusions about the existence of effective schools should be non-normative;
- Conclusions about school effectiveness are tempered by the performance measure involved;
- School effectiveness can be…measured by the average performance of the students in the school; and
- The family/social background of an individual student and school response to that background must be taken into account in assessing school effectiveness. (pp. 14-16)

Edmonds et al. (1979) stratified the student population into sub-groups based on race and
home background. Analysis of school effectiveness was then carried out for each sub-
group using the mean achievement scores for students. By correlating these measures,
Edmonds et al. attempted to determine if school effectiveness extended to all students
regardless of their background, or whether it was limited to a particular social group.
Also, by using school principal and teacher questionnaires, Edmonds et al. attempted to
describe schools that were more or less effective.

They found that there were significant differences between schools, that these differences
were not purely associated with student social and family background, and that schools
that had students from both poor and middle class backgrounds were not necessarily effective. In analysing the results from the school principal and teacher questionnaires, they concluded that effective schools were places where:

- instruction was effective;
- there was strong leadership;
- there was a belief that all students could reach a basic level of mastery;
- the school environment was structured so that it allowed for a safe but yet a challenging space;
- student improvement in basic skills was a priority; and
- student progress is continually monitored and results acted upon.

In summary, Edmonds et al.’s (1979) work provided further evidence that some schools were more effective than others. In focusing on the issue of poor children and how effective different schools were for them, they determined that some schools were more effective than others and that family and social background, while still a significant factor, did not contribute solely to student learning and performance. In analysing the school principal and teacher questionnaires, Edmonds et al. provided some constructive and critical characteristics of the types of in-school factors that should be considered when establishing a new school.

As the school effectiveness research movement gained momentum, studies were conducted that endeavoured to extend the results of the original studies pursued in the 1970s and begin to define more fully what an effective school may look like. As a result of this work many lists appeared of effective schools. For example, Levine and Lezotte (1990) defined a list of elements that were determined to have an effect on student performance and learning. They were:

- productive school climate and structure;
- focus on student acquisition of central learning skills;
- appropriate monitoring of student progress;
- practice oriented staff development at the school site;
• outstanding leadership;
• salient parent involvement;
• effective instructional arrangement and implementation; and
• high operationalized expectations and requirements for students. (p. 10)

Similarly, further work by Sammons, Hillman, and Mortimore (1995) identified factors and characteristics that underpinned effective schools. The characteristics, which were:

• leadership;
• shared vision;
• the learning environment;
• a focus on teaching and learning;
• high expectations;
• positive reinforcement;
• continual monitoring of student progress; student rights and responsibilities;
• home and school partnerships; and
• the school as a place of learning.

The factors identified by Sammons, Hillman, and Mortimore (1995) and Levine and Lezotte (1990) contributed significantly to the effective schools movement and the characteristics stated are widely accepted as what needs to be evident in an effective school. What is relevant for foundational staff establishing a new school is that there is an increased acknowledgement of the human aspect of effective schools. That is, more emphasis has been placed on the teacher, the student and the school as an organisation.

The Victorian Quality Schools Project (VQSP) (Hill, Holmes-Smith & Rowe, 1993) aimed to identify characteristics of effective schools and develop a model of teacher and school effectiveness. By doing so the authors envisaged the development of strategies for both schools and systems that would lead to improved educational outcomes of students. The project was initially conceived in the light of literature on school effectiveness and the perceived limitations of that literature (Hill et al., 1993) and specifically focused on
the achievement levels of students on English and mathematics tests. Data were sourced from parent questionnaires, teacher questionnaires, student records, and teacher records. The sample consisted of 13,900 primary and secondary school students and 930 teachers from two educational systems. The project utilised multiple outcome measures, including students’ achievement in English and mathematics, student attitude and behaviours, teachers’ perceptions of their work environment, and parent participation in and satisfaction with their child’s school. The project utilised a stratified sample and results were reported to a 95% confidence level. The project was longitudinal and as such was able to monitor students’ growth as well as monitor other school changes over time.

The key findings from the VQSP are that:

- subject profiles provided an effective framework for monitoring and reporting achievement;
- schools are not without considerable influence in overcoming inequalities imposed on students by their background characteristics;
- the bottom decile of students makes minimal progress in English beyond Year 4;
- attentiveness has a massive effect on student achievement;
- the frequency with which students do homework varies greatly between students, and the emphasis on homework changes from primary to secondary school;
- parents’ involvement in monitoring their child’s education is important for primary aged students;
- teachers are generally positive about their work environment, but they receive little feedback on their performance;
- leadership support is critically important in establishing a positive teacher work environment;
- the key to improved educational outcomes is teacher effectiveness; and
- schools found the data obtained through participation in the project useful to the context of school improvement. (pp. 27-33)
These findings suggest that classrooms should be the focus of specific change efforts in order to create situations for student learning and performance, supporting the earlier work that found that teacher expectation, instruction, and classroom environments all played a critical role in establishing an effective school. Also, the findings highlight another key aspect of school effectiveness, that is, leadership. Hill et al. (1993) offer a heuristic of teacher and school effectiveness; this is presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Hill et al. (1993, p. 34) A heuristic model of school and teacher effectiveness (p. 34)

Hill et al. (1993) draw our attention to the fact that “student readiness or availability for school learning” (p.32) is of utmost importance. Availability is defined as “functional levels of attentiveness and positive attitudes towards learning” (p. 32). These factors are seen to be affected by the home environment and by parent involvement in their child’s school life. The authors also note that readiness and availability are also influenced by
“positive teacher affect…teachers’ positive perceptions of their work environment….and the quality of teaching” (p. 32). Teachers are noted to be affected by the level and type of school organisational and leadership support. Hill et al. found that effects originating from changes in classroom practice were much greater than whole school effect in analysis of differences in student achievement. This, they argue, provided evidence that the school improvement effort should be focused on the classroom. The study also highlighted that leaders have a fundamental role in creating the conditions for improvement. This would involve leaders establishing vision, building commitment and capacity, and monitoring student progress.

Hill continued to work in the area of school effectiveness and future work involved him identifying further characteristics to add to the existing list of characteristics of effective schools. They are: cohesiveness and clear policies; high level of involvement in decision making and professionalism among teachers; and an emphasis on the basics (Hill, 2001). Hill (2001) was concerned about using a checklist to appraise schools as effective and stated that “those schools commonly acknowledged as effective, are not usually effective across the board” (p. 6). Hill further suggested that using the phrase “high performance schools” (p. 9) to describe an effective school would be more appropriate and presented four key characteristics. They were: “a high level of purpose, coherence, internal alignment and effectiveness” (p. 9). ‘Purpose’ implies strong leadership with clear and explicit goals, to which all members of the school were committed. ‘Coherence’ implied that a ‘high performance school’ managed the intricacies of schools and where all sections of the school worked together to achieve common goals. ‘Alignment’ was the ability of an organisation to cope with external pressures and use these to strategically enhance their own goals. ‘Effectiveness’ meant that there was an awareness amongst all members of the school community of the school’s operations, the way in which various factors in the school interplay and affect each other, and the ability to use such information to evaluate and modify practice. Hill added to our understanding of what makes a school effective. In relation to a new school, Hill’s characteristics of “high performance schools” (p. 9) are pertinent because they highlight the dynamic nature of a school and more fully detail how these characteristics can meaningfully be employed in a new school context.
The relevance of Hill’s work to establishing a new school is two-fold. First, it presents an example of a school effectiveness and improvement effort that is Australian-based. The results, however, are not different from those articulated by researchers from the northern hemisphere. Second, Hill (2001) added to our growing knowledge of the types of characteristics that should be evident in a new school in the need to acknowledge and deal with the human relationships and interactions that occur in a school setting.

School Improvement
The school improvement movement was focused on providing answers to questions about how schools could change to enact effective school practices. Historically, this movement overlapped with school effectiveness efforts and continues to be an area of focused educational research. This area of research furthered our knowledge of what should be evident in effective schools, and also contributed to our knowledge about how such good practices could be implemented in any school. Reynolds (2001) suggested that school improvement, as a means of effective educational change, was based on a number of assumptions, as indicated below:

- the school is the centre of the process;
- the approach is systematic;
- achieving educational goals involves more than just increased student learning outcomes, but also involves the development of teachers and effectively working in partnership with the community;
- that there is a multilevel perspective because a school does not exist in isolation, it is part of a wider educational community;
- strategies that are implemented need to be pursued in an integrated manner, that is, they should involve both policy and processes; and
- enacted change practices need to become institutionalised.

These assumptions seem obvious and logically would be part of the profile of a school wanting to be effective and able to improve over time.
Beginning in the 1970s, school improvement was based primarily on the adoption of innovative curriculum models and the possibilities of these models in improving pedagogical practices of teachers and hence enhancing student learning and performance. Reynolds (2001) outlines the development of the school improvement movement in four phases. The first phase involved implementing curriculum innovations. The second phase was focused on documenting and attempting to ascertain the failure of improvement efforts. The third phase was categorised as a period of success whereby there were educational change innovations occurring and these innovations were having an impact on student learning. The fourth phase was focused on the management of change. The fourth phase began a period of intense work in the area of educational change that has continued to the present day.

Reynolds (2001) discussed the idea that successful school improvement involved managing educational change effectively and stated that the continuing goal was “moving towards the ideal type of self-renewing school” (p. 33). The concept of self-renewing implied a dynamic structure and is appropriate when investigating schools as it implies the ability to regenerate and progress. If we consider this an important feature of an effective school that is able to continually improve, then the ideal would be to strive for such conditions. The question, then, was what would a self-renewing school look like, what sorts of processes, structures and characteristics would be obvious, what would allow for a continual regeneration? These questions underpinned the work of educational researchers by challenging them to not only identify features of such schools but also by challenging them to provide answers to such questions about schools. The end result would be evidence-based research in what makes a school a place that is able to regenerate and in turn this could offer insight into how to make such practices sustainable. The issue of sustainability is one that came to demand a great deal of attention in educational research and literature. The concept of sustainability will be further explored in Chapter Five.

What follows is an outline of two studies taken from the school improvement literature. The first is the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study (LSES) (1987). While the title of this work includes the word ‘effectiveness’ it has been categorised in this section of the
literature review on school improvement because the primary purpose of the study was to ascertain how effective schools managed school improvement. It was also chosen as a focus study because it attempted to bridge the gap between the school effectiveness and school improvement literature. The authors utilised seminal work from Edmonds et al. (1979) and Rutter et al. (1979) to design their study. Primarily this was because the findings of the effectiveness and improvement literature to date had not made a significant impact on the work of teachers and schools.

The second was a retrospective study of six high poverty elementary schools. Pointek, Dwyer, Seager and Orsburn’s (1998) study aimed to learn more about how schools became successful and how they were able to maintain their success. These two studies are significant to this case study because foundational staff members of a new school would want their school to be effective and would also want the school to be able to continually improve over time. By examining such literature we are able to not only describe the what of effective schools but also to begin to understand the how of effective schools.

Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) conducted the LSES over a six-year period and in three phases. These phases included piloting and adapting questionnaires and surveys, and utilising student level achievement data gathered from the hundreds of interviews with students, teachers and parents in seventy-six schools across twelve districts. The gathering of data from such a large “stratified random sample of schools allowed for comparisons among highly effective, typical, and ineffective schools” (p. 4). Stringfield and Teddlie’s (1987) focus areas for study were:

- The significance between student achievement variance at the school level;
- The generalizability of school effectiveness findings to other parts of the United States;
- The stability of outcome, process and relational measures;
- The role of “readily alterable” school climate variables;
- The school contextual variables leading to effectiveness;
• The connections between teacher and school effectiveness variables;
• The effect of leadership; and
• Internally initiated school improvement. (pp. 5-11)

Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) found that there were significant variances between students and that these variances were due to “alterable” (p. 6) variables, at the student, teacher and school levels. At the time of this study the issue of “generalizability” (p. 6) across the United States was not dealt with, but the authors suggested that a comparison between this study and the Rutter et al. (1979) study was needed. They also proposed that much of the earlier criticism into effective schools and how to improve schools was based on the “instability” (p. 7) of “outcome, process and relational measures” (p. 6) and that the LSES addressed this issue when conducting the study. With the “readily alterable” (p. 8) school climate variables, the authors found that there were significant variances within and between schools. One of the most significant variances was in the area of teachers’ and principals’ expectations of students’ long-term achievement. Also, students’ perception of academic climate, the principals’ perception of efficacy, family commitment to education, student long-term sense of educational achievement, and a negative school climate, were significant in determining school climate factors and hence implications for improving school effectiveness.

In regard to contextual variables leading to effectiveness, Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) found that teacher behaviours were predictors of school effectiveness. They found, though, that teachers in low socio-economic effective schools believed that they had accomplished less than others (this was opposite to what the study actually concluded) and also believed that there was less support from the community. Also, they found that teacher instruction, which included more interactive instruction “student time on task, and more ‘direct’ instruction …were occurring in ‘effective’ schools” (p. 10). Leadership was also a focus of the study. Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) stated “effective schools have instructionally focused leaders” (p. 10). They stated that this area was both easy and difficult to investigate. They found it easy in the sense that a principal’s quantitatively-measured opinions about their school’s effectiveness was a good predictor, but further qualitative analysis had to be undertaken to identify the differentiating variables. In
effective schools, they found the principals to be “passive and bureaucratic …cultural managers who saw multiple goals for education and who saw the process of goal achievement as ambiguous and personalistic…became involved in classroom processes…and stayed close to the children” (p. 11). Finally, Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) found significant variances between schools that initiated school improvement efforts themselves and ones that only addressed improvement issues that were imposed from external pressures. Teachers within schools that initiated improvement measures were more attuned to the needs of their students and focused for long periods of time on improving basic skills.

In summary, Stringfield and Teddlie (1987) began to more systematically investigate schools in order to provide a more comprehensive base into what effective schools do about improving. They identified obvious factors as having an effect on school improvement. These factors of school climate, teacher and student perceptions and attitudes, leadership, effective change policies and practices, and teacher-led improvement efforts are important variables in establishing a new school. What is disturbing, though, is that since this time not much has been added to our knowledge base about school effectiveness and improvement with further efforts replicating results, but still not necessarily addressing the issue of how.

The LSES identified factors that are present in schools that are able to manage and implement school improvement initiatives and these factors add to those from the school effectiveness literature. They are:

- School climate, which refers to the culture of the school, the environment, relationships and interactions between students, teachers, administrators and outside agents;
- Teacher and student perceptions and attitudes, which refers to teachers’ positive attitudes about their work and the school, and the ability for them to make a difference in the education of their students. Also this refers to the students’ attitudes and perceptions in regards to their schooling and how this affects the outcomes of their participation and success in learning;
• Leadership, which refers to the structures and processes established for the leadership model to work effectively, the type of leader, decision-making and communication.
• Effective change policies and practices, which refers to the structures and models adopted by the leadership structure to enact change, models of support to teaching staff, constructive methods of decision-making and communication; and
• Teacher-led improvement efforts, which refers to the fact that improvement efforts are more effective if initiated from within the school based on the needs of students and teachers instead of emanating from outside the school.

Pointek et al. (1998) conducted a retrospective study into six high poverty elementary schools that had demonstrated significant improvement. The purpose was not to describe the characteristics of effective schools but rather to learn more about how schools became successful and how they were able to maintain their success. What the authors aimed to do was to provide a more descriptive account of the processes for improvement and the necessary capacities to do so. The study utilised various forms of data collection to enable these aims to be realised. Data were gathered from school documentation, focused teaching staff interviews and observations. This work is of interest to this case study because of its acknowledgement of the intricacies of everyday school life and its recognition of the effect of the processes employed in bringing about change. The results recommended ten capacities that need to be promoted, enhanced and utilised in order to bring about successful change. The capacities were organised into three major themes: foundational; organisational; and learning and resource management (Pointek et al., 1998).

The authors describe the foundational capacities as:

the ways staff work together, make meaning of the context in which schools operate, and initiate and take advantage of the environment. In effective reforms efforts, staff work together to increase the overall energy available to their schools and develop common purposes rooted in the needs of their students.
They also find ways to articulate what is central to the culture of their schools. (p. 11)

This capacity resonates with the factors that would need to be evident in establishing a new school. This is of significance because of initial dynamics that are in play in a new school context. The issue of staff working together collaboratively is crucial in a new school setting as there is only a small number of foundational staff. Within such a small group a sense of community, collaboration, shared objectives and purpose are critical. Also, it is at the beginning stages that school culture will be created and nurtured and the staff capacity to be proactively involved in this process is vital.

The organisational capacities were seen to be as crucial as the foundational capacities and were about the structures necessary to help make educational change positive in schools. This capacity was evident in the six focus schools of the study and the authors observed such detail about the schools’ ability to use the “energy, expertise and initiative” (p. 23) where teams try out “new strategies on a small scale (piloting), allow staff to learn from one another, generate new ideas, and refine their shared objectives…use decentralized decision-making to involve more individuals…create new opportunities for use of time, organizing groups of students, spending funds, and deploying adult resources” (Pointek et al., 1998, p.23). This capacity also resonates with the type of structural environment that would need to be established in a new school. Within such a small community, foundational staff must be able to be part of the decision-making processes if only for the purpose of ownership of what is occurring. Working in such a group also presents the case for being able to work on projects in teams. The possibility of creating new structures in terms of scheduling and organisation of students is also an opportunity in new schools.

Learning and resource management capacities are also crucial, with the focus on creating and maintaining a learning ethic which implies the capacity for staff to align their growth as professionals with professional development and make this aspect an integral part of their work. Bringing in information and skills is about staff using external agencies and staff expertise to further their work in the school. Finally, orchestrating resources and
managing distractions involves staff in best utilising resources and setting parameters so that staff do not become burdened and overwhelmed. This capacity is also of significance to a new school. The idea that professional development should be integral to a teacher’s work is a factor that should be considered in a new school setting, especially since in a new school setting there are possibilities to make this part of a teacher’s core work. This, coupled with the management of resources, to help teachers work in ways that they are not exhausted, overwhelmed and burdened is crucial in a new school setting.

The Pointek et. al (1998) study identified specific capacities that were evident in schools that were improving. They were: foundational capacities; organisational capacities; and learning and resource management capacities. The foundational capacities were: enhancing the energy flow of staff; creating collective purpose; and strengthening the evolving culture. The organisational capacities were: teaming; creating structures for decentralized decision-making; making structural changes; and piloting. The learning and resource management capacities were: creating and maintaining a learning ethic; bringing in information and skills; and orchestrating resources and managing distractions. These capacities are seen as critical factors not only in an established school but also a new school. They are critical because they articulate the very human and dynamic nature of schools and attempt to offer a way of doing the good practices of schools. As such this work provided a way of thinking about new school in terms of a process, not just characteristics.

**Chapter synthesis and the further development of the characteristics framework**

The review and synthesis of the school effectiveness and school improvement literature was deliberate, since there were no substantial research-informed benchmarks for what a good new school should look like, or how it could evolve and continually improve over time. Presenting a synthesis of findings from these areas was a difficult task because the terms ‘effectiveness’ and ‘improvement’ are sometimes used interchangeably, and there is a great deal of overlap in concepts, goals and competing arguments.

There are obvious similarities between the different areas presented within this chapter. What has been presented in the previous sections on school effectiveness and school
improvement is not surprising, and Hill (2001) suggested that “a new paradigm that fully integrates research into educational effectiveness with ongoing processes of school improvement and reform” (p. 419-420) is emerging. It is from this perspective that we would be able to not only know what makes an effective school, but also how the school “came to be like that” (p. 424).

However, a limitation of the literature is that much of the work has been undertaken in the absence of strong theoretical foundations for the totality of the school improvement process (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2000; Sarason, 1990). While initially the research areas promised to inform educational practices, much of what resulted were checklists of factors and characteristics of what needed to be present in schools. What was lacking was a way to implement change on some sort of theoretical basis. This lack of theoretical foundation signaled that caution needed to be taken when considering literature in these areas. This is not to say that what were identified as necessary characteristics were incorrect. What did not eventuate were processes to integrate specific details and methods of planning, implementation and evaluation to have sustainable effects on overall school practices (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2000; Sarason, 1990). What is disconcerting is that researchers in these areas acknowledge the fact that the goals of effectiveness and improvement movements were rarely achieved (Desimone, 2002; Fink, 2000; Fullan, 1997, 2000, 2004, 2005b; 2006; Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006; Goldberg, 1996; Hargreaves & Fink, 2000, 2004; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2004; Harris, 2002; Hill, 2001; Hopkins, 1987, 1994, 1995; Huberman & Miles, 1986; Leithwood, 1992a; Levin, 2007; Louis, Toole & Hargreaves, 1999; Reynolds, 2001; Rosenholtz, 1987; Silver, 1994, 1998, 2001). Sarason (1990) commenting, on the history of educational reform in general claimed that “educational reform…is replete with examples of interventions that either failed or had adverse effects because those involved had only the most superficial and distorted conception of the culture of schools they were supposed to change” (p. 120). It is to this lack of understanding that Sarason (1990) attributes the failure of educational reform movements in the past. This limitation is acknowledged here and is presented as a gap in vital knowledge that could be used to analyse not only the phenomena of new schools, but also existing schools.
There is now evidence in the literature of a synthesis that increases our knowledge base of how to set improvement and reform agendas as well as how to enact them (Alston, 2004; Astuto, 1993; Bain, 2007; Barlow, 2005; Bennis, 1990; Berends, Bodily & Kirby, 2002; Bullough, 2007; Chrispeels, 1990; Crowther, 2002; Cuban, 1988, 1990; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Deal, 1990; Desimone, 2002; Dobozy, 2006; Elmore, 1990, 1992, 2002; Fink, 2000; Frome, 2001; Fullan, 2005b; 2006; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991, 1992; Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006; Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Gronn, 2002; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986a, 1986b; Hargreaves, 1997, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Margolis, 2005; Harris, 2001, 2004, 2005; Hill, 2001; Hollingsworth, 2004; Hopkins, 1994, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1994; Lamb, 2003; Lashway, 1998; Leithwood, 1994; Levine, 1991; Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003; Louis & Kruse, 1995; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Mulford, 1998; Retallick & Fink, 2000; Reynolds, 2001; Reynolds, Sammons, Stoll, Barber & Hillman, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1987; Sarason, 1990; Senge, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000; Silins & Mulford, 2000; Silins, Zarins & Mulford, 1998; Sterling, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Tyack & Tobin, 1994, Zepeda, 2004). Some leading authors in the school improvement and effectiveness fields suggest that the majority of the time this research has been in existence, the two areas have traditionally been in contest with each other (Harris, 2001). An alignment of these two fields of work seemed necessary and there have been more recent attempts to achieve this (see, for example, Bain, 2007; Barlow, 2005; Bennis, 1990; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Deal, 1990; Desimone, 2002; Dobozy, 2006; Elmore, 1990, 1992, 2002; Fink, 2000; Frome, 2001; Fullan, 2000, 2005a, 2005b; 2006; Gronn, 2002; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986a, 1986b; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Hill, 2001; Hopkins, 1994, 1995; Lamb, 2003; Lashway, 1998; Leithwood, 1994; Levine, 1991; Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003; Louis & Kruse, 1995; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Mulford, 1998; Reynolds, 2001; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000; Rosenholtz, 1987; Sarason, 1990; Senge, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000; Stoll & Fink, 1996; Sterling, 2001; Zepeda, 2004). Harris (2001), presenting contemporary perspectives on school effectiveness and school improvement, provided some insight into the distinction between the two fields and stated that “school improvement researchers have concentrated their efforts upon the cultural dimension of schooling” and “school improvement is primarily concerned with building organizational capacity and growth” (p. 12-13). By contrast, the
School effectiveness literature has been more about identifying the characteristics of an effective school. Again this supports the earlier contention that one area is about *what* and the other had the potential to be about *how*. Hence, an alignment of these two areas would be beneficial to not only enacting positive educational change in existing schools, but would offer possible processes to foundational staff members establishing a new school. Another key problem in attempting to align these two areas has been the vast amount and different types of research focus. Commenting on only the school improvement literature, Harris (2001) stated that presenting an overview of the literature is a “complex and daunting” (p. 13) task.

In summary, by drawing upon the cases and general reading presented within this chapter we are able to articulate key principles that should be considered when establishing a new school. The list below is a summary of the key principles of what makes a school effective and also a school that is able to improve.

1. productive school climate and structure (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987);
2. focus on student acquisition of central learning skills (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
3. all students are able to learn basic concepts (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Hill et al., 1993; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979);
4. effective instructional arrangement and implementation (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
5. a focus on teaching and learning (Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
6. high operationalised expectations and requirements for students (Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
7. positive reinforcement (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
8. student rights and responsibilities (Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
9. appropriate and continual monitoring of student progress (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
10. the school as a place of learning (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995);
11. practice-oriented staff development at the school site (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998);
12. teacher professionalism (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998; Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987);
13. teacher-led improvement (Pointek et al., 1998; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987);
14. resourcing (Pointek et al., 1998);
15. outstanding leadership (Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987);
16. shared vision (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987);
17. collaborative decision-making (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998); and
18. home and school partnerships (Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987).

The eighteen principles have been grouped into categories that were presented in Chapters Two and Three, but also a further category has been added, *the professional culture of the*
school, as this area of focus had particular explicit focus within the literature cited in this chapter. The categorisation is presented below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Categories resulting from the school effectiveness and school improvement literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Categories</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15, 16 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 11, 12 &amp; 13</td>
<td>Staff Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, 3, 5, 6, &amp; 9</td>
<td>Student Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Pastoral Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 10</td>
<td>The professional culture of the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary the focus areas resulting from the review of literature in the areas of new schools, school effectiveness and school improvement and my initial observations are:

- Leadership;
- Management;
- Curriculum, pedagogy & assessment;
- Pastoral care;
- Staff issues;
- Technology;
- Resources;
- Planning;
- The professional culture of the school;
- Student learning; and
- The outside community.

The principles identified in the review of literature of school effectiveness and school improvement have provided a description of the factors that would need to be considered in a school that would be regarded as effective or a school that would be able to improve.
While the literature cited within Chapter Three and Chapter Four have provided critical focus areas that must be addressed when establishing a new school, it does not detail the necessary methods and processes by which a school, be it existing or new, can become effective and be able to improve. The literature selected for the final review of literature chapter is that on school reform. The literature in the area of school reform provided details about the practice of change, specific reform innovations or whole school reforms. It is this area of educational literature that was chosen because studies and work have attempted to address the question of not only the what of effective and improving schools, but also the how.

Chapter Five follows with a review of literature in the area of school reform.
Chapter 5

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

SCHOOL REFORM

School Reform

An educational reform is defined as any attempt at improvement in a school setting whether it originated from external influences, for example, from government or system initiatives about raising literacy standards or it can be generated from within the school, for example, the adoption of problem based learning as a way of curriculum restructuring and change in pedagogical practices. Educational change is about enacting the reform(s) (Fullan, 2001). Similar to school effectiveness and the adoption of the principles of this area in order to improve schools, a school reform requires the implementation of some type of educational change process. The reform movement can be seen as an endeavour to apply the lessons learned from the school effectiveness and school improvement efforts.

Tyack and Cuban’s (1995) work is drawn upon to provide a general introduction to educational reform. Tyack and Cuban, in reflecting on one hundred years of educational reform in the United States, defined reforms as “planned efforts to change schools in order to correct perceived social and educational problems” (p. 4). Here the key term is ‘planned’. A reform effort usually adopts the principles in regards to educational change and has a definite path to follow. However, Tyack and Cuban believed that even in a hundred years of different types of reform movements in schools and education in general, “the grammar of schooling” (p. 86) has yet to realistically help achieve this aim. Reform is about improving schooling and educational experiences in order to maximise the learning outcomes of students. Educational change is about the processes and structures necessary to make the reform successful (Fullan, 2001). What has extensively been stated within the literature is that while the intentions and outcomes of school effectiveness and improvement, and reform are very similar, these ‘movements’ have not had long lasting and sustainable effects (Berends, Bodily & Kirby, 2002; Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 2002; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2000, 2001, 2002; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Goldenburg, 2003; Hill, 1998, 2001; Reynolds, 2001; Sarason, 1990; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Tyack and Cuban recommended that, in
order for reform to be successful and sustainable, consideration must be given to: resources; adequate time to implement the reform; professional development of teachers; teachers’ lives; the necessary effort to participate proactively in a reform; and an understanding of how students learn.

The educational reform movement is considered in this study from three different perspectives: a focused reform effort (historically, school reform was about a particular educational innovation); reform from an educational change perspective; and finally a holistic perspective in the form of widespread school reform movements originating from the United States, namely the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) movement. The CSR movement is the most pertinent to starting a new school.

Prior to providing a consideration of chosen school reform efforts, it is necessary to outline why particular studies, viewpoints or movements are presented further within this chapter. Educational, or school, reform has been part of the educational domain for over one hundred years (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Since the late 1800s and early 1900s, schools have attempted to address practices in order to improve the outcomes of students. In this study the focus has been to relate the most recent wave of educational reform movements that began in the 1980s in the United States (similar efforts began internationally) following the release of the Nation at Risk (1983) report. The reform model in the 1980s was based on systemic changes and was highly regulatory (Datnow, 2002; Desimone, 2002). It was based on imposed change practices and the reforms implemented were not ones that were negotiated from within the school, but ones that emerged from system level efforts. This reform effort was not deemed as successful and its lack of success was attributed to a lack of “capacity building…and top-down approaches” (Desimone, 2002, p. 433).

The next phase of recent reform movements involved building teacher capacity, addressing the needs of special groups of students, teacher professionalism, improving teacher education and developing the relationship between schools and families (Datnow, 2000; Desimone, 2002). Again, this particular movement did not seem to produce long-lasting sustainable effects and did not produce changes to school organisational structures.
or the way in which teachers teach (Datnow, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

The most recent and undoubtedly the most complete reform movement has been the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) movement (Berends et al., 2006; Datnow, 2002; Desimone, 2002). This movement is based on making changes in teaching and learning by enacting change practices at a whole school level (Berends et al., 2006; Datnow, 2002; Desimone, 2002). This latest reform movement has its antecedents in the school effectiveness, school improvement efforts and the two reform movements mentioned previously (Desimone, 2002). Desimone (2002), in discussing the school effectiveness literature, suggested that while it provided a picture of a successful school, it did not offer “practical ways by which schools can become successful” (p. 434). Historically, reform efforts were researched from an educational change perspective, focusing on specific innovations in a school that could bring changes to student performance teachers’ practice (Fullan, 1993). What must be noted here is that the results of the school effectiveness, school improvement and school reform efforts should not be seen as having failed. They should be viewed more in a progressive and developmental light. Information from these efforts added to our knowledge of what effective schools look like and how we can make them that way.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the school effectiveness and school improvement research made little impact on effecting educational change and school improvement efforts (Bain, 2007; Creemers, Reynolds, Chrispeels, Mortimore, Murphy, Stringfield, Stoll & Townsend, 1998; Datnow, 2000; Datnow & Castellano, 2001; Desimone, 2002; Desimone, Payne, Fedoravicius, Henrich, Fin-Stevenson, 2004; Fink, 2000; Fullan, 2005b; 2006; Harris, 2001; Hill, 2001; Hopkins, 1995, 1996; Reynolds, 2001). Some attribute this to the lack of theoretical foundations underpinning the school effectiveness and school improvement efforts (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002). More recently educational reform efforts emerged in an attempt to address the limitations of school effectiveness and improvement (Desimone, 2002), and from broader concerns about the performance of schools and whether students were receiving an adequate education. These efforts began in the early 1990s and focused on school reform from a
holistic perspective, recognising the dynamic nature of schools. More recently, comprehensive efforts in reform have been undertaken that provide a more complete insight into the intricacies of school life.

In the sections that follow, each of the three main types of reform efforts previously mentioned are outlined. The school reform movement in general built on the school effectiveness and school improvement literature. By using lessons learned reform efforts have more clearly articulated what it is that would make changes to school and teacher practices and hence bring about change in the learning outcomes of students. Each of the reform efforts should be viewed developmentally where each phase built on the last to develop principles by which successful school innovations would occur. What follows is a consideration of a focused reform effort.

**Focused reform effort**

Datnow and Stringfield (2000) identified common characteristics of “unusually effective schools and reforms” and also identify:

> multilevel linkages among classrooms, schools, and systems that foster effective school improvements and thereby increase the chances of successful reform…implementation, and institutionalization. (p. 183)

Datnow and Stringfield (2000) based their analysis on data from research-based school reform designs that were implemented to help enhance the educational outcomes of students placed at risk. The research was based on sixteen projects and 300 cases. In analysing their data, Datnow and Stringfield (2000) cited cases of both success and failure. They aimed to focus on schools with the purpose of finding out “how to support and sustain potentially effective reforms” (p. 184).

Datnow and Stringfield (2000) listed five key factors for implementing reform, which were:

- the reform is well planned;
• teachers are active change agents;
• effective leadership;
• there are adequate resources and time available; and
• school culture changes with school structures (p. 184)

They also suggested there was an inconsistency between reforms that have demonstrated gains in student achievement and a broader scale up of these reforms. Scale up refers to the full implementation of effectiveness, improvement and reform initiatives not as an isolated case in one classroom, but through the entire school, and possibly district and systems. They suggested that schools are inundated with new initiatives and change efforts and that to sustain momentum and navigate the terrain necessary to adopt reforms requires sustainable practices and support from the “multiple levels” (p. 185) of the educational system. These factors which related necessary support mechanisms to make the reforms work and sustainable, align with the research findings in the area of school effectiveness and school improvement.

In analysing the effects of reform movements of the sixteen projects and 300 cases, Datnow and Stringfield (2000) utilised a conceptual framework, which primarily used the High Reliability Organization (HRO) research base emanating from work in the area of organisations, and they stated that a school or school system could be seen as “highly reliable” (p. 186) when the following characteristics and environmental features were present:

• A finite set of clear goals, shared at all organizational levels;
• A shared belief across the levels that failure to achieve those goals would be disastrous;
• An ongoing alertness to surprises and lapses;
• The building and maintenance of powerful databases as a source of information for future use;
• The extension of formal, logical decision analysis as far as extant knowledge allows;
• Initiatives that identify flaws in standard operating procedures, and honor the flaw finders;
• Extensive recruiting;
• Constant, targeted training and retraining;
• Serious performance evaluations;
• A second layer of behaviour that emphasizes collegial decision making, regardless of position;
• Clear valuing of the organization by their supervising organization(s); and
• Short term efficiency takes a back seat to very high reliability. (pp. 186-187)

The twelve elements articulated above express an opinion that encompasses many factors underpinning a reform. They clearly indicate the importance of mission/vision when undertaking a reform, but more so break this down into the factors of goal setting and shared beliefs. This aspect is critical when establishing a new school, where it is necessary for all those present at the beginning stages having a consensus about the direction of the school, believing in its philosophy and being able to articulate how to achieve the goals. Also, clearly articulated is the need for structures and processes to be in place when undertaking a reform; that is, as much as is realistically possible, any possibility is accounted for, that resources and support structures are available to account for the many possibilities and that there is always the opportunity to evaluate and modify the structures in place. The final aspects that are outlined in the twelve elements represent the human nature of a school. The last six elements refer to some aspect of human and/or organisational behaviour that must be accounted for when undertaking a reform and again this can be directly applied to the logic necessary when establishing a new school. These elements bring to the fore recruitment of appropriate staff. Also mentioned is an ongoing process of performance evaluations of staff, but coupled with this is extensive training and retraining as an ongoing process. This aspect assumes ongoing support of staff in order for them to be able to implement the goals of the organisation. Finally, the ‘short efficiency’ aspect relates to being able to get small things done correctly rather than enormous change efforts that are unwieldy and impossible to implement.
Datnow and Stringfield (2000) conclude that utilising “existing conditions…..school cultures, and diverse peoples’ goals and actions in many interacting sites and settings” (p. 191) have more chance of success. In essence this implies that schools’ and teachers’ pre-existing values and beliefs directly affect the opportunity for a reform to begin, be implemented and succeed. They also stressed the need for schools to carefully think through the model of reform and ensure it best suited the needs of the school. Datnow and Stringfield (2000) further emphasised the importance of the ‘multi-level’ aspects of schools and the impact of each level on the other and where there was support there was more success in reform implementation and adoption. Another key finding was about the way that decisions are made in regard to the reform, and that all stakeholders had to play a significant role in the decision making process. With this, the authors found that teachers needed to learn about being collegial and being proactive members in the decision-making process. These are skills that need to be developed in staff. Further findings indicated that if the school’s culture was not considered carefully prior to undertaking reform and also managing it during the reform, then efforts often resulted in failure. Another finding was the impact of effective leadership. Their conclusions suggest that the leader of reform needs to be a “genuine” team member and have knowledge about how to bring about change. The identification of the goals by the teachers is also seen as critical. By identifying the goals teachers can then proactively search for appropriate reform models to suit their needs, the needs of the school and the needs of the children. The final conclusion presented is that the decision making process must not be rushed. Datnow and Stringfield (2000) have clearly pointed to the significance of school culture, named part of the leadership literature in terms of the decision making process and identified positive team interactions as forces that influence the creation of a new school.

Datnow and Stringfield (2000) argued that as well as the twelve elements stated, a consideration of a “co-constructed process” (p. 187) was necessary in order to exemplify the dynamic nature of reform. A “co-constructed process” is where “educators’ actions in schools shape and are shaped by actions simultaneously occurring in diverse contexts including the classroom, school, district, reform design team, state and federal levels” (p. 187). This perspective highlights the fact that schools and the teachers within them would need to employ dynamic techniques when attempting to adopt reforms within a change
process, and that the success of the reform would be assisted by the ongoing interactions usually within a social frame. Datnow and Stringfield concluded that there were advantages in whole school reform rather than partial reform because whole school reform provided the opportunity to scale up the reform. This position advocates for reform to be undertaken from a holistic perspective and the literature on CSR will provide valuable insight into how this can be accomplished.

**Reform from an educational change perspective**

Fullan (2000) also offered some valuable insights into reforms which added to our understanding of the implications of reform and possible ways of progressing. Applying the principles of educational change, he noted that reforms in schools had only a limited amount of success in terms of scaling up and reproduced in many schools. He also discussed the notion of sustainability by stating that “there is no guarantee that the initial success will last” (p. 581).

Fullan (2000) contextualised these points within the change literature and suggested that “there has been strong adoption and implementation, but not institutionalization” (p. 581). The issue of institutionalisation and hence sustainability is a recurring theme in the literature cited thus far. Fullan suggested that the main reason for failure was our inability to understand and manage both the local community and structures of the wider community. He offered a perspective of what should and could be occurring at three levels, which he termed as “stories” (p. 581). They were the “inside story”, the “inside-out story” and the “outside-in story”. A thorough account of this work is undertaken here as it resonates with the structure I have presented as external and internal perspectives. He suggests that considering the processes of reform and change through these stories provides a “powerful and compelling” (p. 581) framework for achieving reform on a large scale. Fullan’s perspective on the three story levels concurs with one of the findings of Datnow and Stringfield (2000) where a multi-level approach to change is necessary. Also, the three story presentation of what should be happening at school resonates with the external and internal perspectives that I observed and experienced at Companion High School. What Fullan (2000) articulates is that there is activity within the school community, the “inside story” and interaction between the school and an outside level,
but he has defined this interaction as reciprocal and has named them, the “inside-out” story and the “outside-in” story.

The “inside story” refers to the internal dynamics of a school and important factors affecting these dynamics, which are: collaborative work structures; a focus on student learning, specifically through assessment; and a change to teacher’s instructional practices. The focus on assessment is interesting to note as it implies a continual synergy between pedagogy and assessment. The collaborative work feature is again not a surprising one and has been supported by the previous work cited within this chapter. What Fullan (2000) raises is that collaborative work within a school is a necessary condition for success, but little research-based work has been conducted that outlines how schools became collaborative. The research has been conducted when schools were “up and running” (p. 582). Fullan stated:

> particular pathways to collaboration in new situations remain obscure…and even if you knew how particular schools became collaborative, you could never tell precisely how you should go about it in your own school…to some extent, each group must build its own model and develop ownership through its own process. (p. 582)

Fullan (2000) distinguished a way of considering collaborative practices through the lenses of “restructuring” and “reculturing” (p. 582). Restructuring implies the changes to structures and roles within an organisation. He stated that “restructuring” is an easier process than “reculturing” simply because it can be mandated, but restructuring alone does not guarantee a difference in practice. It is “reculturing” that can have a more widespread effect on the practices and procedures within a school. Fullan (2000) defined “reculturing” as “the process of developing professional learning communities” (p. 582). It is within a professional learning community framework that long lasting and deeper changes in culture and structure can be achieved (Astuto, Clark, Read, McGree & Fernandez, 1993; Beare, 2001; DuFour, 2004; Fink, 2000; Hord, 1997, 2004; Hough & Paine, 1997; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas,
Further to this, but reflecting on the school as a learning organisation, Beare (2001) noted that effective change is promoted when we think about schools as “colligative, a living system consisting of interacting parts which have harmonized their thinking and acting. Such an organization keeps learning because it is dynamic” (p. 110).

The “inside-out story” highlights the significance of the “inside story” but also emphasises that schools cannot achieve this alone as they are affected by the external pressures ubiquitous in a school setting. Issues of accountability and the aspiration for increased student outcomes have placed pressures on schools that are complex, chaotic, sometimes contradictory, vague and irregular (Fullan, 2000). Fullan (2000) described five external perspectives that schools must deal with: “parents and community; technology; corporate connections; government policy; and the wider teaching profession” (p. 583). These five external factors also align with previous work cited within this chapter as conditions, characteristics or factors that affect the processes of improvement, reform and how schools go about change. The key to managing the “inside-out story” is for schools to successfully mobilise resources and make coherence of often conflicting perspectives and conditions, to be proactive and selective of what is undertaken and to best utilise the collaborative nature of the school (Fullan, 2000).

The “outside-in story” refers to the pressures placed on schools from system, local, state and national governments, and any other outside agencies that have a vested interest in schools (Fullan, 2000). In order for schools to successfully navigate this terrain what is needed is a decentralisation of resources to a school level, building capacity in a school, external accountability, and stimulation for and of innovation (Fullan, 2000). Here decentralisation of resources provides the opportunity for school focused reform that is contextualised within a particular setting. Capacity building is about providing the necessary resources for schools to utilise appropriate professional development and provide ongoing support in order for schools to grow as they endeavour to achieve their goals. External accountability is about standards and meeting standards, which is where there is emphasis on assessment and the synergy between pedagogy and assessment is the

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2 The learning organisation concept is referred to as the antecedent of current work in the area of schools as professional learning communities, noteworthy work in this area has been undertaken by people such as Beare (2001), Leithwood & Louis (1998), Louis & Leithwood (1998), Mulford (1998), Rosenholtz (1987, 1991), Senge (1990).
focus. Stimulation of and for innovation is where there is a promotion of a desire for teachers to search for innovations that are well supported by research as focus areas, as well as using site-based practice as a source of research to support and enhance innovations.

Fullan’s (2000) work further added to our developing interpretation of effective schooling by highlighting different levels of interaction and interrelationships that exist in schools. Fullan’s work provided a way by which to view schools as part of a larger system set as well as being comprised of smaller subsets, all of which must work together in harmony. The concept of reculturing as being the way to progress reform movement is seen as significantly important in enacting effective change. Fullan proposed that this concept could likely be the condition for successful change efforts.

**Holistic reform**

Some reform movements have demonstrated widespread influence, namely schools are being converted by restructuring and reculturing, and also a number of new schools are being established. The main protagonist in this current wave of reform is Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) and it has manifested itself in different forms. Movements have started from both government and non-government initiatives. The reform movement predominantly focused on existing schools adopting initiatives and then restructuring by using programs of intervention, design, implementation and evaluation. What is significant about the CSR movement is that it is holistic and accounts for not only the characteristics evident in good schools but offers opportunities to document the processes by which schools can become effective. The CSR movement was critical in establishing the characteristics framework for this study as it has drawn on all of the past traditions in the areas of effectiveness, improvement, reform and change in order to provide characteristics frameworks which provide a way to produce long lasting and sustainable change in schools. It is seen by some as the only way forward in progressing any sort of effect on schooling as it is an all-encompassing process (Bain, 2007; Berends et al., 2002, 2006; Datnow, 2000; Desimone, 2002), that is, it takes into account every aspect of schooling both at an external and internal perspective. Conclusions from previously-cited
sources (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000) also support this holistic approach to reform as one of the key underlying features of success.

CSR efforts have attempted to redress the weaknesses and inconsistencies associated with other reform efforts as well as school effectiveness and school improvement efforts (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2008). These efforts have attempted to do this by not only providing evidence about what factors and characteristics should be evident, but also practical means of implementing necessary change practices to bring about improvement in student outcomes. Desimone (2002) acknowledged that past efforts to change schools are still a part of the “educational landscape” (p. 434) but it is CSR that will have most long lasting effect.

There are a multitude of CSR models and movements in the United States. It is not within the scope of this study to cite every attempt at CSR but to present some key findings that are resonating in the current literature. What follows is an outline of two specific considerations of reform from a holistic perspective. The first is Desimone’s (2002) synthesis of literature that documented CSR implementation using a theory of policy attributes. Desimone’s work was focused on analysing reform projects that were implemented using the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRDP) model. This analysis is significant to this study because it focuses on the implementation phase of a reform, which could be aligned with the establishment phase of a new school. Desimone suggests that implementation will need to be successful if there is any chance of a reform having long-lasting effects on improving student learning outcomes.

The second focus within this section is on work undertaken by Bain (2007) to address the issue of successful reform implementation and scaling-up issues. Bain identified “nine next generation targets” (p. 22), or goals, that should be the focus of reformers for a reform to be successful and sustainable. These goals are based on the findings from CSR to date and the implementation and outcome issues associated with that reform. Bain’s work is presented in context of a school reform effort and uses the concepts of “six theoretical principles - derived from the field of self-organization and complex adaptive
systems” (p. 6) to explain ways in which educational reform can occur in schools and how these changes can be sustained over time.

**Desimone (2002): reform implementation and the theory of policy attributes**

Desimone (2002) analysed previous school reform efforts in order to provide principles that would lead to more effective implementation of reforms. It is the issue of implementation that Desimone focuses upon as being the critical issue when deeming the success of a reform. Desimone discussed that while there had been improvements in structures and procedures at organisational levels, there had been little effect on changing the practice of teachers. She noted that in order to make change in teacher practice, reform models must combine “management and organizational level variables…..with interventions that focus on curriculum and instruction” (p. 434).

Desimone (2002) identified the reform efforts that were included in her analysis by several factors. First, the reform effort had to be documented and published in a scholarly journal. Second, the authors of the articles had to utilise original data that measured some aspect of implementation of a design that was adopted from a Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRDP) model. The CSRDP is a federally supported initiative in the United States. Schools applying for funding can choose a reform model from an existing list or they can create their own. Finally, the reforms chosen had to be either “experimental, quasi-experimental, case-study, or ethnographic” (p. 434) in their approach to measuring the effectiveness of the reform implementation.

For a reform model to be considered in Desimone’s (2002) analysis, it had to integrate the following principles:

- Use research based innovative strategies and methods;
- Have a school wide reform plan that enables students to meet state standards;
- Provide ongoing, high-quality professional development for staff;
- Have measurable student goals and benchmarks for meeting those goals;
- Maintain faculty, administrative, and staff support;
Nurture meaningful parent and community involvement;
Use high quality external technical support;
Include a plan for evaluating implementation and student achievement; and
Identify other resources available and how they will be used to coordinate services to support and sustain reform. (Desimone, 2002, p. 436)

Desimone (2002) then utilised a theory of implementation, the policy attributes theory, to analyse the literature chosen. This is significant because it is one of the first cases where research in this area had been critiqued using a theoretical lens on the implementation of whole school reform efforts. The theory of policy implementation attributes can be attributed to Porter (1988, 1994). The theory relates five attributes to successful policy implementation, which are: specificity; consistency; authority; power; and stability.

Specificity refers to the level of detail that accompanies the object that is to be implemented. Desimone (2002) provided an example where the reform may involve some change to curriculum structures and content. The implementation of this change would be more successful if it were accompanied by curriculum frameworks and guidelines, resources, timing schedules and so on. Consistency refers to the level of coherence among the changes and the extent to which they support or contradict each other. Authority refers to institutionalisation of the change where it becomes common practice. Power refers to the “rewards and sanctions” (p. 439) associated with the change. Stability refers to the change being “constant” (p. 439) in regards to people, changes in circumstances and policies.

When analysing the CSR studies, Desimone (2002) makes the assumption that in regards to any level of reform, that is, “state, district, school, and classroom” contain their own policy attributes that are formed by “their own knowledge and perceptions of stakeholders at that level” (p. 440). Desimone (2002) states that each of the attributes affects the policy, or in this case, the reform that is to be implemented. The results of her analysis are not surprising when she concludes that the more specific in detail the reform is, the more likely it is to succeed. Similarly, the more consistent and aligned with the other efforts within the school, the more successful the reform is. Also, the reform will be more
effective if staff are active and ‘real’ players in the effort in terms of decision-making. Teacher choice, as a power base, and the role of the principal also had significant effects on the reform being effective. Finally, the more stable the environment in terms of implementation, staff and students, the more successful the reform will be. What is important to note is the focus on the implementation phase and the significance of this stage of reform to having effects on student outcomes. Desimone (2002) discusses that there are significant differences in the success of a reform depending on the context of the reform, that is, in-school and between school differences. Therefore, Desimone highlights the need to focus on the implementation phase and attempt to ‘null’ the effects of this phase before differences in student learning outcomes can be measured with integrity.

Desimone (2002) states that one of the major factors that affects the implementation of a reform is whether the reform has been developed from within or outside the school setting or from outside the school setting. Desimone found no significant difference in terms of success of the policy being implemented. What was significant were how the five attributes played out in the reform implementation.

A summary of Desimone’s (2002) analysis of the CSR models and implementation against the five attributes is presented in Table 5.1. This table has been prepared by summarising Desimone’s findings (pp. 440 – 469). These principles will be used to aid in the development of the characteristics framework used in this study.
Specificity here refers to the idea that the more specific the reform, “the higher the implementation fidelity” (p. 459). The implication of this approach to CSR is that it would need to provide detailed guidelines, curricula and professional development that was specific. The materials and information would need to be supported by a conducive...
environment where there were benchmarks set so that progress could be measured. The materials would need to be tailored to the specific needs of the school. The result of not having this level of detail in the basic functioning of a reform could lead to the reform not being adopted or the level of implementation varying within and across schools.

Desimone (2002) identifies professional development as the most critical aspect as it would provide the required time for teachers to engage with the proposed change, the time to reflect on the proposed change, and the time to consider and react to implementation issues associated with the proposed change.

CSR is more effectively implemented when the proposed change is consistent and aligns with existing school efforts and vision. The reform will have more chance of success at being implemented if existing school organisation, curriculum and teaching and learning practice can support or be supported by the proposed change. Desimone (2002) states that this could be problematic during implementation because of the issue of accountability, which relates to “high-stakes assessment” (p.460). The issue of schools and teachers preparing students for external accountability assessments has always been troublesome. Changes to practice could be viewed as experimental or not having immediate effect on student outcomes and, hence, there could be risk of students not meeting state-wide assessment benchmarks. She offers a solution in that a proposed reform could integrate the benchmarks so that it would also be a major focus during implementation.

The term authority is used in Desimone’s (2002) work at three different levels: within the school at a teacher level, at a leadership level – specifically at the principal level, and finally at an institutional level. At the teacher level, Desimone uses the term authority to imply that CSR models will have more chance of success if the reform has authority, this implies that “authority established through social norms…through institutional and individual support” (p. 460) will increase the chance of the reform being successful. Authority implies that the proposed change occurs through “persuasion” (p. 462) rather than through “force” (p. 462) (this distinction will be addressed further when relating the aspect of power). The reform would become a part of the everyday social and professional norms of the school and achieved through teacher participation in the decision-making process, teachers accepting and believing in the reform, and through
teacher participation in collaborative professional networks within the school and across schools. The implications of this is that teacher decision-making processes need to be a part of the fabric of the school, that teachers would need to be allowed to make professional decisions about the reform to situate it within the school and for the students in their classes. Also, teachers would need to play a primary role in the choice of design of the reform. Structures would also need to be established so that there was professional sharing of ideas with teachers not only in a particular school but also across schools. Coupled with these factors is that the design must involve a process whereby the vision and ownership of the reform is addressed and teachers have time for genuine “buy-in” (p. 459) of the proposed change.

At the next level, Desimone (2002) addresses the issues of authority through the aspect of principal leadership stating that “principal leadership is a critical component of successful implementation” (p. 460). The role of the principal in a reform would entail being involved in choosing the design of the reform, support of teachers in organisation of school structures, allocation of appropriate and adequate resources, support through the provision of professional development and by being the conduit between the school and external stakeholders. Desimone discusses that one of the “perennial challenges facing school improvement efforts” (p. 460) is the issue of the principal and leadership. In order for the principal to be able to play a critical and effective role in a reform, he/she must have site-based independence that allows for power over the curriculum, resources, money, staff and the vision of the school. This issue is not a surprising one and has been well documented in educational literature for decades (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; Duignan, 2006; Elmore, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Gronn, 2000, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1995a, 1995b; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Harris, 2002; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999; Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1995, 2001; Silins & Mulford, 2002; Spady & Bell, 1996; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001; Yukl, 1998).

Finally, institutional level authority has different aspects to consider and exerts “powerful influence on implementation” efforts. Support is necessary from the external educational community in the provision of adequate and appropriate resources as well as support of
the reform effort to the wider community. Support is also necessary from the community, particularly the parent and local community. The external educational community is seen as critical because it should provide governance in terms of effective leadership through the principal, adequate financial support, adequate time and appropriate information about the reform, and adequate resources for the reform. Desimone (2002) states that adequate time and support of teachers to engage with the proposed change is of utmost importance to the success of the reform.

As stated previously, power as an attribute of reform implementation implies working through force (Desimone, 2002). Power as an attribute is composed of “rewards or sanctions tied to policies” (p. 462) being the motivating factor. Desimone relates the need for an appropriate balance between authority and power. The most critical place where this balance must be apparent is in the choice of design of the reform and support of the reform. Implementation issues occurred when the proposed reform was forced onto schools as teacher dedication and ownership did not develop. Power in terms of financial support did not necessarily equate with successful implementation. Schools reported that the reform effort stopped or slowly faded out when the monetary support stopped.

The final attribute that Desimone (2002) relates as the result of her work is that of stability, which refers to the turnover of people at all levels, that is, student, teacher and administration and that “the higher the mobility, the weaker the CSR” (p. 463). Stability also refers to a “stable policy” (p. 463) and Desimone considers that a stable policy environment will ensure that no matter whether there is high turnover of students, teachers and administration, reform will have the chance of success. This implies that the design of the reform needs to not only account for the present but also for the future. This also implies that the reform is a long term project and one where immediate results are not obvious. The other consideration is that in providing a stable environment, external pressures from social, political and economic contexts need to be accounted for and managed. Desimone states that conditions associated with social, political and economic contexts are the least easy to manipulate but they must be accounted for as they do align with the success of implementation.
Desimone’s (2002) study highlights significant factors that must be considered when implementing a reform. These factors resonate with the types of interactions observed at the case study school. More so, they provide a more thorough description of what needs to be considered at the establishment stage of a school as they not only highlight critical aspects of implementation and successful benchmarks, but also ways of enacting processes to ensure that these benchmarks are attained. By using the theory of policy implementation attributes, Desimone has provided a scaffold by which the important aspect of reform implementation should be considered but much more pertinent to this study is the use of these attributes to describe the phenomenon of new schools. These factors will be further considered within this chapter when the characteristics framework is developed.

**Bain (2007): nine next-generation reform targets and the self-organizing school**

Bain’s (2007) work, known as the self-organising school project, proposes a practical theory of CSR. His work is based on a longitudinal study conducted over an eleven year period in a school and is derived from practical experience. Next-generation reform benchmarks and a process of implementation emerged from this work and are described below as the “nine next-generation targets” of school reform and these benchmarks were realised by adopting theoretical principles based on self-organisations and complex adaptive systems. Bain’s work is an attempt to redress the gap in the literature between principles and practice by developing a highly specific model that took what had been learned and turned it into a design that included systems, methods, tools and practices including software.

The evaluation of the design involved 1614 classroom observations, 114 teachers and data were collected over a five year period. Data were also collected from surveys of stakeholders at all levels of the school. The data were used to describe the integrity of implementation of the reform and as a means of testing the theory underpinning the design. The reform involved being a part of a CSRDP effort. His role at the school was that of change agent and his role in the study was that of participant observer playing different roles in the reform process. His work describes the success of a CSR that has been sustained over time. Bain states that for a reform to be sustained over time it must be
“complete” (p. 250). ‘Complete’ refers to an approach that responded to the nine next-generation targets (outlined below) in order to establish frameworks that allow the school to be able to produce a framework of “practice, curriculum, roles, technology tools, feedback mechanisms, and teamwork that evolve the schema and advance the reform for teachers and students” (p. 250).

Bain described nine “next-generation targets” (p. 22) that are critical if future reform efforts are to succeed. His work supports and enhances the previously cited work and develops the work of Desimone (2002) presenting another level of complexity as well as proposing a theoretical base for this work to progress. The reform targets that Bain refers to are: “educational power; comprehensiveness; emergent feedback; systemic technology; professional lives; school-level design for school-level influence; effective adoption; implementation; integrity; and theory” (p. 22). Bain draws his theory from that of self-organisations and complex adaptive systems and proposes six theoretical principles by which reform efforts can progress. Bain states that this theoretical model accounts for the human element and provides the opportunity for the human systems that operate in a reform effort to “adapt to their ever-changing circumstances bottom-up, without continual top-down intervention” (p. 6). This is possible because the collective pool of intelligence inherent in a human system is able to exceed individual abilities. Bain anticipates that considering and acting on school reform issues from this perspective will provide a way in which CSR “can be represented in every part of a school, reconciling the content and process of a school reform” (p. 41). The six principles that are needed for self-organisation to be successful are: “school-level schema, simple rules, embedded design, similarity at scale, emergent feedback, and dispersed control” (p. 44).

School-level schema is “a commonly held set of professional understandings, beliefs, and actions about teaching and learning” (p. 44). This schema provides a framework by which people work together to articulate the most important factors in a reform and plan for their implementation.

Bain (2007) explains simple rules as deriving from the “functioning of the school” (p. 48) and cites the example that if a school establishes that learning will be based on a model of
cooperative learning then this rule needs to “drive” (p. 49) the design process and directly impacts on the school’s schema. Simple rules are about doing less, well, to eventually achieve more.

Embedded design is about ensuring that the simple rules articulated become a part of the school’s fabric by providing opportunities for the beliefs and ideas to be explicitly embedded in the systems and practices within the school. By embedding the design in the very fabric of the school, there is opportunity for evaluation and reinforcement of the principles.

Similarity at scale implies that the schema is “represented similarly in the roles of agents and groups at different levels in the school” (p. 52). Bain describes how this could be seen practically by using the example of cooperative learning, suggesting that if teaching and learning is based on a model of cooperative learning and students are expected to work in a cooperative and collaborative manner, then this practice would also be evident and expected at the teacher level and management level.

Emergent feedback is essential for reform to succeed and involves schools having structures and processes that allow for continual feedback about what is occurring and what they should be doing next. Bain explains that feedback is the responsibility of everyone in the system and where everyone is responsible for the “success of the system as it pursues its core activity” (p. 53).

Dispersed control is about collaboration that enables “the ready flow of feedback to levels in the organization” (p. 55). Dispersed control speaks to the issues of effective communication and decision-making.

Educational power is a way of bridging the gap between “the school’s contribution to achievement and the contribution currently attributed to classrooms and teachers” (p. 22). Bain (2007) suggested that next-generation reform models would exhibit educational power by “magnifying the effects of successful teachers and classrooms at scale” (p. 23).
Comprehensiveness of reform models can be understood as basically needing to be a complete design, that is, that the design considers and treats the issues of professional development, support for curriculum development and implementation, evaluation as an emergent function of implementation, the disparity between system and school goals, effective feedback systems, and the systemic use of technology (Bain, 2007).

Bain (2007) defined emergent feedback systems as being a key characteristic of successful CSR. Emergent feedback implies the ability to “monitor and manage…implementation and effects and to work out its successes and problems as they occur” (p. 25).

Systemic technologies are about how information technology can best provide valuable information for schools by gathering and maintaining databases in all aspects of the reform process.

Teachers' professional lives are directly affected by CSR. Thus future models must acknowledge the importance of this concept and ensure that teachers are considered during the design process and engaged within the process. This would then allow for an alignment of goals both individually and at a school level.

School-level design for school-level influence will account for how reform models change the “totality of school management; collaboration; technology; ... the role, reward, and recognition of teachers in a complete and integrated way” (p. 29).

Next-generation designs will have the ability to exert influence on the organisation and management structures in ways that “support and scale its classroom practices” (p. 29). Effective adoption is about ownership of the reform model by all members of the school community and the ways in which this ownership can be engendered in individuals; hence it focuses on decision-making processes and leadership.

Implementation focuses on the necessity for implementation processes to be accountable and sustainable. Bain (2007) suggested that a way forward in this area is to develop
evidence-based work so that “what was intended was implemented and sustained with integrity over time” (p. 33).

Bain (2007) focused on the last of the nine next-generation targets, that is, theory. He suggested that reform has occurred in the absence of theoretical frameworks; in a sense reform movements have been “atheoretical” (p. 34). He suggested that next-generation reforms will “produce the theory, systems, and practice capable of scaling research-based practice to the level of the school and beyond” (p. 34).

Bain (2007) provided nine conclusions as a result of the self-organizing school project, which are:

1. Next-generation comprehensive school reform will redefine what it means to be complete as it relates to CSR design, implementation, and readiness to scale;
2. In a self-organising school there is no end to a change process;
3. Theory defines the possibility of CSR;
4. In a reform, persistence is the quality that guarantees all others;
5. Professional cultures of practice make it possible to disperse control;
6. In school reform, technology matters when it becomes educational;
7. Emergent feedback can define what it means to be a school;
8. Sustainability is a baseline condition for CSR; and
9. There is a paradigm crisis in schooling and characterises the space between the old and the new… the old no longer adequately explains what it is, whereas the new is neither fully articulated nor resolved. Contemporary schooling currently exists in this space. (pp. 249 – 256)

Bain (2007) proposes a theory of process by which educational reform efforts can be designed, implemented, evaluated, maintained and sustained. By focusing on the necessary conditions of success, the nine next-generation targets and theoretical principles of self-organisations and complex adaptive systems, Bain has provided the opportunity
for educational reformers to reconcile the content and process of school reform. His work is of significance to a new school because of the comprehensive nature of the self-organising school design and the treatment of levels of school life in response to educational change. The ability of a school to adopt such design principles, whether it be new or established, would imply a committed and sustained effort to ensuring positive educational outcomes for students.

**Chapter synthesis thus far and future direction**

The review of literature in the area of school reform has added another level of complexity in the way we can view schools, more specifically new schools, and how they function. In summary the lessons learned from the reform movement have provided the following conditions.

- The reform needs to be well planned (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002) and clearly articulated around a defined set of processes, methods and tools (Bain, 2007);
- The reform needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the reform can be implemented and sustained (Bain, 2007);
- The focus must be on improving student outcomes (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002);
- The reform must have mechanisms in place that are inclusive of all members of the school community (Bain, 2007);
- Leadership is effective and proactive in the reform process by being inclusive, supportive, distributed (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
- There is ownership of the reform across the school community (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
- The reform is part of an ongoing process of change which can aid true reculturing of the school community (Bain, 2007; Fullan, 2001);
- The systems of the school support a process of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
• The functioning of the school provides clear and well functioning structures to support the work of the reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
• There are well thought out plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
• The leadership structures provide support for teachers implementing the reform and are able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school (Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
• Teachers are integral to the reform’s success and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification of the reform (Desimone, 2002);
• Teachers and other levels of reform implementers are given adequate time to plan and implement the reform (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002);
• Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001);
• Teachers’ professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002);
• There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the implementation of the reform (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000);
• Technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of a reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000);
• A theory of process must drive the reform (Bain, 2007);
• The school and all its members should be seen as a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to the reform succeeding (Bain, 2007; Beare, 2001);
• The issue of educational change in a school is seen as positive and ongoing (Bain, 2007; Fullan, 2001); and
• Sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of a reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001).
The results of reform efforts have provided detailed descriptions of not only what is needed to make a school more effective but also some of the more recent literature based on CSR has provided insight into the process of how to bring about change. This literature has contributed significantly to our understanding of schools, what makes them effective and how they can become effective. The twenty one principles are a summary of the findings emerging from the school reform literature. They have been synthesised and categorised and are presented in Table 5.2. Table 5.2 includes a further three categories to what was previously presented in Chapter Four, these categories are sustainability, complete design and a theory of process.

Table 5.2 Issues, factors and conditions emerging from the school reform literature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles from the literature in the area of school reform</th>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership is effective and proactive in the reform process by being inclusive, supportive, distributed (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001)</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>The leadership structure provides support for teachers implementing the reform and are able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school (Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001)</td>
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<td>Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001)</td>
<td>Staff issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002)</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the implementation of the reform (Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000)</td>
<td>Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The focus must be on improving student outcomes (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002)</td>
<td>Student Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The school and all its members should be seen as a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to the reform succeeding (Bain, 2007; Beare, 2001)</td>
<td>The professional culture of the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The issue of educational change in a school is seen as positive and ongoing (Bain, 2007; Fullan, 2001)</td>
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<td>• The reform is part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community (Bain, 2007; Fullan, 2001)</td>
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<td>• Sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of a reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001)</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
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<td>• The reform needs to be well planned (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002)</td>
<td>Complete Design</td>
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<td>• The systems of the school support a process of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the reform (Bain, 2007; Datnow &amp; Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The reform needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the reform can be implemented and sustained (Bain, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A theory of process must drive the reform (Bain, 2007)</td>
<td>A theory of process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability**

Sustainability is an area that is receiving increased attention in educational research and has been a recurring theme throughout the literatures cited in this study. An account of some pertinent work in the area of sustainability and schools follows.

Research has indicated that there is no panacea to improve the core work of schools (Datnow, 2000; Fullan, 2000, 2003; Leithwood, Fullan & Watson, 2003; Sarason, 1990; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). However, possessing an understanding of sustainable practices and how they can be achieved offers a possible way of revealing and explaining the many phenomena of schools (Sterling, 2001), and hence ways of thinking about the work of new schools.
Sterling (2001) defines sustainability as:

the ability of a system to sustain itself in relation to its environment, given that all systems are made up of sub systems and parts of larger suprasystems. (p. 54)

Here Sterling (2001) is implying the interconnectedness and interrelationships of all aspects within a system and that the system is not situated alone but rather is part of a larger system and is made up of smaller parts. This has relevance for schools. Schools are a part of a larger ‘system’, that is the educational system to which a majority of schools are bound, they are a part of a local community, they are a part of a wider educational community and they are a part of society that is answerable to government and regulatory bodies. The ‘sub systems’ are also obvious in a school setting and are dominated by issues in regards to staff, students, structures and procedures in terms of curriculum organisation, pastoral care organisation, leadership and management issues and so on. Figure 5.1 represents this synergy.

![Figure 5.1 A representation of the interrelatedness of the suprasystem, the system (the school) and the subsystem](image-url)
This view of ‘system’ in regards to a school acknowledges the fact that a school is part of and encompasses other systems, and that working proactively as part of the system(s) is a necessary condition of success. Fullan (2005) makes the assertion that we must begin to see schools as complex and dynamic, and that there is no easy path to sustainable practices and that “[a]ddressing the problem of sustainability is the ultimate, adaptive, challenge” (p. 14).

As mentioned previously, the literature has highlighted that while we know what is necessary to make schools more effective we do not know how to keep them that way (Bain, 2007; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Desimone, 2002; Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Harris, 2001; Hill, 2001; Quint, 2002; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Winger, 2000). Sustainability is not only seen as the maintenance of good ideas, but also something that has long lasting and deep effects (Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Lewis, 2003; Stoll, 1999; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2002). Hence there is a need for research to focus on not only documenting the necessary conditions, characteristics and processes to making change and reform so that schools can improve and be effective, but also on how to keep them that way. Answers to such problems would be relevant to establishing a new school. The majority of current literature in sustainability is in the areas of educational leadership, and schools as learning organisations or schools as professional learning communities.

Leadership has emerged as an area of importance from the school effectiveness and school improvement literature. Leadership is important and transforming leadership practices so that they are effective will have an obvious impact on practices. But what is becoming more apparent in this literature is that not only is effective leadership a necessary condition for success, but also that there are certain foundations and structures that are needed in order to create and sustain leadership and teaching practices. Lewis (2001) suggests that leaders will need to:

- demonstrate skills in creating systems that are renewable…
- resources need to be invested wisely…
- enablers…need to be nurtured and a team role developed…
- a sharing of workload and a collective commitment…
- collaborative process and respect for continual improvement will become key elements…
- to rethink and redesign structures within their organisation. (p. 2)

Lewis’ comment reinforces Sterling’s view of the school as system by highlighting the aspect of ‘renewable’. This suggests that not only should leadership practices be sustainable and be able to sustain, but they must also be ‘renewable’ and re-emerging after critical leaders have moved on.

Leadership needs to be an integral and dynamic part of the school and structures need to be ones that promote an organisation that is continually improving and learning. In essence this describes the characteristics found in the literature on professional learning communities (Astuto, Clark, Read, McGree & Fernandez, 1993; Beare, 2001; DuFour, 2005; Fink, 2000; Hallinger, 1999; Hord, 1997, 2004; Hough & Paine, 1997; Huffman & Jacobson, 2003; Lieberman, 1998; Lewis, 2002; Louis & Leithwood, 1998; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Rosenholtz, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1994a, 1994; Smylie, Conley & Marks, 2002; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). The principles of a professional learning community present the possibility to create a climate where effective practices are nurtured. Hence, there is the possibility of having a positive impact on student performance and learning. Leadership must be a part of this process. The
nature of a professional learning community implies the promotion of that community as a cohesive entity that works together to learn and progress. A professional learning community also implies that teachers are leaders and that formal leadership structures must use a ‘distributed’ view of leadership to facilitate sustainable practices (Gronn, 2000).

Seeing the creation of a professional learning community as the universal remedy for sustaining good practices would be naïve. However, using the lessons learned from this work does provide valuable insight into the complex nature of schools. What needs to be considered are the separate components and how they can work together in order to enact and sustain change in existing and new school settings.

Leaders must also have clear direction as to the destination and have a design plan prepared that will lead the school in the ‘right’ direction. This does not imply that there are fixed paths to take; it does imply that there has been thought into the possible paths and planning for the many permutations of the journey. The idea that planning is one of the necessary conditions is well supported in the literature (Bain, 2007; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Desimone, 2002; Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Harris, 2001; Hill, 2001; Lake, Winger & Petty, 2002; Quint, 2002; Winger, 2000).

Levin (2007) on reporting on a large scale reform initiative in Canada aimed at improving the literacy and numeracy outcomes of elementary aged school children, proposed that there are four key principles to making significant sustainable impact on student learning. They are: “respect, comprehensiveness, coherence and alignment” (p. 328). ‘Respect’ is for staff and their professional knowledge and those teachers are committed professionals with a great deal of knowledge and skill to enact sustainable school practices. ‘Comprehensiveness’ is recognising that an innovation in one area should not be seen in isolation and planning associated with promoting a comprehensive use of skills should be aligned with other curricula areas. ‘Coherence’ is a commitment by all stakeholders to the purpose of the innovation. ‘Alignment’ means the ability for the organisation to navigate the pressure from within and outside the school setting. These conditions for promoting
sustainable practices are not new and have been frequently mentioned in the literature cited.

As a result of the outline of the literature in the area of sustainability and sustainable practices we are able to draw the conclusion that:

- leadership is critical and effective leadership is desired;
- leadership involves all levels of the school and should be distributed;
- schools are multifaceted and sustainable change practice must account for the complexity of schools using theory to generate models of reform and change;
- teachers are a critical factor in ensuring sustainable change and accounting for their professional lives is vital;
- reform and change requires well thought out and systematic processes that are underpinned by comprehensive design plans;
- schools and the people that make up a school must learn to navigate the internal and external pressures placed on them; and
- commitment to improvement by all stakeholders is critical.

Chapter summary and synthesis

Drawing information from within this chapter the focus categories for this study are listed below. The focus categories are:

- Leadership & Management;
- Staff issues;
- Technology;
- Resources;
- The professional culture of the school;
- The outside community;
- Sustainability;
- Complete design; and
- A theory of process.
Alone, these categories and associated characteristics provide only a list of relevant factors that pertain to a new school. What is more relevant to this study is a consideration of the underlying issues and dynamics underpinning each of the categories. Table 5.3 shows the convergence of categories from those presented in Chapter Four. The categories of leadership and management have been merged to reflect a more holistic approach to the said categories. The categories of ownership, planning, and pastoral care have been subsumed within one of the final categories. The categories of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, and pastoral care do not have any focus within this synthesis. This is not to say that the issues surrounding these categories are not significant or important, however, they are implied and treated in other categories such as complete design or student learning. The final iteration of the categories (presented in Table 5.3) reflects the implicit nature of such factors.

Table 5.3 Convergence of previous categories into final focus categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories from literature in previous chapters</th>
<th>Final categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The outside community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff issues</td>
<td>Staff issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum, pedagogy &amp; assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning</td>
<td>Student Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The professional culture of the school</td>
<td>The professional culture of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Complete Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>A theory of process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The assumption is made here that a new school would want to work towards exhibiting the characteristics and factors of an effective school. The major literatures have concurred with the type of factors or characteristics needed to deem a school effective. However, what the literatures have not necessarily provided is an in-depth knowledge base for becoming that way.
The more recent work undertaken in the CSR movement and sustainability area, particularly Bain’s (2007), Desimone’s (2002), Levin’s (2007), and Sterling’s (2001) work adds another echelon of complexity to the issues associated with establishing a new school, as well as a possible way of progressing. Bain’s (2007) evaluation of the self-organising school provides the possibility of not only identifying the what of effective schools, but also the processes, methods and tools for enacting educational change and subsequently improving schools. Bain achieves this by offering six principles by which schools can organise and implement comprehensive school reform. These principles are based on findings from research in the area of schools being complex human adaptive systems.

Implicit in these ideas and design is the concept of sustainable practice. Sterling’s (2001) work in the area of sustainability also further supports the work cited within this chapter by focusing on two relevant issues, that is, leadership and the professional culture of the school as being critical to sustainable school practices. Levin’s (2007) work reporting on a large scale reform initiative in Canada, supports previously mentioned studies, but also accounts for the dynamic nature of schools and provides a way of progression by outlining four main components necessary when undertaking reform. They are: “respect, comprehensiveness, coherence and alignment” (p. 328). Desimone’s (2002) work is also considered, as her work focuses on the issue of the attributes of policy implementation in schools. This is of significance here since in a new school setting there are no existing ‘policies’ as such and a way of thinking about how to do this effectively is essential.

By using Bain’s (2007), Desimone’s (2002), Levin’s (2007), and Sterling’s (2001) work and that of the previously summarized conditions and characteristics (see Table 5.1) a set of new school design characteristics were developed. The new school design characteristics are presented in Table 5.4. The characteristics describe the underpinning traits that should be evident when establishing a new school.
Table 5.4 Characteristics that should be evident in a new school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a new school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership &amp; Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership should be effective and proactive in establishing a new school by being inclusive, supportive and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The leadership structure should provide support for staff and these structures should be able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The systems of the school should support a method of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The establishment phase of the school requires an inclusive environment for all members of the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff issues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers are given adequate time to plan and implement at the establishment phase of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification stages of establishing a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the establishment of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The professional culture of the school</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The school should be established taking into consideration the fact that it is a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to succeeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Educational change should be promoted as positive and ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The initial stage of establishing a school should be seen as a part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complete design</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The establishment of a school needs to be well planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A theory of process</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A theory of process must drive the establishment of a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of establishing a school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not sufficient to only be able to identify the *what* of a new school, but also the *how*. It is the issue of *process* and *design* that are critical here in terms of sustainability. Being able to identify the process will inform our knowledge about ways in which the design
characteristics can be implemented, reproduced, regenerated and sustained (Bain, 2007; Beare, 2001). To complement the new school design characteristics stated in Table 5.3, as part of the recommendations of this study new school design principles are presented in Chapter Eight.

As a consequence of the review of literatures in Chapters Three, Four and Five two research questions have evolved, they are:

Major
- What structures, procedures and resources are vital in establishing a new school resulting in sustainable practices?

Minor
- What evidence existed of a theory of process for starting Companion High School?

By presenting the findings of research undertaken for this study (in Chapter Seven), responses to these questions will be presented in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Six explains the research method of the study. The research questions and the final categories used to interrogate the data from this study are re-articulated. An outline of the process involving the review of literatures as part of this study is explained. Also, the benefits of using case study research to explain the phenomena in this study are discussed. Included are details about the site and participants involved and issues about participant observer are explored. Data collection and analysis processes are explained.
Chapter 6

METHOD

Introduction
In this chapter the purpose of the study is reiterated and the methodological approach is outlined. The research statement is presented as are the research questions. The research design, site and participants are discussed. Data collection procedures are explained and the processes used to analyse the data are described.

Purpose of the study
There were two purposes of this study. The first was to document the establishment phase of a new school from the perspective of an ‘insider’ and hence relate the issues and challenges that face foundation staff during this critical period. The second was to establish what structures are vital when establishing a new school that would result in sustainable practice.

Research Design
Within the theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research, a case study was used for the research study. This approach most suited the context under investigation. The study is a single case in a secondary school context. Adopting a case study design, allowed flexibility in the interpretation of data and situations and provided the opportunity to modify guiding research questions (Stake, 1995).

The two research questions emerged through a process of reading and reflection of the major literature areas stated previously and focus on the aspects of what should be evident when establishing a new school, and also how it should be occurring. The two research questions are:

Major
- What structures, procedures and resources are vital in establishing a new school that will result in sustainable practices?
Minor

- What evidence existed of a theory of process for starting Companion High School?

The parameters of qualitative research allow the flexibility to make an account of what happened after a study is completed. Schools are fluid and dynamic, as such, the nature of the design of this study had to be flexible. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) discuss the nature of qualitative research as not being segmented and that “theoretical assumptions provide the parameters, the tools, and the general guide of how to proceed” (p. 58). Part of the process of research design is to have some guiding focus and questions. Within the framework of this qualitative study determining and eventually deciding on research questions was part of the process and eventuated as a product of initial data collection and reading (Gay, 1987).

Case study methods allow the researcher to get as close to the focus of the study as possible, this is mainly due to access to subjective factors. Utilising case studies widens the “net” for evidence compared to traditional scientific approaches (Stake, 1995) and by utilising a case study approach “develop in depth subjective understandings of people, situations and key episodes” (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p.318).

There are various descriptions of the purpose of case studies. Yin (1984) details three types of case study approaches: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Merriam (1988) uses similar terminology and categories, namely, descriptive, interpretative and evaluative. This study was an observational case study as it traced the development of the school, relying on archival records and using a variety of observation methods and interviews. The aim was to provide an account of the first two years of the school’s life in a manner that was descriptive, explanatory and evaluative.

The research questions stated at the beginning of this section were not obvious when the study was started. They have been part of the processes and product of a cycle that spanned seven years. It is necessary, though, to have a problem or questions as a guide for the study (Ezzy, 2002; Fetterman, 1989). Initially the problem focus was that school
practices and structures were to be aligned with recent theory in teaching and learning, and this was to eventuate in the development of structures that offered better learning experiences for students. My research focus soon had a parallel; I began to explore how decisions were made and how leaders in the school were developing practices to share the vision of the school with all staff. It was important to establish structures that enabled best practice in decision-making, in turn, providing the opportunity for staff, students and the wider school community to have ‘ownership’ of the development of the school. With this, came the complex culture of staff and their professional relationships, and how this focus affected the development of the school. Further into the study other issues became apparent, namely: leadership and management structures; staff exhaustion; adequate planning time; external systemic pressures; local community support; no permanent site; and foundation staff leaving the school or resigning from the teaching profession. These issues formed a further focus of the study.

The stages of the study are also significant in understanding the design of the study. Data were collected over a three year period; reading and reflecting on literature spanned a period of seven years (refer to Figure 1.1). This time frame provided the opportunity to reflect deeply on the information collected, on the literature read and on my initial observations which appear in my journal. Carney’s Ladder of Analytical Abstraction (1990) was used to define the stages of this study. Pursuing the path as outlined in Carney’s Ladder of Analytical Abstraction (1990) (see Figure 6.1) organised the stages of the study into three distinct levels. Level 1 involved beginning with some sort of text and trialing coding categories to extrapolate preliminary themes. Level 2 involved identifying themes and trends. Level 3 involved testing questions or hypotheses aiming to define the structure and hence developing a characteristics framework.
In 1999 a new Catholic systemic, coeducational, comprehensive high school was established in the metropolitan west region of Sydney. The school commenced with a four-stream year 7 cohort and a two-stream year 8 cohort. The year 8 cohort of 12 students, were a ‘holding group’ and attended a neighbouring high school as year 7 students in 1998. The high school initially occupied a temporary site and was to move to a permanent site to start the academic year of 2000. The school did not move to a permanent site in 2000. Negotiations with local council, state government and system leaders over the permanent site started a debate that lasted until the beginning of 2002. The school moved to the permanent site in 2004.

The school drew its student population from a forty-kilometre radius. The socio-economic status and structure of families was diverse. Students came from families that were comprised of two parents, with dual incomes, living on “boutique” acreages on the
outskirts of the Sydney metropolitan region. In contrast, students also came from single parent, no employment and impoverished families.

Participants
Teaching staff are the participants in this study. All first and second year staff were asked to participate in this study. There were fourteen first year staff and eight second year staff, each of whom consented to participate. Information regarding the staff is presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Participant information and identification number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification number</th>
<th>First or second year staff</th>
<th>Female/Male</th>
<th>Teaching experience in years</th>
<th>Subjects taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>PDHPE, Outdoor Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>TAS, technical drawing, wood, metal and plastics work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Italian, Geography, Religious Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Initially primary trained, then retrained as special education teacher, qualifications in specifically dealing with students with hearing disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Primary trained, junior high school mathematics, science and history/geography and religious education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Junior Science, Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>All TAS subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teacher Librarian, Information Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>History, Computing Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Science, Religious Education, Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>First Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>PDHPE, Religious Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>First Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>English, Religious Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Second Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>TAS, design and technology, food technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Second Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>TAS, design and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Second Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>HSIE, Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Second Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Primary trained teacher, generalist, Religious education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Second Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Second Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Science, physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Second Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Second Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection
This case study used multiple data collection methods. Data were collected using a variety of instruments including field notes in the form of a reflective journal, school
documentation and policies, semi-structured interviews with teaching staff and a review of relevant literature. My role as researcher is defined as that of a participant observer. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) describe the role of the participant observer as having the potential to become the “trusted person” (p.39). The access to the site and documentation, that was available, provided the opportunity to:

learn firsthand how the actions of your others correspond to their words; see patterns of behaviour; experience the unexpected, as well as the expected; and develop a quality of trust with your others, that motivates them to tell you what otherwise may not. (p. 39)

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) refer to the study participants as “your others” (p.3 9). In this study the need to be the “trusted person” (p. 39) was crucial. In my role as curriculum coordinator I had developed professional relationships with the participants of the study. As the founding curriculum coordinator, my research role in the study was that of participant observer. As participant observer I began the study with preconceived ideas on issues and focus areas for the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) discuss the nature of a researcher’s work and state that as researchers “we do have background knowledge” (p.17). It is because of this background knowledge that we are able to make sense of situations, issues, details and the complex nature of the site under investigation. Reflection from 1999 to the time of writing this thesis involved a process of development of the original focus areas and issues.

The design of the study also provided the opportunity to integrate data collection and data analysis. Ezzy (2002) discusses the idea that:

simultaneous data collection and data analysis builds on the strengths of qualitative methods and as inductive method for building theory and interpretations from the perspective of the people being studied. It allows the analysis to be shaped by the participants in a more fundamental way than if the analysis is left until after the data collection has been finished. (p. 61)
Data collection involved taking field notes that took account of the everyday life of the school, in the form of the curriculum coordinator’s journal. Data collection also involved documenting all processes and archiving all school documentation. Documenting, reflecting and evaluating the development of the school was a process performed continually. Such reflection allowed themes and issues to be identified.

Data collection was directed by the examination of archival records such as policy documents and correspondence to the school community by members of the school executive. The purpose of this phase was to extrapolate and validate themes. Finally analysis involved examination of data gathered through interviews with foundation and second year staff, again with the purpose of extrapolating themes.

Field notes: journal

My journal was a diary that maintained an accurate account of the school’s daily events. It was also in this journal that I would reflect on the day’s activities. Detailed accounts were made of meetings and conversations with staff. During meetings with staff, or in staff meetings, I would record the focus of the meeting, the factors that affected the focus of the meeting and the outcome of the meeting. The entries were both descriptive and analytical (see Appendix 2). Glesne and Peshkin (1996) describe the need to maintain field notes in such a way that they can be easily read and understood, so that emerging themes can be extrapolated and further explored. During the first year of maintaining the journal, the accounts kept were descriptive. As my research focus developed, the nature of the journal became both descriptive and analytical.

Archival records: school documentation

School documentation was collected and archived in categories of type and kept chronologically. No documentation of students was kept. The access to the site and documentation provided the opportunity to “learn firsthand how the actions of your others correspond to their words; see patterns of behavior; experience the unexpected, as well as the expected; and develop a quality of trust with your others, that motivates them to tell you what otherwise may not” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 39). Here, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) refer to the project participants as “your others” (p. 39). In this project the need to
be the “trusted person” was crucial. In my role as Curriculum Coordinator I had developed professional relationships with the participants of the project. The need to remain objective and collect as many primary data sources to increase reliability and validity was a prominent thought. The data collected included memos, minutes of meetings, newsletters, policy documents, proposals, vision statements and statements of philosophy. If documents such as policy of vision statements were updated, a progression of changes and both new and old versions were maintained. Any changes that were made within documentation were then reflected upon in the journal. The keeping of these records and subsequent reflection offered an insight into the school’s development and provided the opportunity to add richness to other data collected. For example, Bogdan and Biklen (1992) discuss the opportunity for such documentation to reveal information about issues such as, “the official chain of command and internal rules and regulations. They can also provide clues about leadership style and potential insights about what organizational members value” (p. 136).

**Interviews: school teaching staff**

Interviews with teaching staff were conducted and used to enhance and supplement the findings and themes that emerged from analysis of my journal and school documentation. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) discuss the work and experience of a participant observer as the preceding option to interviewing and as the basis of question formation. Research questions were designed around themes that were emerging from school documentation and my journal. The initial questions designed had as a focus: leadership; decision-making and communication; curriculum construction; staff relationships; the local community; and the system. Because of my personal relationship and the possible bias of staff, an independent research assistant was employed to interview staff. This allowed the participants to freely discuss and explore research questions. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Participants were asked to validate the accuracy of their transcript and clarify unclear responses. While questions had been designed, the research assistant was instructed to conduct a semi-structured interview. This then provided an opportunity to probe the participants for further clarification and understanding.
Adopting a semi-structured interview approach yielded much meaningful information that assisted with the study. Initial reading of the transcripts was conducted and emerging themes and issues were coded in light of focus areas from school documentation and my journal. The interview questions are presented below (see Appendix 3).

**Educational Vision and Philosophy**
- What is your educational philosophy?
- Was the vision and philosophy of the school clearly articulated to you during your employment process?
- How is the vision and direction of a beginning school developed?
- What are effective methods of implementing the guiding philosophy of a beginning school?
- What initial structures are essential in a beginning school?
- How does a management team ensure that the vision and philosophy of the school is maintained after year 1 (year 2 and year 3)?

**Decision Making**
- How are decisions made in a beginning school?
- Describe the decision making process at the school through the various levels and years of your involvement.
- What made these processes effective / ineffective?
- How would you have improved the processes?

**Support of Staff**
- What support mechanisms are necessary for teaching staff to maintain the stamina and pace that are essential for developing a beginning school?

**Relationship of Staff**
- How do the foundation, second and third year staff relate?
- What effect does this have on practices and implementation of the vision and philosophy?

**Roles of the School Community**
- How critical are the various roles of all the community in building a beginning school?
• What role does the staff play in maintaining the vision and philosophy of a beginning school?
• What role did you play in establishing the school?

Procedure
The procedure followed for this study was as follows. Initially, ethics permission was sought from the University’s Ethics Committee. On receipt of ethical approval, consent was sought from the Principal of the case study school to conduct research at the site, which involved the collection of archival school documents, interviews with staff and the use of the curriculum coordinator’s journal. Consent was then sought from prospective participants and interviews were conducted with staff. Additionally, archival documentation were collected during 2001. The interviews were transcribed and an initial coding was undertaken, which informed the review of literatures. Informed by the literature review, the research focus was finalised and final coding and categorisation of data were undertaken.

Data analysis
The data gathered were initially analysed by identifying relevant emerging themes from my observations. The process of refining themes involved pursuing the path as outlined in Carney’s Ladder of Analytical Abstraction (1990) (see Figure 6.1).

Stake (1995) refers to analysis as a “matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as final compilations” (p. 71). Stake (1995) explains data analysis in a qualitative frame involving “analysis and synthesis in direct interpretation” (p. 75) of the case. Miles and Huberman (1994) discuss the challenges that face qualitative researchers when analysing data that stems from the “multiplicity of data sources and forms” (p. 55). As stated previously multiple types of data were collected over a three-year period from 1999-2001. To overcome this challenge, the previously described review of literature was the guiding focus for overcoming this issue. It was through a process of reflection of key findings from the literature in the areas of school effectiveness, school improvement and school reform that defined parameters by which data were interpreted.
Analysis of data occurred during different stages of the study. The process of analysis involved employing methods of interpretive narrative accounts, and coding and categorising of data to extrapolate themes and provide possible explanations (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994).

**Step 1** involved my initial observations and experiences and the identification of key focus areas at Companion High School during the first year of its establishment. The areas were in regards to:

- educational vision and philosophy;
- initial structures and processes necessary to establish a new school;
- leadership, decision-making and communication;
- staff issues particularly capacity and knowledge, burnout and relationships between foundation staff and staff that came in years two and three, professional development, planning time; and
- the school and wider communities.

These focus areas have been previously described as the internal and external level forces. My observations about these areas were maintained in a journal. Initial codes were assigned to the focus areas, see Table 6.2.

### Table 6.2 Initial issues and themes identified as focus areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>educational vision and philosophy</td>
<td>Process of sharing and developing the vision</td>
<td>SHARING (SHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process to provide the opportunity for ownership of the vision</td>
<td>OWNERSHIP (OWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>initial structures and processes necessary to</td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate management structures to support the work of</td>
<td>MANAGEMENT (MAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establish a new school</td>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>WORKLOAD (WOR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An enormous workload to create structures</td>
<td>SCHOOL SITE (SIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No permanent site</td>
<td>RESOURCING (RES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate resourcing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership, decision-making and communication</td>
<td>Effective leadership</td>
<td>LEADERSHIP (LEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective decision-making and communication processes that</td>
<td>DECISION-MAKING &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are collaborative, open and inclusive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• staff issues particularly capacity and knowledge, burnout and relationships between foundation staff and staff that came in years two and three, professional development, planning time</td>
<td>Staff capacity to implement vision and associated issues</td>
<td>CAPACITY (CAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff expertise in curriculum integration</td>
<td>CURRICULUM EXPERTISE (CUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate time to plan curriculum</td>
<td>PLANNING TIME (TIM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate professional development</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff efficacy of vision</td>
<td>EFFICACY (EFF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship of staff between first and second year</td>
<td>RELATIONSHIP OF STAFF (REL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff exhaustion</td>
<td>STAFF EXHAUSTION (EXH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff capacity to use of technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2 Initial issues and themes identified as focus areas (continued)

In addition to this, reflection and coding of journal entries revealed other areas of focus. An example of the process undertaken to code one journal entry is provided below. The example is focused on a journal entry written after the first staff meeting:

The meeting today was interesting. The anxiety levels of the staff were obvious. I think the reality of what is expected of them hasn’t really hit home. All of us are going to have to teach outside of our KLA teaching at least two subjects to one class. Obviously a worrying thought seeing though I am trained to teach maths but I will be teaching maths and science. As well as the fact that we are integrating what we are doing. I am not quite sure whether they really know what this means. (Researcher journal)

The meeting was about the approach taken to curriculum construction and how it was to be implemented at Companion High School. This issue is a key factor in the establishment of the school because the driving philosophy was to be underpinned by best
practice in the middle school years. The curriculum model was based on a thematic integrated approach where teachers were expected to teach in more than one subject area.

This entry was coded by initially highlighting key-words and phrases.

The meeting today was interesting. The anxiety levels of the staff were obvious. I think the reality of what is expected of them hasn’t really hit home. All of us are going to have to teach outside of our KLA teaching at least two subjects to one class. Obviously a worrying thought seeing though I am trained to teach maths but I will be teaching maths and science. As well as the fact that we are integrating what we are doing. I am not quite sure whether they really know what this means.

What this process revealed were issues in regards to: staff anxiety; expectations; the ability to work in a different curriculum area; the ability to plan, implement and evaluate in an integrated curriculum approach. Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 show the key-words and phrases taken from the journal excerpt, the initial codes that were assigned and definitions of the codes.

Table 6.3 Key-words and phrases and codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key-words and phrases</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>Anxiety (ANX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what is expected</td>
<td>expectations (EXP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach outside of our KLA</td>
<td>capacity (CAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrating</td>
<td>efficacy (EFF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether they really know what means</td>
<td>knowledge of curriculum (CUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge of pedagogy (PED)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4 Codes and definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>expectations (EXP)</td>
<td>Staff understanding of the expectations and implementation issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capacity (CAP)</td>
<td>Staff ability to accept, adopt and implement required models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>efficacy (EFF)</td>
<td>Staff understanding of the model adopted and the value of this model in learning experiences for students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further coding of journal entries substantiated the themes identified above. The themes were recurring in journal entries. As such, the themes presented in Table 6.4 were then integrated with those in Table 6.2. These are presented in Table 6.5 and this list was used to begin Step 2 of the process.

Table 6.5 Step 1 Themes and codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• educational vision and philosophy</td>
<td>Process of sharing and developing the vision</td>
<td>SHARING (SHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process to provide the opportunity for ownership of the vision</td>
<td>OWNERSHIP (OWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• initial structures and processes necessary to establish a new school</td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate management structures to support the work of teachers</td>
<td>MANAGEMENT (MAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An enormous workload to create structures</td>
<td>WORKLOAD (WOR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No permanent site</td>
<td>SCHOOL SITE (SIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate resourcing</td>
<td>RESOURCING (RES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• leadership, decision-making and communication</td>
<td>Effective leadership</td>
<td>LEADERSHIP (LEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective decision-making and communication processes that are collaborative, open and inclusive</td>
<td>DECISION-MAKING &amp; COMMUNICATION (DMC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• staff issues particularly capacity and knowledge, burnout and relationships between foundation staff and staff that came in years two and three, professional development, planning time</td>
<td>Staff capacity to implement vision and associated issues</td>
<td>CAPACITY (CAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff expertise in curriculum integration</td>
<td>CURRICULUM EXPERTISE (CUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate time to plan curriculum</td>
<td>PLANNING TIME (TIM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate professional development</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff efficacy of vision</td>
<td>EFFICACY (EFF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship of staff between</td>
<td>RELATIONSHIP OF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.5 Step 1 Themes and codes (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• the school and wider communities</td>
<td>Local community acceptance of the school</td>
<td>LOCAL ACCEPTANCE (ACC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship with the local community</td>
<td>LOCAL RELATIONSHIP (LRE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The system’s inability to manage the process of site identification and building of the permanent school</td>
<td>THE SYSTEM (SYS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2** then involved testing these focus themes against the conclusions from the literature in the area of new schools. Two of the first descriptions of new schools that I read were that of Doremus (1981a, 1981b) and Fink (2000). These two sets of readings and my initial observations influenced the drafting of the interview questions for participants. The interview questions were focused around several organising themes, namely:

- educational vision and philosophy;
- decision-making and communication;
- support of staff;
- the relationship of staff; and
- the role of the school community.

The interview questions (cited previously within this chapter) reflect the analysis of my observations, coding of journal entries, and identified focus areas from the literature.
Step 3 involved two processes. The first part of the process involved research into schools focussing on the identified themes presented in Table 6.5. The second part of the process involved an analysis of the interview transcripts and archival documentation. These two stages are described further below.

Research into the identified themes stated in Table 6.5 resulted in a vast amount of information. It was clear that a comprehensive knowledge base was required to be able to fully understand the issues associated with establishing a new school. Hence, the literature in the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement was sourced. This literature provided the opportunity to reflect on what an effective school should be like and also what a school that was improving should be like. The themes that emerged from this literature base were presented in Chapter Four. However, what this literature did not provide was substantial detail about how schools could become effective and improve over time. Hence, literature in the area of school reform was considered as it promised not only to articulate the necessary characteristics of effective schooling but also a way of becoming effective.

What this stage of the analysis process resulted in was a set of design characteristics that should be considered when establishing a new school. The design characteristics are presented in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Step 3 New School Design Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership &amp; Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership should be effective and proactive in establishing a new school by being inclusive, supportive and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The leadership structure should provide support for staff and these structures should be able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The systems of the school should support a method of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The establishment phase of the school requires an inclusive environment for all members of the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform
• Teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice
• Teachers are given adequate time to plan and implement at the establishment phase of the school
• Teachers are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification stages of establishing a school
• There are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the establishment of the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6 Step 3 New School Design Characteristics (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The professional culture of the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school should be established taking into consideration the fact that it is a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to succeeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational change should be promoted as positive and ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The initial stage of establishing a school should be seen as a part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The establishment of a school needs to be well planned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A theory of process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A theory of process must drive the establishment of a school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of establishing a school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second part of this stage involved analysis of data to triangulate findings and check the identified themes. An example of theme identification conducted on one participant’s response to the question, *Have the learning outcomes of students been enhanced by adopting specific practices?* is presented in Table 6.7 below.

Table 6.7 Teacher 8 response to *Have the learning outcomes of students been enhanced by adopting specific practices?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall I would say yes. I believe strongly in teams. Originally I was very hesitant and quite frightened by the prospect of working in a different environment. I remember the first day of school where we all had a day to talk about how the year was going to work. Suzanne was talking about making links with other KLAs and making sure we worked together as a team. I wasn’t quite sure that I was capable to teach in that sort of environment, after all I had been trained to only to teach X not any other subject. The</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
long periods also worried me, I really didn’t know how I was going to teach for 75 minutes……….

A full description of findings from this part of the process is presented in Chapter Seven.

Figure 6.2 is an outline of the stages of the study in terms of data analysis.
Figure 6.2 Stages of data analysis

**Step 1**
- Themes and issues identified from journal entries and observations
- Internal and external level forces

**Step 2**
- Themes and issues identified from new schools literature
- Integration of Step 1 and Step 2 themes and issues

**Step 3**
- Analysis of school effectiveness, school improvement, school reform and sustainability literatures
- New school design characteristics developed
- Analysis of interview transcripts and school documentation

**PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND RESULTS**
Validity and Generalisability

Naturalistic data collection is underpinned by the assumption that reality is holistic, multidimensional and ever changing. It is not a fixed, objective event waiting to be revealed, observed and quantified. As researchers we are dealing with people’s construction of the world. Different people can view an event in totally different ways from each other. As the founding curriculum coordinator I was an ‘insider’. This unique position provided a way of documenting and seeing (Wolcott, 1999) and an opportunity to consider the issues and challenges are in play during the stages of conceptualisation, planning and implementation. Because of this unique position, it was appropriate to adopt methods of case study research coupled with ethnographic methods to guide the research design of this study. The dynamic, sometimes delicate, situations and interactions in a school’s foundational years, as well as access to all school documentation are not always open to scrutiny and examination from external agencies. As a participant observer, however, I had access to all factors of the school’s foundational years. The issue of validity of both data sources and data analysis needs to be scrutinized here. My role and involvement is encapsulated within the realm of ethnographic methods. These methods provide a framework and tools to describe the complex phenomena encountered from a privileged position and increase the validity of the study. To counter these issues, the strategy of triangulation was used to increase internal validity. Denzin (1989) discusses the use of data triangulation and explains this approach involves data that are collected over a period of time, from more than one location and from, or about, more than one person. Triangulation of data in this study was based on the collection and analysis of a journal, archival records in the form of policy documents, interviews of multiple participants and relevant literature. This process increased the validity of the study by cross-referencing emerging themes from different sources of data (Stake, 1995).

Generalisability in the context of this study will be categorised by comparability and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The study will assess the situation and context of the school in relation to the guiding research questions, as well as identify possible comparable situations. Indications and suggestions of how the data may be transferred to similar contexts will be made clear to the reader through the richness of data collected and subsequent interpretation of the data.
Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The limitations of this study related to most single case study research and concern the study’s generalisability. The school is a catholic systemic school and as such, the findings may not be generalisable to other schools in different educational systems. Further, the school is a metropolitan school and the findings may not be generalisable to schools that do not have the same demographic make-up.

In discussing methods used for this study it is relevant to outline the ethical considerations. The primary ethical considerations were: seeking the permission of the Principal to conduct interviews regarding the school and using school archival records; seeking the approval of initial, second and third year staff to be involved with the study.

Permission of the Principal of the school was gained. It was not necessary to gain the permission of the educational system. The Principal in this educational system has the autonomy to approve research being conducted within the school setting.

Permission of staff to be involved was gained. Staff were asked their consent to be a participant in the study. Interviews were negotiated at a time convenient for the participants and were conducted in the participants’ professional setting or another comfortable environment nominated by the participant.

The confidentiality of participants involved in the study was maintained. Participants are only identified by the year they started teaching at the school. Accounts of participant responses were made using general descriptions rather than specific names or identifying factors.

Students were not interviewed.

I had a professional relationship with teaching staff at the school. Except for the deputy Principal and Principal, all staff were under my direct supervision in terms of curriculum within the school. Staff were initially told about the study at a staff meeting. A letter of
information and consent about the study was mailed at a later date. For staff that left the school, a telephone call was made eliciting their interest in participating in the study. Interested participants were mailed further information about the study, as well as a letter of consent.

The relationship between the participants and myself should be discussed further. Because of relationship with staff it was imperative that they were not coerced in any way to be part of this study. This study was best served by staff involved being willing participants. As such, procedures were implemented to overcome the likelihood of potential participants feeling ‘obliged’ to participate. A research assistant was employed. It is this person who made initial contact with and interviewed consenting participants (see Appendices 4-6).

The participants were free to withdraw from the research at any time and were aware of their ability to do so, as outlined in the Information Sheet for Participants (see Appendix 7).

Chapter Seven which follows presents the results of this case study.
Chapter Seven
RESULTS

The research questions for this study are:

Major
• What structures, procedures and resources are vital in establishing a new school that will result in sustainable practices?

Minor
• What evidence existed of a theory of process for starting Companion High School?

The organisation of this chapter is as follows. First, a presentation of findings in regards to the major research question is made by presenting the themes developed from the analysis of journal entries and the literature in the area of new schools (see Table 7.1). Then the new school design characteristics are presented in Table 7.2. These findings are triangulated with other data sources, namely, participant interviews, school documentation and the Principal’s correspondence. Then a presentation of findings in regards to the minor research question is made. Data used for this section were sourced from the Principal interview, school documentation and a follow-up interview conducted with the Principal in February 2008.

What structures, procedures and resources are vital in establishing a new school that will result in sustainable practices?
In order to provide a response to the major research question, data sources that have been used are interviews with first and second year staff, my initial observations as recorded in my journal, and the new school design characteristics developed in Chapters Three, Four and Five. To support the findings, other archival documents have been used, namely, the principal’s correspondence memos and school policy documents.

Table 7.1 represents the themes as major focus areas. These were identified from my initial observations of the establishment phase of Companion High School during year 1
and year 2. What they articulate are specific issues in regards to the initial stages of the school and outline structures, processes and characteristics that are important when establishing a new school.

Table 7.1 Identified themes extrapolated from researcher’s observations and journal entries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus areas Internal and External Level Forces</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• educational vision and philosophy</td>
<td>Process of sharing and developing the vision</td>
<td>SHARING (SHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process to provide the opportunity for ownership of the vision</td>
<td>OWNERSHIP (OWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• initial structures and processes necessary to establish a new school</td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate management structures to support the work of teachers</td>
<td>MANAGEMENT (MAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An enormous workload to create structures</td>
<td>WORKLOAD (WOR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No permanent site</td>
<td>SCHOOL SITE (SIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate resourcing</td>
<td>RESOURCING (RES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• leadership, decision-making and communication</td>
<td>Effective leadership</td>
<td>LEADERSHIP (LEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective decision-making and communication processes that are collaborative, open and inclusive</td>
<td>DECISION-MAKING &amp; COMMUNICATION (DMC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.1 Identified themes extrapolated from researcher’s observations and journal entries (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus areas</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Coding categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal and External Level Forces</td>
<td>• staff issues particularly capacity and knowledge, burnout and relationships between foundation staff and staff that came in years two and three, professional development, planning time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the school and wider communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff capacity to implement vision and associated issues</td>
<td>CAPACITY (CAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff expertise in curriculum integration</td>
<td>CURRICULUM EXPERTISE (CUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate time to plan curriculum</td>
<td>PLANNING TIME (TIM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate and adequate professional development</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff efficacy of vision</td>
<td>EFFICACY (EFF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship of staff between first and second year</td>
<td>RELATIONSHIP OF STAFF (REL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff exhaustion</td>
<td>STAFF EXHAUSTION (EXH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff capacity to use of technology</td>
<td>TECHNOLOGY (TEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff knowledge of appropriate pedagogical practices</td>
<td>PEDAGOGY (PED)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff understanding of the expectations and implementation issues</td>
<td>EXPECTATIONS (EXP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local community acceptance of the school</td>
<td>LOCAL ACCEPTANCE (ACC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship with the local community</td>
<td>LOCAL RELATIONSHIP (LRE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The system’s inability to manage the process of site identification and building of the permanent school</td>
<td>THE SYSTEM (SYS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These areas are further discussed when data from participant interviews and school archival documentation is presented later in this chapter.

Table 7.2 presents the new school design characteristics which were developed from the literature presented in Chapters Three, Four and Five. They were developed because there were no benchmarks by which data from this study could be interpreted. The new school
design characteristics articulate the structures and processes that would need to be evident when establishing a new school.

Table 7.2 New School Design Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership &amp; Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership should be effective and proactive in establishing a new school by being inclusive, supportive and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership structure should provide support for staff and these structures should be able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The systems of the school should support a method of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The establishment phase of the school requires an inclusive environment for all members of the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are given adequate time to plan and implement at the establishment phase of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification stages of establishing a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of a new school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the establishment of the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The professional culture of the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school should be established taking into consideration the fact that it is a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to succeeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational change should be promoted as positive and ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The initial stage of establishing a school should be seen as a part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The establishment of a school needs to be well planned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A theory of process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A theory of process must drive the establishment of a school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of establishing a school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two sets of data and the findings that will now be presented will be used to provide a response to the major research question.
Table 7.3 presents a summary of responses from staff when asked, *What initial structures are essential in a beginning school?* Staff were interviewed in the third year of the school’s existence. Responses have been categorised to indicate whether the response was from foundation staff or staff that were employed to begin during the second year of the school’s operation. There were fourteen (14) foundation staff (excluding the researcher) and eight (8) second year staff. Responses have been grouped according to an organising theme and major issues are listed under the appropriate theme. The organising themes and issues emerged from a process of coding which involved identifying recurring issues within the transcripts. The themes are:

- Vision and Philosophy;
- Effective decision-making and communication;
- Basic managerial functioning;
- The wider community;
- Appropriate professional development;
- Clear role definition;
- Support; and
- Future planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified structures</th>
<th>Foundation staff (14)</th>
<th>Second year staff (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VISION AND PHILOSOPHY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a clearly articulated vision and philosophy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a method to ensure ownership of the vision</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structures for new staff to become a part of the culture of the school and share its vision and philosophy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFFECTIVE DECISION-MAKING AND COMMUNICATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear and effective processes for communication and decision-making</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.3 Initial structures identified by foundation and second year staff (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified structures</th>
<th>Foundation staff (14)</th>
<th>Second year staff (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASIC MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• basic managerial functioning structures, namely, pastoral care and discipline policies, timetable structures, duty rosters, committee structures, curriculum structures</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WIDER COMMUNITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• issues with the system</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• positive relationship with the local community</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• adequate and appropriate professional development</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• access to experienced role models</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• mentoring programmes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROLE DEFINITION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a clear definition of roles</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• support from the leadership structures</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• adequate time to plan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE PLANNING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a plan for when staff leave the school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vision and Philosophy

Through my reading of literature, issues in regards to vision and philosophy were identified as a significant factor when establishing a new school (see Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Fink, 2000; Hill et al., 1993; Margolis 2005; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987). Therefore, participants were asked specific questions on vision and philosophy during the interview process.

- Was the vision and philosophy of the school clearly articulated to you during your employment process?
- How is the vision and direction of a beginning school developed?
- How does a management team ensure that the vision and philosophy of the school is maintained after year 1 (year 2 and year 3)?
A critical aspect identified in the literature as significant to staff adopting the vision of a school is that staff are quite clear about the driving direction that the vision articulates. The process of sharing and developing the vision and philosophy of Companion High School began when prospective staff enquired about positions at the school. The Principal’s initial school vision is presented below (see Appendix 8).

OUR SHARED VISION

We hope to create a reflective, prayerful and accepting environment.
We hope to build a community which is Christ centred, practices forgiveness, understanding and actively accepting of others.
We welcome the possibility that we will be challenged in our beliefs, because we want our students to be critical thinkers with informed consciences.
We are committed to making our school a centre of learning and excellence, which provides a kaleidoscope of opportunities for all.
We aim to create a community of learners who will be technologically comfortable, flexible, adaptable and well informed about local and global issues.
We will foster in our students a strong belief in themselves as well as the ability to think logically, critically and independently.
We aim to provide a balanced curriculum through which varying needs and abilities will be nurtured.
We aim to create an educational climate which is purposeful and where common goals are pursued.
We will encourage staff, parents and students to view failure as an opportunity for growth and renewal. (Document archive, Excerpt from marketing brochure stating the vision of the school)

This vision statement espouses a philosophy which is student centred, however, what it does not specifically treat is the issue of how specific teachers could enact these ideas into classroom practice.

Was the vision and philosophy of the school clearly articulated to you during your employment process?
The underlying philosophy of Companion High School was initially formulated by the Principal and articulated to prospective staff when they enquired about employment at the school and also during the interview process. When asked how the vision and direction of a beginning school developed, the Principal responded with:

I suppose for me it began with having some time – a year in fact – to think about and to read about what I thought would be a good school, and I know that was, I suppose, common sense. And a lot of what I’d seen and done and believed in, and in reading people who were talking about challenging some old mind-sets and thinking about doing things a little differently. To answer the question ‘how’s it developed’, I think you have to take on board people who want to believe in your vision and want to run with it and were brave enough to do that, and that was the point of I suppose my letter to people saying to them don’t come on board unless you really think you can do this. (Principal, original interview)

In this excerpt the Principal has raised some significant factors. First, she had time to think about the direction of the school and begin to plan what sort of educational principles would underpin school practices. As discussed in Chapter Two, the educational principles that would underpin the school were to be based on adopting middle school practices. Policy documents that were developed by the Curriculum Coordinator and Pastoral Care Coordinator had to reflect this direction (See Appendix 9). These documents were used as starting points of future discussions and professional development of staff.

Second, the issue of employing appropriate staff who believed in the same things and wanted to be part of the process of establishing a new school was raised. All prospective staff were sent an employment package. The package contained a marketing brochure that was also given to all prospective students, and the Principal’s letter which included the vision of the school. It was this text that was used in providing information to prospective staff. This statement was also used during the initial stages of year 1 as the basis of discussions and negotiations about the direction of the school.
Employment interview questions were drafted so that they quite clearly indicated the underlying curriculum and pastoral care structures that would be adopted at Companion High School. The employment interview questions were:

1. The underlying philosophy of the school is based on implementing structures based on a middle school approach to schooling. Explain your understanding of these structures and how you would play an active role in implementing them?

2. More specifically, the curriculum at Companion High School will be integrated. How will you ensure that your curriculum area is effectively planned to uphold this approach?

3. Articulate your approach to student pastoral care issues. How does your approach align with the vision of the school? (Document archive, Interview questions)

Both these pieces of evidence clearly indicate the underlying philosophy of the school. When asked, *Was the vision and philosophy of the school clearly articulated to you during your employment process?* all participants indicated that it was made clear to them. One comment from a foundation staff member that indicates a typical response to this question was:

I think more than any job I have seen it was quite clearly articulated that there was a vision and philosophy based behind the school and that was right from the minute that I was applying for the job. I was given a copy of that. I read it fairly clearly and I talked over it with some people and when I went for the interview, I can remember of a few occasions during the interview that the attention was drawn to that. It had lots of elements. It had that technology approach. It had that integrated learning approach. It had middle schooling. It had a lot of elements to it that I thought could weave together to make something work. So yes I thought it was quite clearly stated that was what we were going to do at that time. (Teacher 12)
Here the staff member has confirmed that from the outset the guiding vision and philosophy was made clear to prospective staff. Second year staff also indicated that the vision and philosophy was articulated to them, as one second year staff member commented:

I think it was during the employment process because one of the first things I received was an information package in the mail and that had vision statements, school philosophy and lots of information on paper about those sorts of things. (Teacher 17)

Commenting on the employment interview questions all participants indicated that the interview questions also articulated the vision and philosophy of the school and attempted to ascertain what they knew about specific critical factors of the vision and philosophy.

As mentioned previously, the direction of the school was to be underpinned by a middle school approach to both curriculum and pastoral care. The design of the curriculum structures were based on having an integrated approach to learning and teaching and initially units of work would be thematic. This approach to curriculum design was not a new concept but certainly unfamiliar to many teachers as it deviated from traditional subject structure approaches. Also, the pastoral care system employed meant that everyone was involved in the pastoral care of a group of students, and this relationship was to be maintained for the duration of the students’ time at the school. This meant that it was essential that staff employed understood the concepts underpinning this philosophy and had the capacity to implement necessary structures and policies. A foundation staff member commented:

At the interview they talked about integration. It was clearly articulated during the interview. Yes it was articulated but I didn't understand a lot of it. Such as middle schooling and integration and it was something that I learnt along the way after I was employed. (Teacher 8)
This response indicates that the interview reaffirmed the guiding vision and philosophy of the school but also raises the issue of staff capacity. Staff capacity to implement the underlying structures of the school is significant because if staff could not enact the vision then there would be obvious problems with the implementation phase. Another foundation staff member stated:

The idea of integrated learning and the technology push of the school were very clearly portrayed of what the school was after. Particularly the integration idea quite appealed to me and the concepts to deal with middle school. I felt there was a lot of value in that. (Teacher 9)

This response again indicates that the vision and philosophy had been articulated and also indicates that this staff member aligned their educational philosophy with the school’s vision. This observation was articulated by another seven foundation staff (50%) and three second year staff (37.5%).

While it is clear that the initial vision and philosophy were articulated to prospective staff, my experiences during the employment process of staff and during the first few weeks of the school’s operation indicate that staff knowledge and capacity to implement what was required of them was an issue. During the employment interview process only two staff (14%) demonstrated the ability to clearly articulate what a middle school philosophy could look like in reality and also how they could be a part of implementing such structures. As to staff capacity, my journal entry from the first staff meeting indicates my concerns as to the ability of staff to effectively implement an integrated approach to curriculum.

The meeting today was interesting. The anxiety level of the staff was obvious. I think the reality of what is expected of them hasn’t really hit home. All of us are going to have to teach outside of our KLA teaching at least two subjects to one class. Obviously a worrying thought seeing though I am trained to teach maths but I will be teaching maths and science. As well as the fact that we are
integrating what we are doing. I am not quite sure whether they really know what this means. (Journal entry, Year 1)

One foundation staff member who, in retrospect, supported my concerns stated:

Originally I was very hesitant and quite frightened by the prospect of working in a different environment. I remember the first day of school where we all had a day to talk about how the year was going to work. Suzanne was talking about making links with other KLAs and making sure we worked together as a team. I wasn’t quite sure that I was capable to teach in that sort of environment, after all I had been trained to only to teach X not any other subject. The long periods also worried me, I really didn’t know how I was going to teach for 75 minutes. (Teacher 8)

The findings on this aspect of vision clearly indicated that the vision was quite clearly articulated to prospective staff at various stages at the employment inquiry stage and then reinforced during the interview process. This highlights that staff were well informed about what was expected of them and the direction that the school was taking. The evidence provided here also raises several issues. First, there is the difference between vision and a clear comprehensive design of the school. The ambiguity that this caused was expressed in staff not fully understanding what it means to integrate a curriculum and work together in teams on this approach. This then raises the second issue of staff capacity and possible ways of countering the lack of professional knowledge of implementing such curriculum structures.

How is the vision and direction of a beginning school developed?

Participants were also interviewed about how the educational vision and philosophy is developed in a beginning school. There was consensus that the issue of vision and philosophy was an important factor and participants specified several ideas about how it could be developed in a new school. First, the concept of continually sharing ideas about the vision and philosophy, which would then instil a sense of ownership, was a common idea that emerged. Also, the concept that the process was ‘led’ well (see Teacher 1
(excerpt below) was an emerging theme. Further, the collaborative nature of what had to be done was also a significant recurring theme that emerged from foundation staff. All foundation staff believed that their professional opinions were significant and would be a part of the process to develop the direction of the school. Some excerpts of interviews that reflect these ideas are:

The vision across the staff seemed to be shared and it was led fairly clear[ly] I think along the way. (Teacher 1)

I think it was through the numerous meetings that we had in our first year and consultation between management and ordinary staff at the KLA level as well. I think many things were discussed at the executive level and were brought to the rest of the staff to discuss about the vision and philosophy and the direction of the school. I felt it was one of the priorities of the school in the first year to establish the vision and philosophy and where we were going and what direction we wanted to take. I think after the first year however it didn't seem as much a priority as it was in the first year. (Teacher 8)

Another foundation staff member concurred with what has been already indicated but added that the leadership team was trying to share the vision and attempting to think about the processes needed to enact the vision. Her comments were:

It was just a lot of discussion and thrashing a lot of things back and forth. Trying to figure out what were the important parts or what was most important. What we believed in and then try to look at processes of how to do it. It's hard. It was hard. I think we got some things right. In other parts we got lost in it. So yes, it is difficult. I don't know how much of it is planned and how much just happens. Even looking back, it's not clear to me what the right process should be. Some of it just evolves from where you are at the time which I don't know is a good thing because I think you start just looking at the immediate problems and looking for solutions and stuff and looking at your clientele then and there when things are not going to remain the same, but in saying that I suppose you constantly had to
revisit your vision and philosophy because things do change. Schools are not static. (Teacher 6)

This staff member also highlighted another factor that is critical in the sharing of vision, that is, that the process of vision sharing is an evolving one.

All foundation staff members highlighted the significance of the Principal and foundation staff in building and sharing the vision, one commenting that:

I think that the Principal in our case had a lot to do with it. I think that the foundation staff contributes quite a lot to that and their past experiences both positive and negative I think guide them towards an ideal if you like because of the possibility that a beginning school offers. You know a fresh slate and the fact that there are no restrictions in place. There isn't a tradition and all of those things. There is the option to create some of that. (Teacher 12)

In contrast, all of the second year staff indicated it was a significant factor, but believed that much of the vision and philosophy had already been decided and that they had to adopt what had come before.

It felt for me that the philosophy and vision in the first year was established and a lot of things just rode off the back of the vision and philosophy. I think a lot of things that happened from the second year on, decisions were made and it was reported directly from the executive. They wanted to discuss certain things about the vision and philosophy or other directions etc but I think some decisions were made and felt it was just a collaborative process to fulfill the decisions that the executive had already made. (Teacher 15)

Another second year staff member indicated that the vision and direction of the school was clearly articulated and that effective leadership was essential. The fact that the process of vision building is collaborative and ‘collective’ was also raised by this staff member. Other critical factors raised were basic day to day school functioning, external
pressures from the local community, the fact that there was no permanent site when the school started, ownership from the second year on, and system accountability factors.

You can have vision and direction and you have to have leadership which is great. I think Companion High School is a good example of something that had really clearly articulated vision and direction. But then there are so many other factors that go into either making that work or not. Some of those factors would be just basically, well I can say in schools, just living day to day….the fact that you are not in a proper school. You are struggling to survive, when you know that the community is not happy. It’s hard to remain focused and the other issue is that the vision is only born by people that are there. The more people that come into a school, the more that challenge of that vision and redirect it. The reality is that the vision of any organisation will be collective. (Teacher 20)

Another second year staff member commented that a school goes through a process of evolution and that there is a life-cycle to innovations. This staff member highlighted again the significance of the leader in the process of vision building and also the difficulty that the leader must have in maintaining the vision.

It is very hard for a leader to maintain that vision and keep it going. Primarily because of the way that schools are run. Schools inevitably go back to that approach of ‘I am an English teacher and I am a Maths teacher and I am a music teacher and I am a such and such teacher and I am in the library and I have got to do this job’. We work independent of one another. So as much as you may try to think people as collective it always ends up being a matter of coming back to the lowest common denominator. The subject stuff has been around for years. I don’t think it is any one thing. I think it is everything. You can have a slight shift of the original vision and it will change. (Teacher 15)

Fifty percent of second year staff expressed concerns in regards to the vision being lost when they started at the beginning of the second year. One-second year staff member
attributed this to the observation that the school had begun to operate as a ‘normal school’ and that there were extraneous pressures of accountability that had to be addressed.

The original vision was clearly articulated to me and I was looking forward to starting at the school. What I noticed when I arrived in the second year was what I thought should have been happening wasn’t, the handle on that initial vision was lost. I think this was because we were trying to operate as a normal high school and trying to get through difficult times, you start to fall back onto things that need to be done, [teaching] programs and getting ready for reviews. You lose track of what probably you could have been doing. You just can’t. (Teacher 21)

The development of vision and philosophy in a beginning school is a critical issue. In regards to providing insights into the essential structures and processes necessary when establishing participants clearly indicated several factors that need to be considered, which were:

- Effective leadership;
- Effective management of day to day issues;
- A collaborative approach;
- Ownership;
- Effective management of external pressures; and
- Effective sharing of the vision and philosophy when new staff are employed.

These factors are considered as vital aspects when developing the vision and philosophy of a new school that would eventuate in sustainable practices.

*How does a management team ensure that the vision and philosophy of the school is maintained after year 1 (year 2 and year 3)?*

When asked how management and leadership structures maintained the vision and philosophy of a beginning school, foundation staff indicated several factors, which were that leadership and management needed to have a clear direction (100%); that there were
critical people who maintained what needed to be done (28%); that the vision and philosophy had to be continually revisited (100%); that anything that happened in the school was based on the vision and philosophy and it permeated throughout all structures (42%); that a positive ethos in the school was maintained (100%); that professional development was critical (100%); and that feeling valued by management and leadership was important (78%). Excerpts from foundation staff interviews supporting these factors are:

I think it starts with the person and a blueprint of the direction. Otherwise you could go off in the wrong direction. A very strong blueprint of what [the Principal] wants to achieve but not too specific. Just a general vision statement. I think you need people like [the Principal] and Suzanne. Because Suzanne was a carrier and rowed the ship no matter what. Also I think people like Michael who was socially cohesive and kept everyone socially cohesive. (Teacher 12)

One of the things that were most important was the revisiting of the philosophy along the way. Not just on paper and but clearly spelt out all the way and it was picked up in things like the ways assemblies were run or the way sporting choices were made. Day to day things along the way followed the vision constantly in comparison to schools I had been to in the past. (Teacher 3)

I think developing an ethos where we all work together and we all help and share, etc. A good team that is very team orientated and everyone shares the load and helps out when it's needed. That's the first thing; the second thing would be people using the professional development provided by the school…and the last thing probably would be just feeling like you're valued. That spurs you on to go that extra mile. (Teacher 9)

Seventy five percent of second year staff also supported the factors highlighted by the foundation staff. Further, one second year staff member raised the issue that the structures also had to be flexible, commenting that:
It has to be flexible enough so that staff are able to discuss it and change it for the needs of the students. This would enable the staff to have ownership over the direction. (Teacher 17)

Also, 50% of second year staff members commented on the fact that they found the processes adopted by leadership and management to be occurring at a pace that was too quick and this was to be to the detriment of the vision and philosophy, with one staff member commenting that:

In my experience at Companion High School, it is maintained in an absolutely frantic, frenetic manner. It's like being on a roller coaster. I get a sense that there was a real urgency and a drive to get everything right yesterday and I think sometimes in doing that we cut corners. (Teacher 22)

Another significant element that was stated by a second year staff member was that of staff turnover, the employment of appropriate staff and the effect it would have on maintaining the vision and philosophy in a beginning school. One teacher commented:

It will be difficult simply because of the change-over. There are things that are variable. By having said that, I think just employing the right people. That's what I think is important. (Teacher 16)

This concern was echoed in my journal entry at the time. Further, the fears of the foundation staff about bringing new people into the school and the effect this would have on maintaining the vision and philosophy, was highlighted:

We’ve just finished employing the second year staff- I wonder whether they will cope with what we are doing. I have to organise a getting to know you night so that all staff can mix. The current staff aren’t really positive they think we are going to lose what we have done. We need to think carefully about how to bring the new staff on board. (Journal entry, Year 1)
The Principal’s response to the question, how do management and leadership structures maintain the vision and philosophy of the school, was:

Well, you’ve just got to keep repeating it … and I’ve hit low as often as you can, and it sounds a bit like a propaganda technique, but it’s so true, you’ve just got to keep it out there. And you’ve got to take on board and create icons, symbols and rituals that do keep that vision and philosophy alive, and you’ve got to keep it very visible, very viable, and very much keep repeating the message over and over again, and never think that you’ve said it often enough. You can never say it often enough - you can never say if often enough - whether after the first year or the second year, you have to just keep saying it and revisiting it. (Principal, original interview)

This excerpt highlights the Principal’s method of how the vision and philosophy is maintained by indicating that it should be constantly revisited and discussed, and that ‘rituals’ around the vision need to be created.

However, one of the teaching and learning coordinators who left the school at the end of the second year made reference to how he felt disillusioned and that original dreams would never be realised:

I suppose I was very disillusioned. It wasn't the people at Companion I was more upset about, it was the fact that I could see and I knew that it wasn't going to go anywhere. When I started at Companion I was at a point in my teaching career where I said to myself I have a great chance to build a department, see it through until its first year through till Year 12 and then go. Have the building and all of the infrastructure set up and then reassess whether or not I was prepared to stay at school any longer. I thought that the school owed me. I thought that it owed me the chance to do that and it wasn't [the Principal’s] fault or anyone else's fault. It was [the system] and the people organizing it. They weren't going to deliver what they promised and I knew that it wasn't going to happen and I thought well I am not
prepared to see it through. I wasn't prepared to do it any longer. Just disillusioned generally with how schools operate. I could see not specifically anyone's fault but I could see Companion just going down the same path as every other school. It was just going to be like any other high school and we weren’t really going to realize what we had set out to do. So I suppose I left earlier than I thought I would, but I thought I just can't do it anymore. I suppose I left because I felt that there was really no future there and I wasn't just going to stay for the people anymore. I had done all of that before. If I was going to stay it would have to be for something more than that. (Teacher, 9)

This comment provides information about how the process of maintaining the vision was not adequate for him to remain at the school. The failure of the system to provide what was originally promised played a significant role in this staff member’s departure. Further, the articulation of the belief that Companion High School would become like any other school played a significant role in his decision to leave the school.

This section highlighted some significant features underpinning the development and maintenance of the vision in a beginning school from the perspective of leadership and management. These features included such aspects as:

- the leadership and management structures in a new school must have a clear direction;
- there are significant people that were critical in maintaining what needed to be done;
- the vision and philosophy had to be continually revisited;
- events and day-to-day practice had to be based on the vision and;
- a positive ethos in the school was maintained;
- professional development was critical;
- processes were put into place to ensure that the vision was shared by staff that joined the school after year 1;
- staff had to feel valued by management and leadership; and
• the external system pressures must be managed if the school is to realise its vision.

The issue of vision and philosophy was highlighted as one of the most critical factors by foundation and second year staff when establishing a new school. Participant responses indicated several key factors about vision and philosophy. In summary they identified that in order to be able to share the vision of a new school and also maintain it over subsequent years, the structures that are necessary in a beginning school are:

• a method that clearly articulates the vision and philosophy to foundation staff (100%);
• a clear direction for where the school is heading (100%);
• effective leadership that is able to implement said method(s) (100%);
• effective management of day to day issues so that staff can live out the vision (78%);
• a collaborative approach to sharing the vision (100%);
• a method that promotes ownership of the vision amongst staff (100%);
• structures that effectively manage external pressures allowing staff to live out the vision (78%);
• structures and methods that provide the opportunity to effectively share the vision and philosophy when new staff are employed (95%);
• structures (‘rituals’) that provide the opportunity for staff to continually revisit the vision and philosophy, evaluate it, modify it and ‘live it’ (Principal comment);
• appropriate professional development that provides staff the opportunity to engage with material so as to enhance their knowledge about the underlying curriculum and pastoral care philosophies (75%);
• structures that promote a positive school working environment (100%); and
• flexibility (25%).

**Decision-making and communication**

Another critical structure identified by participants was the decision-making and communication processes in a beginning school. Fifty five percent of participants initially
experienced a system that they saw as collaborative and consultative, with one foundation staff member commenting:

I thought there was a fairly collaborative and positive decision making and I think people were more involved, well more than I had experienced. (Teacher 11)

In support of this a second year staff member commented:

When I came here in the second year, it was still very much that decisions were laid out on the table so to speak and it was discussed at a full staff meeting. Now I think as the school gets bigger and there are more meetings and people don't like going to meetings and I see that starting to waiver off a bit. I think decisions are being made more by executives. (Teacher 16)

Also, another foundation staff member talked about the process of decision-making, commenting that:

I think if people have visions or something they want to do, that then gets discussed at an executive level I suppose and then maybe a TLC [Teaching and Learning Coordinator] level and then it's open for discussion at a PD [Professional Development] situation like the whole staff. Then the decision is made from there taking people’s opinions into account and people’s thoughts. Sometimes there is a committee involved if the issue is important enough. (Teacher 9)

This participant’s comments also raise another issue that is relevant to decision-making in a beginning school, the idea of committees. This participant has placed a level of importance on how some decisions are made, commenting that if the issue was important enough it would go to an appropriate committee. During the first year of the school’s existence there were no committees. This was due to the manageable size of the staff and everyone wanted to be involved in creating something new. As the school grew in size the
sheer logistics of managing larger numbers of staff in a decision-making process meant that committees were a necessary structure that evolved and this adds another layer of communication. This is because as more structures were created then there were more levels that needed to be included in a communication process. Effective methods of communicating within multiple layers of structures in an organisation are crucial. Appendix 10 Staff Handbook includes some of the processes that were adopted at the beginning of the second year. The excerpt from the Staff handbook in relation to this appears below.

**Communication**

Good communication is as essential for good administration as it is to building good relationships. The following methods will be used throughout the year.

**Publications – In house**

Principal’s weekly letter  
Assistant Principal’s Weekly Bulletin  
Curriculum Coordinator’s Memo  
Daily student notices, staff will need to write any messages before 8.15 am and then they will be printed for homegroup.

**Daily Staff Notice Board**

The whiteboard in the staff common room is used to inform staff of specific messages.

**School Newsletter**

Every second Monday, distributed to parents via students and also to teachers.

**Meetings**

**Briefing & Prayer**

Will take place each Monday and Wednesday. Staff will be asked to participate in a roster for prayer at each briefing. Briefing is for whole
school administration and general affirmation.

**Professional Development Afternoons**
Scheduled for Monday afternoons. The emphasis of these meetings is professional development and will encompass the areas of Curriculum and Pastoral care. For more details regarding specific topics see the Term Calendar. All staff are encouraged to become actively involved in the facilitation of these meetings.

**Teaching & Learning KLA meetings**
Are scheduled on an optional (at the discretion of the Coordinator) rotational basis either on a Thursday or Friday from 8.00 - 8.30 am. See Term Calendar for specific dates. These meetings will be facilitated at a KLA level.

**Teaching & Learning Coordinators Meetings**
Scheduled as an after school meeting once a month, please refer to the Term Calendar for specific dates.

**Teaching Teams Meetings**
The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate communication between core teaching teams, the emphasis of these meetings should be both curriculum and pastoral care issues. Scheduled on a Tuesday from 8.00 - 8.30 am. See Term Calendar for specific dates.

**Twilight Meetings**
Only scheduled when there is an essential need. Advanced warning of a proposed date will be given, usually will run to about 7 pm.

Other participants recognised (45%) that there was a change in the process of decision-making as the school grew, as another participant commented:
It seemed to me that by the second year there were fewer decision made by consensus. That there was a process of discussion and often consultation but for various reasons it seemed that there were more decisions made from the top. I think there are practical reasons for that as well, when you are working with a smaller group both of students and staff that you have more opportunity to make them involved in the decision making process. (Teacher 17)

Three foundation staff members disagreed that the approach to decision-making was collaborative, with one commenting that:

I found in the first year they were made from top down. We had a management team or should I say a pseudo management team …. So I see it as very top down. But I also think that some decisions had to be made and the hard decisions had to be made by somebody and if we had all of these committees like we do now we would sit around and still be at square one. So I suppose there are probably cases for having decisions made from a top down level. (Teacher 7)

This staff member is making reference to the management structures of the school which he believed were only a token of collaborative decision-making and that the real decisions were being made by the Principal.

Another commented that:

I think in the first year a lot of decisions that we made were put forward as collaborative decisions amongst the whole staff. That was a naive perspective and it took me to later that year and early next year to realize that there was a staff change that existed at Companion High School and a lot of decisions I think were already made but the image of being collaborative was put across. Such as the no voting and things like that. Things are often discussed at meetings and no decision was made but then at a later time it was put forward that this was what we were going to do. (Teacher 3)
The third staff member who did not believe that decision-making was a collaborative process commented that:

My own experiences of the way decisions are made at Companion High School are that we talk about a flat structure but I don't think we do a flat structure. I think they come from above and we're basically given or told that this is what we are doing. I don't see many committees this year or last year formulating and driving certain agendas in the school. (Teacher 12)

This comment pertains to what was espoused at Companion High School in terms of decision-making processes, that is, the Principal explicitly stated that there would be no hierarchical models of decision-making in the school and that it would be through collaboration. This participant did not believe this. The Principal used the terminology ‘flat-line’ when describing the model of decision-making at Companion High School, commenting that:

I think more so than any other school in a beginning school you need to have a model of making decisions that is based on a ‘flat-line’ structure. The leadership and decision-making must come from all the staff members. (Principal, interview)

The reasons the three staff members did not believe that the process of decision-making was collaborative is obviously a concern in a beginning school. Their views would have tainted their perceptions of most processes that were operational at Companion High School. As has been indicated, the literature identified the way decisions are made in schools as a critical component in being able to bring about change in schools (Desimone, 2000; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977, Fink, 2000).

As a member of the executive team responsible for the implementation of all curriculum structures at Companion High School, I would often have to lead a process of decision-making. I found the process to be intensive and extremely hard to implement. Often I would want to just make the decisions about the issue at the time but I was told very
clearly by the Principal that the staff must be a part of the process. I was also told that I could have a direction in mind but ultimately the staff would need to ‘own’ the issue at hand. An excerpt from my journal in regards to the reporting structures that were to be established highlights this point.

I need to think of a way to bring them all on board. I want the method of reporting to be descriptive and really say something. I think this is going to be more hard work than just a tick-a-box report. I don’t know how they [the staff] will take it. [The Principal] said that I should run some after school meeting to bring everyone on board offering suggestions but ultimately they need to make the decision. (Journal entry, Year 1)

Ten of the participants (45%) across both foundation and second year staff reported a change in decision-making processes as the school grew and one commented that:

Again, in my very early days there was very much a real genuine attempt to be collaborative and for everyone that wanted to have a say, to have that say. It was really encouraging in those early days to know that when you were after an opinion, you could have a contrary. The secret will be if we can maintain that at the various levels as various new people come on board. I don’t know if we can. (Teacher 1)

Further this participant has highlighted one of the key factors that have been implied at various stages thus far, that is, the notion of the difference between foundation and any ‘new’ staff. Specifically here this participant is referring to the impact that new staff would have on processes in regards to decision-making.

Another foundation staff member made comment on the type of leader necessary to have a collaborative process of decision-making in place, commenting that:

I suppose it really depends on the personality or the leadership style of your Principal as to how decisions are made more so than the fact that it's a beginning
school. At Companion High School and with [the Principal] being Principal it was a consultative team at meetings where things were discussed and most of the time decisions came from that. (Teacher 13)

One participant offered a reason as to why they believed the decision-making processes were changing as the school grew, commenting that:

I think because of more staff involvement and another year of kids moving through and that there was a lot more kids in the general. Communication got more difficult. I think we nearly doubled the staff. We also had to move into a tighter space but there was less time to actually communicate so things seemed to be more top down driven in the second year. (Teacher 4)

Another commented on the fact that they did not find the change in the decision-making processes as ineffective; in fact it made the day-to-day running of the school more effective and commented that:

I think moving into the second year it became more Principal based decision-making or management decision-making and passing them on. It was more effective in the day to day running of things. I don’t think it was ineffective. However, people liked being able to make decisions and being listened to more often and sometimes the authoritative approach wasn’t appreciated as much as it probably should have been. I found it necessary though at times. There is sometimes where a decision needs to come from above and I think it was quite worthwhile at times to be more authoritative. (Teacher 7)

Another participant made comment that the more inclusive the decision-making process, the more the staff had ownership of the issue at hand:

I suppose if people felt that they had an active role in the decision making then they tended to have more ownership of what the outcome was. I also think that there was some difference between, for example, pastoral issues and curriculum
based issues where there wasn't as much emotional input or as much baggage if you like that goes with the curriculum stuff as it does with the pastoral issues and people’s varied experience meant that by the time we got to the second year, to me there were more differences in our outlook on pastoral issues and when it came to decision making, the process of them got bogged down where we were given a chance to have a say because of the differences that people had. (Teacher 5)

When asked what made the decision-making processes effective or ineffective a critical issue that was raised by a foundation staff member was that at the beginning stages of the school there was a common purpose and that this drove the decision-making process. Also this person viewed the actual running of meetings as a helpful factor in making decision-making effective, commenting that:

They were effective at the start because was there was a common vision and mission. I think that is primarily why it was effective and plus there was good management of what was happening. Meetings were well run generally and so I suppose that was what made it effective. It makes it ineffective when I suppose when you lose focus and the focus becomes less directed. That’s when it becomes ineffective. (Teacher 6)

This staff member also raised the issue of the management (leadership) structures diverting from the original direction and losing sight of what the ultimate purpose of the school was:

When people feel that the management is wavering. That they are struggling with it and just going through the motions and it’s not really the driving force any more. That’s when it becomes a bit ineffective and by the nature of all of the large organisations. It’s probably not always a good idea to have everyone in on collective decision-making because some people will ebb away at what you are trying to do. I found that happening in the second year. (Teacher 6)
A second year staff participant made comment on another critical issue of effective/ineffective decision-making in that the processes had to be inclusive and that all members had to feel valued:

Effective processes I think involve people and are inclusive. People have a voice. They have an opinion. Well, not even an opinion, but people that are in the position for a particular role have a say, again it comes down to being valued. I think the processes that I have witnessed have been ineffective because I don't believe people own it if they are not part of the formulation of the process. (Teacher 15)

Supporting this view, another participant commented that:

I suppose what made them effective was that people felt that they had some input into it and therefore when a decision was made there was a sense of ownership which meant that whatever the decision was, had more chance of it being acted upon or taken on board. Ineffective, in the same way you can get bogged down in things that aren't really relevant or important and easily side tracked and constantly having to try and bring that back. Again it depends on your staff. Some people want to be consulted and some people don't really care and some people go 'just make the decision, I am not really interested'. So I suppose that is just the personalities and that is going to happen at whatever level there is. I think also when things move to committees I suppose some of that ownership got lost and maybe some of the traditions that were made were not taken on board as much. (Teacher 18)

The Principal’s response to how decisions are made in a beginning school was:

Well, it depends on the Principal I think. I think it is about shared leadership. But I suppose when we began, we talked about a flat-line model and although I’m very on about knowing what’s going on and people would call me a control
freak, I did always believe that decisions needed to be made at a school level. Yes, at the end of the day you've got to call it, but initially those discussions have to be guided by the staff and by all of the stake-holders. (Principal, interview)

This excerpt indicates that the Principal believed that the method of decision-making was based on a shared leadership model.

When asked how staff would have changed and improved the process of decision-making, all participants responded that they probably would not have. They explained that it is the nature of a beginning school to grow and so for pragmatic reasons the way decisions are made would change.

I really don't know. I don't know if I could necessarily improve on it. Like I said, it's not perfect and it's a damn sight closer to a lot of other situations I have seen. I don't know how you get past logistics of the larger staff to be consultative and to come to that collaborative decision making of all staff. I don't know... I don't know how you get around that. I felt we tried to do the best that we could and yet we were still ineffective at times. Again it depends on your staff. Some people took meetings seriously and they came along to it and others sort of lacked that commitment. People had different priorities. I suppose some people felt just getting through the day teaching was their priority and therefore didn't want anything to do with meetings and felt that they were wasting their time as such. (Teacher 3)

In summary, in regards to decision-making and communication in a beginning school we are able to draw the following conclusions from participant responses:

- decision-making structures must allow for a collaborative consultative approach (100%);
- the process must make all members of staff feel included, valued and their opinion be seriously considered (100%);
• the structures must provide the opportunity for staff to have ownership of the decision being made (100%);
• at some times, for pragmatic reasons, a decision just needs to be made by the leadership team (20%); and
• structures need to be created to ensure that the method of decision-making adheres to the vision and philosophy of the school (40%).

These factors are seen as significant for decision-making and communication processes to be effective and have an impact on the development and maintenance of practices in a new school.

**Basic managerial functioning**

Basic managerial functioning was raised as a major structural issue that needs to be addressed in a beginning school. While there were no specific interview questions that addressed this issue, some critical points emerged from staff while answering other questions. The most significant factors that were raised were in regards to timetabling, duty rosters and discipline structures. An entry from my journal indicated my level of anxiety at the lack of formal structures in regards to discipline:

> I am worried that we don’t have a clear way of dealing with things. There are no real routines in place. Dealing with some of these kids is difficult and it feels like there are no consequences for their actions. The home group system seems too fuzzy. I’ve spent a lot of time over the past two weeks with X talking about things but I don’t feel like I am getting anywhere. (Journal entry, Year 1)

Another participant commented (three more also supported this opinion) that she was unhappy with the way that the assistant principal had been dealing with a discipline problem, commenting that:

> One of the things that attracted me to Companion High School was the way that the pastoral care structure was set up. I like the fact that I am responsible for a group of kids. But Bill is getting too involved in my group’s problems. Bill
needs to stay out of it and let me deal with it. Obviously the kids will behave for Bill they’re the AP [assistant principal]. (Teacher 16)

On the issue of timetabling, some participants (20%) commented that the block scheduling did not work as well as it could have because the schedule was such that the students might have only seen one teacher all day. This was an issue during 1999 because when the timetable was created, groups of subject were scheduled together without providing a variety of subjects (or blocks) that students would encounter in one day. This meant that you could see one class all day. In a primary school setting this is not an issue because one teacher is assigned to one class and teachers in primary schools have developed the appropriate pedagogical practices to deal with this scenario. However, this change in a secondary school setting implied a change in pedagogy for most classroom teachers. It was an issue that should have been better explored and better planned for. A solution could have been to provide professional development in the changes necessary in order for teachers to work in this way. One participant made comment that:

I can’t cope with the long time frames, the kids are bored and then they start to muck up. I needed to do things differently. (Teacher 20)

The issue pertaining to duty rosters raises a significant point about staff workload. During the foundation year, all staff worked above what would be expected in an established school. One major issue that was raised was that they felt they were always scheduled on a duty for some reason and that there was never enough time to reflect and recoup. A comment from a foundation participant, when discussing the vision and philosophy of the school, was:

We were expected to carry the vision forward but the day-to-day business of the school keeps getting in the way. If you are not doing a duty, you are dealing with a kid, or you are organising a sport team, or you are organising debating, or organising the choir. (Teacher 4)
In summary, the basic managerial issues raised by staff pertained to effective timetabling and as a consequence of the different timetable structures, appropriate professional development needed to be provided. Also, if the philosophy of a school values a specific type of pastoral/welfare structure then that needs to permeate through all levels of the school community including the leadership structures and allow for the system to operate. Another critical factor that must be considered at the beginning stages of a school is that of staff workload. More creative ways of managing day-today structures and pressures need to be thought of to take the pressure off teaching staff.

The wider community

One of the most critical factors that affected staff during the establishment phase of Companion High School was the external pressures that were placed on them by the local community, the wider educational community and the catholic system. A key factor that impacted on the establishment of the school, and hence on staff, was that the permanent site for the school had not been secured and as such the school began on a temporary site. This site was at the rear of a primary school. The parents of children from the primary school voiced their objection to Companion High School being housed at the back of the school, even though the primary school was the main feeder school for Companion High School. They voiced their complaints to the system leaders, to the principal of the primary school and to the Principal of Companion High School. While you would have expected the relationship between the parents and the new high school to be positive, it was not. The issue was exacerbated when there were even more delays surrounding the permanent site and the eventual building progress of the permanent new school. Companion High School remained on the temporary site from 1999 until 2004.

Many participants attributed the issue of no permanent site to the lack of leadership demonstrated by the system leaders. They had originally selected a site for the land but due to an environment protection order the school could not be built on the selected site. Instead of pursuing an alternative site the system leaders pursued the original site and with a change of government gained approval at the Commonwealth level to build the school on the site. However, this was not to be the end to the issues with this site. The plans for the school then had to go to the local council. The local council was in
opposition to the school being built on the site. Many of the original plans of the school had to be modified and eventually in 2003 approval was granted by the council.

One of the greatest consequences of the school being housed on the temporary site was that of size and facilities. While the temporary site had all of the necessary resources and many more resources than would have been at an established school, space was limited. There was no playground for the students, there was not adequate staff space, and there were not adequate parking facilities. Also, the local community openly ignored both the students and the staff at the school. There was a sense of hostility. During this time the Principal attempted to bridge the gap by encouraging open days, inviting staff from the primary school into the high school, by involving the local community in the decision-making processes of the school. However, these attempts did not bridge the gap and the poor relationship between the community of the primary school and the high school still exists (Principal, 2008 interview).

One foundation staff member’s comments in regards to the pressures placed on them by this issue summarises the thoughts and feelings of all participants:

We are in a unique position in that we had strained relationships with the neighbours and the local community. We had strained relationships with the local primary school. They didn't want us in the background. We were getting irate neighbours about the building and knocking down those trees that we were not allowed to touch. So I think it is really important that all of the stakeholders do work together but I feel we were thrown in the deep end by the [system] and they offered minimal support to [the Principal] and the school and the staff. I think relationships could have been better built with the primary school because they were our local feeder school and even though [the Principal] and Bill went on letter drops with the local community, perhaps things could have been different and I think that stems from the arrogance of the [system]. One interesting thing that I have noticed about the local community is they are quick at writing letters criticising the school but they are very slow in praising any good work that is done by the teacher in the classroom. They are very quick to
pen a letter of disgust but when you want loyalty and support, it is lacking amongst the majority of the local community. (Teacher 12)

Another critical factor was that of the support of the parent body. The majority (95%) of staff commented on how supportive this group of people was and a typical response to the question of what role the parent body played in the establishment of the school was:

I think they just have to be very supportive; that’s really it. I thought they were quite supportive at most times when we were involved with things. I don’t think the local community was. Our parents were. I think what hurt Companion High School more than anything was that feeling that we didn’t belong and that the school wasn’t going to happen as such as a real school for a while. Even just the knowledge that we weren’t welcome in the area made it quite tense at the start. I thought the parents generally were brilliant in the support of the school. I thought everyone basically except the fact that we had been sold a dummy in the essence. Once again it's up to the parents to believe that the community is doing the right thing with going ahead with a new school. (Teacher 11)

More positively, a participant made comment that:

Parents I feel have a major role especially in a beginning school. They are such large stakeholders to bring their students in on something new that has no history, no reputation is a big risk and they are often consulted at a far greater level than in established schools and I think that is also because it is a new school and they feel more a sense of ownership and they can direct the course of the school. Sometimes this can be beneficial and sometimes this can be detrimental but yes, they play a much greater role in a beginning school than in any other because they feel they do have something to contribute and can help shape the direction of the school. (Teacher 20)

This comment relates to the issue of ownership and the perception that parents can feel more a part of a beginning school than an established school.
One of the major issues participants found when establishing the school was frustration with the school system (the diocesan catholic system). Participants believed (100%) that system leaders did not adequately plan for the creation of the school. As significant was that all staff believed that there was not genuine support from the system. One staff member made comment that:

One would like to think that the [system] are behind us and are interested in more than just the bare bones. Given that they have allowed the school to be set up with the vision that it has one would hope that they have done that with a genuine desire to see it work, not with that cynical attitude of 'Oh, yes go for your life and see what happens but we know it really won't work. Just sit back and wait for it to fall over'. I would like to think that they had more integrity than that. But I just can’t believe we didn’t have a school to start in, it speaks to their [the system] lack of foresight. (Teacher 6)

Participants felt enormous pressures in terms of accountability. They basically had to create everything. There were no teaching programs, no teaching resources had been developed, and they had to manage the accountability issues of becoming registered with the State’s Board of Studies. There were eight teaching and learning coordinators. Except for one teaching coordinator, all other coordinators were inexperienced. This placed enormous pressures on the leadership and management structures. The structures that were adopted were to provide support for staff to help them navigate the accountability issues. A significant proportion (75%) of coordinators believed that the processes were effective, commenting that:

I am learning every day. I find that the coordinator meetings are good in that we are all basically in the same position and we are learning together to create what we need. (Teacher 3)
However, two (25%) of the beginning coordinators were extremely critical of the structures, implying that they did not have much direction at all. This was evident in the comment made by one coordinator:

I felt that even with the number of years experience as a teacher, it was a very daunting exercise to run a department especially if you had not done that before and you had no one to talk to or no one to lean on or a mentor to ask questions. I think one of the things that should be done at a developing school is to employ not only people that want to be coordinators but maybe people who either have had some experience as a coordinator or some experience at a developing school. (Teacher 8)

The other beginning coordinator commented that:

As a coordinator I found that I needed to make many decisions in regards to the department and the direction of the department and I was unable to seek assistance of anybody else regarding that and as a first appointment to run a department, this caused extreme anxiety as I had no previous experience in terms of what should be done or what could be done. I actually think people who were experienced would have got to a point in a quicker time than we got to. (Teacher 11)

Both these comments raise the issue of staff capacity and their genuine belief that they were not supported and that there is a need in a beginning school to have experienced personnel.

The main issues raised by participants here is in relation to the fact that they believed it necessary to:

- foster and maintain positive relationships with the local community (95%);
- have structures in place to navigate the many obstacles placed in front of them by the system (100%); and
• have structures in place to adequately navigate the wider educational community accountability issues (95%).

As mentioned previously some of the issues that staff raised in regard to the theme of the wider community were out of the control of any one person. Many of the issues raised within this theme were concerns about the lack of planning by the system.

Definition of roles
Participants were also asked about the various roles people take in establishing a school. The most common response (85% of foundation staff, no second year staff raised this issue) was that roles had to be clearly defined, that you had to know exactly what was expected of you. Roles were not clearly defined in the first year of the school’s existence but rather only explicitly stated in the first Staff Handbook that was published at the beginning of the second year (refer to Appendix 10 Staff Handbook, pages 285-302). One participant made comment that:

I think it is necessary to have clear and defined roles in the school. Who is responsible for what in the development of the new school? I know at Companion High School we moved away from traditional roles. Things like your coordinators. For example because what we wanted was something different so the roles that were put in place sort of fitted in with the vision and philosophy of the school and even though sometimes that didn't work I think it was the right way to go. (Teacher 8)

The second part of the comment about moving away from traditional roles raises an interesting issue in respect to traditional departmental coordinators. From the outset these coordinators did exist but they were named Teaching and Learning Coordinators (TLCs). This simple act of naming them differently was meant to impact on the way the coordinators viewed themselves, that is, that they were not managing a subject but teaching and learning. My journal entry in regards to this issue stated that:
[the Principal] asked me today to create a structure that the curriculum would work under. In line with the vision of the school I don’t want to have normal coordinators, I want them to be the leaders of learning in the school. I am going to propose that we call them Teaching and Learning Coordinators and that their main objective is to create structures that will promote a middle school approach to learning. (Journal entry, Year 1)

This journal entry was made at the very early stages of the school’s establishment. In contrast to this, after a period of two years, my account of a TLC meeting was:

They are so focused on hours and why one subject area has more time than the others. I think they have forgotten why we set things up the way we did. They started to squabble about elective lines for Stage 5 and how they didn’t feel they were well represented. It is frustrating, they’re not thinking of the kids. (Journal entry, Year 3)

This contrast signifies a change in the school culture as we grew. It also expresses the perception that as we began to grow, we began to let go of ideals that initially were seen as fundamental to who we were as a school community.

Eighty five percent of foundation staff indicated that in a new school a clear definition of roles was essential. This would clarify the direction each individual would take and also the impact of that role on the collective. Foundation staff could have found this to be an issue because role descriptions were not developed until the beginning of the second year.

**Appropriate Professional Development**

During the first three years of Companion High School’s existence one of the focus areas was that of professional development. As the number of responses indicated (100% of foundation staff and 50% of second year staff), participants generally believed that there was adequate and appropriate professional development. Professional development opportunities and focus areas were generated by the staff and their needs. At the beginning and at the end of each year staff were asked to set goals and identify areas that
they would like to focus on in terms of professional development. As curriculum coordinator it was my role to organise events and activities that catered for the needs of staff. In asking them to identify the needs it was hoped that it would promote a sense of a community of learners, much like what we were trying to achieve with the students. The professional development activities were provided from both within the school and by external experts, depending on the need and expertise at hand. One participant commented that:

Professional development is a big push here. There is continually something going on. We also can go to courses outside the school if they will benefit what we are trying to do here. (Teacher 2)

The professional development focus was a genuine attempt to build on staff knowledge. It was designed to support staff so that they would grow professionally. The working environment and ethos of the school also supported staff participation in professional development. It was not uncommon to hear staff discussing the latest course they attended and how they would be changing their practices in line with what they had learnt. An excerpt from the Staff Handbook (see Appendix 10, pages 262-269) in regards to professional development appears below. This excerpt support the statements made previously.

**What is Professional Development?**

Professional Development refers to the policies, procedures and activities that assist staff to meet their personal, academic or professional needs in ways that are consistent with the vision and objectives and with the known anticipated needs of the School.

Staff at Companion are called to share in the mission of the Church. This call, or vocation, is integral to the ministry of service in which all staff at the School participate. Companion is not simply a place where lessons are taught; it is a place that is guided by an educational philosophy and vision, enlightened by the Gospel. We are actively involved in the formation of the whole person.
Professional Development is an ongoing process of learning, growth and support, which allows staff to increase their awareness of self and to acquire further skills, knowledge and understanding.

Teachers in Catholic schools need to recognise that knowledge, skills and attitudes develop over time with effort and reflection. The teaching profession is complex and requires a multitude of skills and personal attributes. Constant change within the profession demands continual enhancement of knowledge and teaching practice. Teachers are expected to take responsibility for their continuing education, growth and development.

Support staff at Companion participate in an important way in the educational vision, mission and organisation of the school. They have a responsibility to be aware and extend their knowledge of the Catholic ethos of the school. They also must take responsibility to develop their professional and personal skills, so that they may participate fully in the School’s activities.

At Companion leaders should be committed to their own professional development. The role of leaders within the School demand specific knowledge and skills and it is imperative that they seek relevant professional development. It is the responsibility of all School leaders to maintain a commitment to all staff for professional development. School leaders should maintain and ensure a balance between the professional development goals of each individual and the educational goals of the school. School leaders play a crucial and integral role in the development of all staff through the support they give and the structures, which facilitate and enhance professional development within the school.

**Companion High School’s Commitment to Professional Development of all staff**

The principal purposes of Professional Development are to optimise the quality of working life and to achieve excellence by enhancing and supporting the existing strengths and potential contributions of all members of staff to
Companion. Companion’s Professional Development Policy will recognise and reflect the link between the needs of the School and the needs of the individual staff members. Professional Development will be linked and integrated with Companion’s functioning. It will be a part of normal planning, management and work practices.

Professional Development is an ongoing process and as such the Professional Development policy at Companion will:

- Support the religious ethos of the School.
- Focus on issues that promote student learning and development.
- Foster the professional and personal growth of all staff.
- Be conducted according to the principles of adults as learners.
- Acknowledge and take note of current research.
- Provide a balance between theory and practice.
- Recognise, respect and utilise the expertise and experience of all staff.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the individual.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the School.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the System.
- Respond to educational agendas set by the System.
- Respond to educational agendas set by state and national governments.
- Where appropriate involve all stakeholders in joint planning.
- Strengthen the attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, skills and practices of all staff to empower them to bring about improved practices in the classroom, the School and the wider community.
- Provide opportunities for all staff to develop a professional development plan, which is linked to career pathways.

The Professional Development Policy and Plan will cater for the stated and perceived needs of:

- Executive
- Administrative and Support Staff
- Senior and Experienced teachers
Inexperienced Teachers
• Beginning Teachers
• New Teachers to the School

Professional Development Plan – All Staff

The plan for Professional Development at Companion will be multi-faceted. Its approach will focus on individual needs and still address the needs of the School.

It is envisaged that all staff will:
1. Participate in the beginning of the year whole staff activities.
2. Complete a goal setting and reflective task at the beginning of each year, “The Year Gone By – The Year to Come
3. Maintain a Professional Development Log
4. Participate in external activities organised by other Catholic schools, the system, outside agencies and cross-sectorial groups that enhance and develop all dimensions of their profession.
5. Disseminate information gathered from courses attended to relevant stakeholders.
6. Participate in the Companion’s Professional Development Afternoons.
7. Participate in school based and KLA based professional development days.
8. Be invited to participate in informal appraisal activities.
9. Be invited to participate in formal appraisal activities (dependant on positions of special responsibility held within the School’s structure).
10. Participate in the School’s Staff Reflection Days.
11. Be provided with the opportunity to be facilitators and presenters of current educational initiatives and best practice.
12. Be encouraged and supported to participate and undertake further studies.
13. Be encouraged to be actively and fully involved in all aspects of the Companion’s life and development.
In addition to this there were processes in place for professional development of staff new to the school, as well as an induction processes for beginning and inexperienced teachers (see Appendix 10, pages 262-269).

With the exception of two (9%) staff members who believed that there was little support in their new roles, participants believed that the professional development was:

- tailored to their needs;
- provided time for reflection and subsequent implementation of changes; and
- there was a variety and an ample amount.

**Support**

Two main issues were raised within this theme. First, a majority (eleven foundation staff and six second year staff, 77%) believed that support from the leadership structures was essential when establishing a new school, with one foundation staff member commenting:

> It is so important that [the Principal] looks out for us. In a way [the Principal] protects us from the outside world and lets us get on with our job (Teacher 1).

Another foundation staff member commented that:

> The good thing about being here is that you can have a go at something and it doesn’t matter if you don’t get it right the first time. You can talk about things about teaching with others and try again. (Teacher 8)

Also, a second year staff member made comment about the support in terms of the management structures, stating that:

> What is a great thing about Companion High School is that if you are trying something new and you need time to get organised and implement something, then all the support in terms of structure and time are there. (Teacher 19)
The second issue that was raised by second year staff members was that they believed that there was not adequate time to plan. No foundation staff member raised this issue. One commented that:

Things are moving so quickly. I don’t feel like I am planning as well as I should be, there never seems to be enough time. I am not sure how they did it last year with nothing. (Teacher 20)

This indicates not only the pressures they were feeling in terms of adequate planning time, but also raises the question of why foundation staff did not raise this issue. Perhaps part of their expectations when they accepted the position at the school would be that there would be an extraordinary amount of work that would need to be done, above what would normally be expected.

Within this theme two factors were highlighted. First, there need to be demonstrable acts of support from the leadership and management structures. Second, the issue of adequate planning time was raised by second year staff members. While no foundation member raised this issue it is worthy to note that this support structure would be necessary when establishing a new school (Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005).

**Future Planning**

The issue of future planning was raised by four foundation staff members (28%). Six (40%) foundation staff members left the school either at the end of the second year or during the third year of the school’s existence. Five of the staff were members of the executive team. There were eight members of the executive. When interviewed in July 2001 they were reflecting on what happened after they left and whether there was adequate forward planning by the senior executive. The four participants that commented on the aspect of future planning highlight a crucial issue when establishing a new school, that is, the issue of staff turnover. The six members of staff leaving represented a turnover of approximately 40% of the foundation staff and 27% of a combined foundation and second year staff. They would have had to be replaced; also as the school began the third year, new staff members would have been employed. When the third year started, the
original members of foundation and second year staff only represented 50% of the total staff. This would have impacted on the initial vision and philosophy of the school being upheld. Data collection ended during July 2001 so that information of the exact impact this would have had was not recorded. What this does indicate, though, is that a plan must be put into place for such situations. One of the staff members who left the school made comment that:

One thing that I don’t think was well planned was about what would happen when key people leave. All of us that left were key players and help set things up. I know that [the Principal] wasn’t ready for it. I think what it had done is fragmented the staff. (Teacher 5)

The critical mass that left the school during 2000-2001 would have impacted on the running of the school and highlights that processes would need to be in place for issues associated with staff turnover, not only in sharing the vision and philosophy of the school, but also in terms of basic day-today functioning.

**What evidence existed of a theory of process for starting Companion High School?**
The characteristic of a *theory of process* was not articulated by participants, nor was it an area of focus during my initial observations. In regards to this issue the Principal stated:

I’d have to be honest with you - I’ve never sat down and thought, what’s the methodology here? Again, I followed what my heart and head told me was good practice and I’ve always believed in getting people on board and building good relationships that probably would have at the end of the day have been a methodology to empower people (hate that word, sorry to use it!), but to enable people to ‘own’ what we were doing and to have some input – in fact a lot of input and a lot of ownership, so I never actually called them ‘methods’, it’s just the way I did things. (Principal, original interview)

The conclusion that can be drawn from the Principal’s response on whether there was some sort of process that influenced the initial stages of the school’s establishment is that
there was not. This does not mean that what she envisaged for the school was not research based but it was certainly not presented as a complete design. This response highlights the fact that she did not have in mind a complete design, but based the establishment phase on building positive relationships, ownership of the vision and the empowerment of staff. Recent literature suggests that if effective sustainable practices are to be part of the school culture that processes must be based on some sort of theoretical model of process and be complete in design (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002, Levin, 2007; Sterling, 2001).

On a recent follow up interview with the Principal (February, 2008) it was noted that pastoral structures that were initially established were still in existence. There had been development and modification of the structures but she reported that on a whole the initial guiding vision and philosophy of the school were still operational. Future research into the extent that the initial structures and processes were operational would need to be undertaken to validate this claim and could be the focus of future research.

The Principal also made comment that the curriculum structures in principle remained intact; however, there was a need to revitalize the approach to curriculum design in terms of integration. She reported that there was a recent resurgence of middle school curriculum practices at Companion High School and planning had begun to ensure that the original vision became entrenched in everyday teacher practice. The Catholic system will be using Companion High school as a model school in terms of future curriculum design practices. Companion High School has been provided with financial and physical resources to create a physical space where “real” curriculum integration can occur. They have constructed a spaced called the Learning Common. This space is the size of six traditional classrooms. There are no walls, technology is fully integrated into the design and other physical resources are plentiful. Her current approach in implementing appropriate curriculum and pedagogical practices, have been informed by a partnership with an academic. This relationship is to aid the executive team in designing more comprehensive implementation procedures. Also, the academic partner will work with teaching staff to develop an action research framework by which processes of ongoing evaluation and feedback are possible. Further structures will provide appropriate professional development of staff (focus areas have already been decided by staff), as
well as, adequate planning time. The Principal hopes that this more ‘complete’ approach to curriculum design will ensure that practices continue into the future.

Chapter synthesis and summary
Through the semi-structured interviews a vast amount of data was gathered as to the structures and processes that were seen as necessary to establish a new school. These issues were identified by fourteen (14) foundation staff and eight (8) second year staff. In summary the issues that emerged were focused around the following themes:

- Vision and Philosophy;
- Effective decision-making and communication;
- Basic managerial functioning;
- The wider community;
- Appropriate professional development;
- Clear role definition;
- Support; and
- Future planning.

Comparison of findings
An alignment between the themes identified by the participants, my observations of internal/external level forces and the new school design characteristics are presented in Tables 7.4 – 7.11. This information represents a development of critical themes from the beginning of the case study. Initially, fundamental issues occurring at Companion High School represented my observations. Then through a process of research the new school design characteristics were developed. These represent a much more in-depth perspective of the characteristics of a new school. The data collected from participants and school documentation further supports the types of characteristics that should be evident when establishing a new school. Colour coding has been used to highlight the similar findings between my observations, the new school design characteristics and the findings from participant interviews and school documentation. No highlighting indicates that the theme only occurs within that particular section of data.
In regards to vision and philosophy, participants indicated that a clear articulation of the vision and a direction for the school was the most significant aspect. While this is not explicitly stated within the new school design characteristics or my observations, it is implicit in being able to share vision that this occurs. Similarly, effective leadership and management practices that account for internal and external pressures and which allow the vision to be enacted were an important aspect raised by participants. Again this is not explicitly articulated in my observations or the new school design characteristics, however, implicit in developing, sharing and enacting vision are effective leadership and management practices. A common aspect in all three categories of findings is that there must be a collaborative inclusive approach to developing and sharing vision and this would ensure ownership. This is a significant aspect raised by participants in terms of vision being developed and shared between staff in each year of the school’s establishment.

Another important aspect raised by participants is that of appropriate professional development to ensure that staff had the required knowledge to implement the vision. This is supported within the new school design characteristics, in the aspect of the professional culture of the school, where living the vision demands constant attention. This process should be viewed as continual and positive. This, in turn, will lead to a school that will be able to regenerate and reculture. The Principal’s response, which indicated that ‘rituals’ needed to become a part of the process of developing and sharing the vision, is an appropriate way of progressing this idea. This would imply that every part of the school, whether it be in a classroom, the way that meetings are conducted, student conduct or staff interactions, would all be undertaken in a manner that advocates and upholds the vision.

There were three aspects that were not similar between the three categories, the idea of flexibility, the student as a focus for all the reasons why any type of innovation, reform or change is undertaken, and the concept of sustainability. Participants raised the aspect of flexibility and this is due to the nature of establishing a school, where it is appropriate and sometimes necessary to change or modify practice. The aspect of the student being the focus is an obvious and necessary condition for any school and it is implied within all the
other findings. The idea of sustainability is one that is relevant to all aspects of schooling. In a new school setting the idea of sustainable practices based on a driving vision is a real possibility but this can only be enacted through all other aspects being adopted and adhered to.

Effective decision-making and communication is an important aspect of any organisation (see Table 7.5). All three sets of data indicated this level of importance in regards to a new school setting. Common features of effective decision-making and communication were that processes are supportive, collaborative, open and inclusive. Further, the new school design characteristics and my initial observations identify that leadership is critical. An important aspect is, what type of leadership is appropriate for effective decision-making and communication? The new school design characteristics identify the idea of leadership needing to be distributed amongst the members of the organisation. A feature raised by the participants identified that as well as processes needing to be effective that there would also need to be mechanisms in place to ensure ownership of decisions being made. The final point made by participant data is that the decision-making and communication processes would need to be underpinned and enacted through the vision and philosophy of the school. This feature was also mentioned within the characteristic of vision and philosophy previously discussed.

Table 7.6 presents information in regards to the participant-identified theme of basic managerial functioning. This theme relates to effective management in a new school setting. Participants identified that appropriate structure in terms of timetabling and routines would need to be in existence in a new school setting. The new school design characteristics add another layer of depth to this concept in that not only should management structures be effective but they should be such that will provide the opportunity for practice to be sustained. Within this would be the idea of having a complete design when the school begins. Appropriate mechanisms to cope with the enormous workload associated with establishing a school was raised as a factor by participants and also within the new school design characteristics. The aspect raised within the new school design characteristics about adopting a better use of technology to help teachers in their work and also managers in their organisation could be a way of
progressing this idea. Appropriate resourcing was an element raised initially in my observations and within the new school design characteristics. This factor is an important aspect of a school, that is, that adequate and appropriate resources are available for staff and students. The participant findings also indicated that the management practices of the school should be underpinned by the vision and philosophy of the school.

Appropriate professional development in a new school setting was identified as an important feature within all three data sets (see Table 7.7). In regards to this aspect, participants identified that professional development had to be tailored to their needs, that there had to be adequate time for them to reflect and act upon what they had learnt and that there was a variety and ample amount of events. My observations supported these findings but also reflected on the fact that the events had to be grounded in staff increasing their knowledge of pedagogical practices that would then more clearly define the expectations of them. The new school design characteristics further support these findings but also articulate the need for professional development to be an ongoing feature of a school.

The wider school community has a significant impact on the school community during the establishment phase. Participant data and my observations (see Table 7.8) identified that relationships with the local community and acceptance of the school by this community was a critical factor to staff morale as well as the functioning of the school. The issues surrounding this were due to there being no permanent site for the school when it started. The new school design characteristics also speak to relationships and acceptance and a way in which this can be progressed is by sharing the vision and philosophy of the school with the community and by having them as collaborative partners in developing the school. Participants also identified that appropriate mechanisms would need to be developed that provided the opportunity for them to be engaged with the core business of their work. This would entail developing appropriate management and support structures to deal with external pressures.

Participants identified that clear definition of roles was a necessary condition in a new school (see Table 7.9). The new school design characteristics also support this finding. My initial observations did not record anything in regard to this fact; however, the Staff
Handbook (see Appendix 9) does indicate the level of importance that clear roles had in the structure of the school. All roles were developed during the first year of the school’s existence.

Participants identified support as a critical structure that needed to be considered when establishing a school (see Table 7.10). Support implies appropriate demonstrable acts from the leadership and management structures, and also in terms of providing adequate time for staff to plan. These aspects were also identified in my observations and the new school design characteristics. Further, my observations indicated that there were pressures placed on staff due to the enormous workload and over time what was becoming obvious as staff exhaustion. This, then, highlights the factor within the new school design characteristics that relates that adequate and appropriate support measures need to be in place if innovations are to be sustained. The new school design characteristics also articulate the importance of teachers to the initial stages of establishing a school. As such, appropriate structures need to be put into place that value and honour teachers as integral and necessary components of establishing a new school. My observations also identified the issue of relationships between foundation and second year staff. While not explicitly stated within this theme, participants did identify that there were strained relationships in regards to adopting and sharing the vision.

The aspect of future planning in regards to staff turnover was identified by only four participants and also explicitly articulated within the new school design characteristics (see Table 7.11). This aspect pertains to structures being in place to proactively act on the issue of a turnover of staff. In the case of Companion this was a critical factor as by the end of the second year six staff had left the school, five of whom were foundational staff members that held positions of responsibility.

Chapter Eight follows with a synthesis of findings and discussion in regards to the findings. Also implications, recommendations and concluding comments are made.
Table 7.4 Vision and philosophy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vision and Philosophy                       | **Leadership**<br>• process of sharing and developing the vision;  
• process to provide the opportunity for ownership of the vision; and  
• staff efficacy of vision | **Leadership & Management**<br>• the vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders |
| • a method that clearly articulates the vision and philosophy to foundation staff;  
• a clear direction for where the school is heading;  
• effective leadership that is able to implement said method(s);  
• effective management of day to day issues so that staff can live out the vision;  
• a collaborative approach to sharing the vision;  
• a method that promotes ownership of the vision amongst staff;  
• structures that effectively manage external pressures allowing staff to live out the vision;  
• structures and methods that provide the opportunity to effectively share the vision and philosophy when new staff are employed;  
• structures (‘rituals’) that provide the opportunity for staff to continually revisit the vision and philosophy, evaluate it, modify it and ‘live it’;  
• appropriate professional development that provides staff the opportunity to engage with material so as to enhance their knowledge about the underlying curriculum and pastoral care philosophies;  
• structures that promote a positive school working environment; and  
• flexibility | **Staff Issues**<br>• there are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community |
| **Leadership & Management**<br>• the vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders | **Student Learning**<br>• a new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes |
| **Staff Issues**<br>• there are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community | **The professional culture of the school**<br>• the school should be established taking into consideration the fact that it is a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to succeeding  
• educational change should be promoted as positive and ongoing  
• the initial stage of establishing a school should be seen as a part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community |
| **Student Learning**<br>• a new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes | **Sustainability**<br>• sustainable practice must be the ultimate goal of establishing a school |
Table 7.5 Effective decision-making and communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Effective decision-making and communication** | - decision-making structures must allow for a collaborative consultative approach;  
- the process must make all members of staff feel included, valued and their opinion be seriously considered;  
- the structures must provide the opportunity for staff to have ownership of the decision being made;  
- at some times, for pragmatic reasons, a decision just needs to be made by the leadership team; and  
- structures need to be created to ensure that the method of decision-making adheres to the vision and philosophy of the school | **Leadership & Management**  
- effective leadership;  
- effective decision-making; and  
- communication processes that are collaborative, open and inclusive | **Leadership & Management**  
- leadership should be effective and proactive in establishing a new school by being inclusive, supportive and distributed |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic managerial functioning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• there must be effective timetabling for the different design of curriculum;</td>
<td><strong>Appropriate and adequate resourcing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• appropriate professional development to provide ways of working within a different structure;</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• all systems within the school need to uphold the philosophy of the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• mechanisms to counter increased staff workload; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• more creative ways of managing day-today structures and pressures need to be thought of to take the pressure off teaching staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership &amp; Management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the systems of the school should support a method of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the establishment phase of a new school; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of a new school</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• there must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the establishment of the school</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Complete design</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the establishment of a school needs to be well planned</td>
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</table>
Table 7.7 Appropriate professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate professional development</td>
<td>Staff issues</td>
<td>Staff issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• that is tailored to staff needs;</td>
<td>• appropriate and adequate professional development;</td>
<td>• teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• time for reflection and subsequent</td>
<td>• staff knowledge of appropriate pedagogical practices; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation of changes; and</td>
<td>• staff understanding of the expectations and implementation issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• there was a variety and an ample amount.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</td>
<td>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</td>
<td>New school design characteristics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The wider community</strong></td>
<td><strong>The local community, the wider educational community, the system</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leadership &amp; Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• systems that foster and maintain positive relationships with the local community;</td>
<td>• local community acceptance of the school;</td>
<td>• the vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• structures in place to navigate the many obstacles placed in front of them by the system; and</td>
<td>• relationship with the local community; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• structures in place to adequately navigate the wider educational community accountability issues</td>
<td>• the system’s inability to manage the process of site identification and building of the permanent school</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.9 Clear role definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear role definition</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• roles must be clearly defined</td>
<td></td>
<td>• the functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</td>
<td>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</td>
<td>New school design characteristics:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Support**                                 | • there needs to be demonstrable acts of support from the leadership and management structures; and  
  • adequate planning time is necessary if structures are to be properly implemented | **Leadership & Management**  
  • the leadership structure should provide support for staff and these structures should be able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school; and  
  • the establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained |
| **Staff Issues**                            | • appropriate and adequate management structures to support the work of teachers;  
  • an enormous workload to create structures;  
  • staff capacity to implement vision and associated issues;  
  • staff expertise in curriculum integration;  
  • adequate time to plan curriculum;  
  • relationship of staff between first and second year;  
  • staff exhaustion; and  
  • staff capacity to use of technology | **Staff Issues**  
  • teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice;  
  • teachers are given adequate time to plan and implement at the establishment phase of the school; and  
  • teachers are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification stages of establishing a school |
Table 7.11 Future planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identified Themes in regards to:</th>
<th>Internal and External Level Forces, and Themes developed from my observations:</th>
<th>New school design characteristics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future planning</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• processes would need to be in place for issues associated with staff turnover</td>
<td></td>
<td>• there are plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Chapter Eight
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study traced the establishment of a new school to determine what structures would lead to sustainable practices. Such a study was important because there is very little research on new schools in the literature, and none in an Australian context. The existing literature suggested new schools begin with enthusiasm and are places where all dreams are possible, however, after a period of time they revert to the norm. The study at Companion High School identified eight critical aspects to establishing a school, they were: vision and philosophy; effective decision-making and communication; effective managerial functioning; factors in regard the wider community; appropriate professional development; clear role definitions; support of staff; and appropriate future planning. Further this study provided the opportunity to develop a set of design characteristics to inform the establishment of a school. Originally, these design characteristics were drawn from the literature. The eight identified critical aspects for establishing a new school were then compared with the design characteristics. This resulted in an integrated set of design characteristics that should be evident when establishing a new school and are presented in this chapter.

Some practices have been sustained at Companion High School (Principal, 2008 interview). Practices and structures in regards to pastoral care have been maintained since the establishment phase. However, curriculum structures in terms of classroom pedagogical practice and planning were not fully sustained (Principal, 2008). The principal attributes this to the initial exodus of foundation staff, the pace of innovations, and the lack of ownership of the vision of staff that came after the second year (Principal, 2008 interview). The Principal was clearly crucial at the beginning stages of the school’s establishment and is currently the only original executive member of staff still at the school. In regards to sustainable practices at Companion High School and by drawing upon data gathered, the conclusion can be made that the Principal was and remains the significant factor in practices being sustained. Given her pivotal role, the question remains as to whether practices would be sustained after her departure.
Another significant feature surrounding the issue of sustainability was the exodus of a critical mass of foundation staff. By the end of the second year of Companion High School’s existence, 40% of foundation staff had left the school. The reasons for their departure were varied, but responses to interview questions clearly indicate four key factors, that is: the physical environment—not having a permanent site; the tensions between the foundation and second year staff; the system not delivering on their promises; and the school beginning to become like any other school. All of the staff who left the school played a critical role in the initial establishment phase. There was not a model of succession planning in place to deal with the exodus of staff, and this aspect is seen as critical to practices being sustained (Fink, 2000).

Participant responses focused primarily on the factor of vision and philosophy as the vital structure that needed to be treated when establishing a new school. However, this factor alone cannot account for all issues at this stage of a school’s development. The participants were concerned about whether the vision and philosophy would be lost as the school grew. This indicates a lack of design planning because if there were a complete design of the school, its practices would not necessarily be totally centred upon the vision and philosophy, but would have sustaining systems in place that clearly and explicitly articulate the vision into practice. Staff would not have had to have been concerned about whether the vision and philosophy would be lost, but more so on how new staff would become a part of the fabric of the school.

Participants identified that a process that allows the vision and philosophy to be shared and ownership to occur amongst not only foundation staff but also subsequent years’ staff was a critical aspect. This focus is also supported by the literature (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Hill et al., 1993; Margolis, 2005; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987). In their responses, participants identified issues of sharing, ownership, collaboration, openness, inclusivity and positive staff relationships as critical themes that must be accounted for if the vision of the school is to be fully accepted and implemented. In the new school case studies cited in this study one critical issue raised was that the vision of the school had to be developed by the stakeholders if lasting change was to occur
At Companion High School the initial vision and philosophy of the school was developed by the Principal, but was then subsequently redeveloped and renegotiated by the foundation staff. What was clearly reported by second year staff though, was that while every attempt was made to make them feel as though they had ownership of the vision, there was very little that was redeveloped or renegotiated. Another critical issue that was raised by foundation staff was that of feeling that they would lose the original vision as the school grew. It is clear from the data that much attention must be paid to developing the vision through a process of open communication and collaboration, firstly by foundation staff and then through a continual process as the school grew in size. The issues raised here would need to be at the focus of attention if practices associated with vision and philosophy are to be sustained.

Effective decision-making and communication are seen as vital characteristic in any organisation. During the process of establishing a school this characteristic is seen as vital and was so identified by staff at Companion High School. Participants indicated that there were open lines of communication and much time was devoted to discussing critical issues of establishing the school. Staff believed that the responsibility of establishing such structures was the responsibility of the leadership team. Effective decision-making and communication were seen to have a direct impact on the work of teachers. The literature also supports this and has established that the most effective methods of decision-making and communication should be collaborative (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998).

The issue of leadership structures and the type of leadership in play at Companion High School was not the focus of discussion, but more recognition of this important issue was raised at other times during the interviews. Staff recognised that leadership and the processes involved in decision-making and communication were integrated and on a whole operated successfully at Companion High School. The issues around leadership were recognised as a critical aspect in all aspects of establishing a school. This focus is well supported in the literature (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Hill et al., 1993; Margolis, 2005; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987). Leadership is an influential factor in schools and can be proactive in establishing a school through processes that are inclusive,
supportive, and distributed (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001). The organisational structures of the school should provide clear and well functioning structures to support the work of teachers (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001). The leadership structure should provide support for teachers and should navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school (Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Margolis, 2005).

The issue of basic managerial functioning also received consensus from participants in their responses to interview questions. More so than leadership, this issue pertains to operating structures that provide the opportunity for teachers to do their jobs appropriately. This includes such things as appropriate timetabling, duty rosters, adequate resourcing, and extra-curricular activities. The issue of good managerial functioning is an expectation of any school, let alone a school that is being established. Companion High School began with only a skeleton of structures in place and the majority of management issues were developed by all staff as was needed. This placed an enormous amount of pressure on staff during the first year of operation because every time that something was needed, they had to create the necessary structures and processes to enact what they were focusing on. The issue of ‘good’ management is also supported in the literature and is a basic expectation of ‘good’ school functioning, detail must be given to basic structures such as adequate time, curriculum material and resources management issues and support (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005).

Due to the way that Companion High School began, issues with the outside community, that is, the local community, the wider educational community and the system were of paramount focus for staff. The majority of these issues pertain to the fact that there was no permanent site to start the school on. Negotiations for a site began several years before the school opened in 1999 and continued until 2003. The school was housed on a temporary site at the back of the major feeder primary school from 1999 to 2004. The relationships that were formed with the primary school staff and parents of children attending the primary school were strained. Researchers (Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons et al., 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987) all found that positive home and school partnerships were an essential component of an effective
school. Staff at Companion High School placed the blame for this negative situation on the diocesan system and the lack of planning and foresight. The pressure that this situation placed on staff was enormous, where they were not only attempting to start a new school, but also were going through a continual process of validation of the school’s existence. The issue of adequate preparation in establishing a new school is also well supported by the new schools literature where these issues were also apparent in some of the case study schools cited in Chapter Three (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b, Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000).

A significant amount (100% of foundation staff and 50% of second year staff) of staff at Companion High School commented that professional development was an important and critical factor when establishing a school. All participants who raised this issue believed that the amount and type of professional development provided was appropriate to their needs. The issue of appropriate and adequate professional development is also a significant issue raised in the literature, in that teachers are a critical factor in ensuring sustainable change and therefore accounting for their professional lives is vital (Hill et al., 1993; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter et. al., 1979; Sterling, 2001; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987). This can be done through various mechanisms including appropriate and adequate professional development that is tailored to staff needs (Bain, 2007; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Fullan, 2001; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Margolis, 2005; Pointek et al., 1998). Also, the aspect of the school as a place of learning (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Sammons et al., 1995), not only for students, but also for staff is seen as an appropriate way of encouraging and valuing teacher professionalism and as an underlying philosophy when considering suitable professional development for staff (Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002). This would, in turn, result in a productive and positive school climate, which has been documented in creating an effective school (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Hill et al., 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Pointek et al., 1998; Rutter et al., 1979; Sammons et al., 1995; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987). One final aspect to be considered in terms of professional development is that of mentoring and appropriate role models. Two foundation staff stated that this was an issue for them when they began at Companion High School. This aspect was also raised by Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) and Doremus (1981a, 1981b). Only one staff
member had previously held their position of responsibility at their previous school. This factor is critical because not only were staff a part of a new environment, that is, a new school, but they were also learning about their new positions of responsibility. This factor did place an inordinate amount of pressure on all staff.

The issue of role definition was also raised by the majority (85%) of foundation staff. This was possibly a key factor to them because there were no structures or roles clearly laid out when the school began. This fact is crucial and can be considered from two points of view. First, when establishing a school you would want the staff to be as much a part of creating the structures and definitions of their roles. However, there needs to be a clear direction for staff to operate from.

The staff at Companion High School identified four major issues, which were: processes and mechanism of support from the leadership team; adequate time to plan; their capacity, knowledge and efficacy with curriculum and pastoral care aspects; and the enormous workload involved in establishing a school. These factors have also been found as significant within the literature. Doremus (1981a, 1981b), Eastabrook and Fullan (1977), Fink (2000), and Margolis (2005) found significant impact of teacher exhaustion when a school was being established. They also found that there was a significant impact of staff capacity and knowledge, staff efficacy and staff feelings of inadequacy when establishing a new school. Adequate planning time was raised as a major consideration. Bain (2007), Desimone (2002), Doremus (1981a, 1981b), Eastabrook and Fullan (1977), Fink (2000), and Margolis (2005) all made comment on the need for adequate planning time. At Companion High School this was a significant issue in that staff had to prepare curriculum materials and be an active member of the school community while teaching. This did contribute significantly to staff exhaustion.

Four foundation staff members identified staff turnover as a critical factor to consider when establishing a new school. This issue raises the question in regards to adequate future planning in terms of human resources and that there are well thought out plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Fullan, 2001). In light of this, the aspect of employment of appropriate
staff (Doremus, 1981a, 1981b; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000) also needs to be considered. Foundation staff at Companion High School articulated their concerns just in terms of when second year staff were to arrive and whether these people would share the vision of the school. Staff leaving the school, and especially foundation staff, would compound the effect on sharing and building the vision in a new school. Staff turnover was also seen as a direct effect of the pressures within a new school setting and did result in an exodus (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977). This phenomenon did occur at Companion High School. The effects of this were not measured, as the ‘exodus’ occurred after the data collection period of this study.

Issues in regards to staff relationships were significant but were implicit in all other issues discussed. The primary concern of foundation staff was that they believed that the original vision would be lost. In contrast, the second year teaching staff believed that there was little negotiation about existing structures and processes, and that the vision and direction of the school was a non-negotiable item. These issues did impact on the relationship between staff and raises the question of appropriate mechanisms to counteract them.

**Implications**

The major implication of this study is that there are specific critical aspects in regards to processes and structures that must be considered when establishing a new school.

Leadership is a critical aspect in any organisation and in a new school is significant because in reality it is the leader that will be employed first when establishing a new school. Leadership, namely, the Principal needs to ensure that they not only have a guiding vision and philosophy to underpin the establishment of the new school, but also have in place appropriate mechanisms that will guide the overall implementation phase. Implicit in this would be the need for appropriate processes to make decisions and communicate with staff. This would mean a complete design of the new school is necessary as well as a process for acting on the design. This complete design would be able to deal with the specific issues associated with establishing a new school. These issues are in relation to: vision and philosophy; decision-making and communication;
staff issues; basic managerial functioning; the wider community; appropriate professional
development; clear role definition; support; and future planning.

A method of ensuring that the original vision and philosophy is shared amongst not only
foundation staff members, but also staff in subsequent years is critical. With this is the
issue of ensuring that the professional lives of teachers are valued when transitions occur
between successive years of the school’s establishment. This brings to the fore the idea of
an inclusive and collaborative environment. With this is also the aspect of ensuring that
the vision and philosophy is not subsumed by other administrative and procedural issues
that would emanate from both internal and external pressures. Staff employed in a new
school setting, during the first few years, join a school because of the articulated vision
and philosophy and the preservation of these ideals is paramount.

Establishing a school requires enormous energy and expertise. Teachers must be provided
with adequate support in terms of time and resources to create the necessary structures
and procedures for the new school. It is through this aspect that teacher burnout can be
taught for and dealt with. Further, structures need to be implemented that provide
teachers with appropriate feedback about their practice and also be provided with time to
act on this feedback. Also, appropriate and adequate professional development is needed
in a new school setting especially of the design of the school requires teachers to work in
a different or unfamiliar environment.

Another critical implication is that in the initial stages of a new school clear roles must be
defined by the stakeholders. The nature of a beginning school is frantic and having clearly
defined roles will provide another parameter by which staff can effectively work.

One significant implication emerging from this study is that of future planning. The
primary focus is that of staff turnover. Plans must be set in place to account for staff
departures.
**Recommendations**

One recommendation of this study would be to implement the recommended new school design characteristics. The new school design characteristics are presented in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Recommended new school design characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership &amp; Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership should be effective and proactive in establishing a new school by being inclusive, supportive and distributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>The vision of the school must be clearly articulated</td>
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<tr>
<td>The vision and philosophy of the school must be shared and developed in a collaborative manner amongst all stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Rituals’ must be established that provide opportunity for staff to continually revisit the vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>The leadership structure should provide support for staff and these structures should be able to navigate issues that may arise from both within and outside the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structures constructed should be flexible and allow for changes and modification</td>
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<tr>
<td>The systems of the school should support a method of continual feedback about the processes and the results of the establishment phase of a new school</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The functioning structures of the school are clear and uphold the work of the staff establishing the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision-making processes should adopt a collaborative consultative approach that is open and inclusive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication structures need to be open and inclusive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are plans ready for any turnover in staff at any level of the school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The establishment phase needs to have operational mechanisms which provide ways in which the innovations being implemented can be sustained</td>
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<tr>
<td>The establishment phase of the school requires an inclusive environment for all members of the school community</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices in line with the vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers professional lives are taken care of to ensure sustainable involvement and practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers are given adequate reflection time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are given adequate time to plan and implement at the establishment phase of the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning, implementation, evaluation, modification stages of establishing a school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are structures and processes implemented to ensure that innovations implemented are owned by all members of the school community</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology should be used as a tool to help in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of a new school</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There must be adequate and appropriate resources to aid in the establishment of the school</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A new school should be established with a focus on providing appropriate schooling which is centred on improving student outcomes</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The professional culture of the school</th>
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<tr>
<td>The school should be established taking into consideration the fact that it is a human system where relationships and interrelationships are crucial to succeeding</td>
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<td>Educational change should be promoted as positive and ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>The initial stage of establishing a school should be seen as a part of an ongoing process of change which can aid towards true reculturing of the school community</td>
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The design characteristics refer to critical themes of school design, namely: leadership and management; staff issues; technology; resources; student learning; sustainability; complete design; and a theory of process. Each theme then has components that need to be considered when establishing a school. The factors expressed in the new school design characteristics pertain to issues surrounding vision and philosophy, managerial functioning, effective and inclusive decision-making and communication structures, supportive leadership and management structures, effective and ongoing professional development, structures that provide a smooth transition between successive years of operation, systems that honour the professional lives of teachers, adequate time for teachers to plan and reflect, the effective use of technology as an administration and pedagogical tool, adequate resources, student learning as the focus of all practice, the design of the school must be based on the school being a human system with interconnected and interrelated parts, and change as a positive aspect of ongoing educational practice. The new school design characteristics also refer to the themes of sustainability, complete design and a theory of process. These areas were explicitly articulated in the literature on school reform and sustainability, however, were only articulated by the Principal as possible areas in question. These three themes are seen as vital in the success of a new school being established that result in sustainable practices. Another recommendation is that these three themes are addressed and researched within a new school setting to establish whether there is a relationship between them and sustainable practices.

What is critical for future work is the investigation of implementing the new school design characteristics through the new school design principles. A way to progress this issue would be to conduct further research into the establishment phase of new schools and based on what we know of effective schooling, on how schools improve and how
reform efforts occur. By doing this a model of process for establishing a school can be proposed. By utilising the common and recurring themes resulting from staff interviews, and the more recent work in the area of comprehensive school reform and sustainability (see Bain, 2007; Desimone, 2002; Levin, 2007; Sterling, 2001) design principles were constructed. The design characteristics should be enacted through the design principles. This action will provide the benchmarks of the vital structures and processes that should be evident when establishing a new school resulting in sustainable practices. The design principles are:

- a philosophy that believes that the school is a human system comprised interconnected and interrelated of supra and sub systems
- a vision that has been articulated and acknowledged by all key stakeholders as the guiding direction of the school
- a school design that has been developed by stakeholders in a collaborative manner prior to the school opening
- a set of rules that guide the operations and practices of the school community which are specific, comprehensive, coherent and consistent with the direction of the school;
- operations and practices that are inherent, implicit and an embedded part of the school;
- operations and practices where evaluation and modification of said practices are guided by consistent and emergent feedback;
- structures that support the work of school staff aligning school practice with external accountability issues; and
- structures, operations and practices which disperse control and authority about all issues in regard to the school.

The principles represent a way of enacting good practice within a school setting. The significant feature is that all that occurs should be underpinned by a way of doing, not only focusing on what characteristics should be evident. A new school will start with some sort of vision in mind. This is necessary, but a method for implementation, direction and evaluation would provide the best possible grounding for practices to be sustained.
Acceptance and an understanding of the direction of the school are essential. Staff support, willingness and capacity to implement the guiding direction are vital. A mechanism that promotes a professional culture within the school and honours the professional lives of teachers is critical. The mechanisms must also support the work of teachers and provide skills and ways for them to undertake their core business successfully. The day-to-day functioning of the school must be underpinned by the philosophy that started the school.

Another recommendation of this study is that foundational leaders and staff should be provided with the opportunity to work with other professionals that have been in a new situation. Also, system leaders must provide adequate time prior to the school opening for critical planning to occur. It is not best practice to expect that planning will occur simultaneously with the day-to-day business of the school. There should be enough structures in place that will provide teachers the chance to work successfully within a new school setting, but also allow them the opportunity to engage with the vision and direction of the school as professionals.

Concluding remarks
This study provided the opportunity to document the types of structures that would be necessary when establishing a school. The establishment phase of a school is unique in that it will only ever occur once. It is a time where all dreams are possible and stakeholders can be a part of a process that can enact best practice. This period is an exciting time for all those involved. The possibilities seem endless. However, there are specific issues that must be dealt with at this time. Staff must have a clearly defined direction of the school, they must be able to react to this direction proactively, they must be supported, they must be part of a system that not only espouses a vision and philosophy but also lives it. A new school setting can provide valuable information about the functioning of schools. This information can inform practice in every area of educational research. As such new schools are worthy of further research.
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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

Educational Vision and Philosophy

• What is your educational philosophy?
• Was the vision and philosophy of the school clearly articulated to you during your employment process?
• How is the vision and direction of a beginning school developed?
• What are effective methods of implementing the guiding philosophy of a beginning school?
• What initial structures are essential in a beginning school?
• How does a management team ensure that the vision and philosophy of the school is maintained after year 1 (year 2 and year 3)?

Decision Making

• How are decisions made in a beginning school?
• Describe the decision making process at the school through the various levels and years of your involvement.
• What made these processes effective / ineffective?
• How would you have improved the processes?

Support of Staff

• What support mechanisms are necessary for teaching staff to maintain the stamina and pace that are essential for developing a beginning school?

Relationship of Staff

• How do the foundation, second and third year staff relate?
• What effect does this have on practices and implementation of the vision and philosophy?

Roles of the School Community

• How critical are the various roles of all the community in building a beginning school?
• What role does the staff play in maintaining the vision and philosophy of a beginning school?
• What role did you play in establishing the school?
Appendix 2

An example of a journal entry

DAY 1. Full day staff meeting.

Quite an exciting time. We’ve got 2 days without the kids. The time is going to be used to talk about starting structures and procedures.

The day was spent as a whole group with key peoples addressed. The staff started by outlining the direction of the school. There was a lot of discussion about the structure of the day and the timetable. People were overwhelmed with the prospect of teaching 1 new lesson. I talked about the philosophy behind the curriculum.

In bold sight this should have preceded XXXX well. I spoke at length about the curriculum's structure and how we would use it.

I mentioned the concept of a strong pastoral care system. XXXX spoke about this further. We also talked about the ideas of cells that had minimum disruption to student movements.

The 15 minutes would allow us to create only 2 movements a day. The idea is also to allow only a grouping of subjects together to form teams of students. The idea is to promote a link and articulation and allow for subjects to the curriculum. Well, this was definitely an interesting point of discussion with staff responding favourably about how they would benefit in such a format frame. That any student should be involved. And would they be? If some of them feel uncomfortable with proposed...
Appendix 3  An example of a complete interview transcript

Interview with Michael

Michael, this interview is looking at beginning processes in a new secondary school. Questions I will be asking you will follow onto the categories of educational vision and philosophy. The roles of various staff and the establishment of a school, teaching and learning, decision making, support of staff and relationship of staff. First question I would like to ask you is regarding your employment at Companion, what qualities professional, personal and what skills did you have to offer and bring to your position at Companion as TAS coordinator?

Personal skills I felt at the time that I had a lot different experience with people coming from different viewpoints that I had worked on committees and I had an understanding of how the schools work both good and bad and that I was looking forward to doing something personally both for myself and the school in terms of furthering education and things like that. Professionally, I had worked in positions where I knew a fair bit about my subject area. I felt that I was fairly well organised in terms of running a department and that I had an idea of what should have gone into a department of that nature. That given that opportunity professionally that I could do something positive in terms of creating the functional aspect of the department and fostering the growth and development of a good faculty I suppose. Skills that I had, management skills, teaching skills and all of the different types of administrative skills that went into basic type skills that I had done in previous schools.

Do you feel you were employed for those qualities?

Yes I do. I remember at the time that the position had its own vision statement and I thought that it was fairly impressive and that it was not only you were applying for a job, but there were a number of things they were trying to achieve and at the interview it was obvious that they were committed to doing those sorts of things and I felt the interview was fairly strongly weighted in that respect. They were trying to do something different. So on the strength of that I think I was employed to be part of that structure.

I am going to move on the education, vision and philosophy. First of all what is your educational philosophy?

Now I have no idea. Probably educational philosophy now in schools probably doesn't work in a lot of respects. They may work for some and under some structures. Kids want to learn. Rapid change of content. I think that they may have to shift away from traditional models and I think Companion is trying to do some of that. My educational philosophy was decided by that. The possibility of something different but the reality in getting it up and running is another issue. The juggernaut approach to churning out children and following a status quo and achieving great marks and following the
curriculum and all that sort of stuff. It's hard to change. Probably need to start with a total new structure. Not a pseudo structure, but using a traditional model and rounding the edges a bit. My educational philosophy now would be very different and I think kids should go to school every day. I don't think the traditional subjects are worthwhile anymore and kids learning when they want to learn. I don't know in a lot of respects that we are doing the right thing. I think at Companion tried to do the right thing and probably achieved some principles. My educational philosophy would be that kids have to have more power over what they learn. Some prescriptive thing that you are here to learn and that is not realistic anymore. If adults can't operate that way so why should children.

You said you were unclear about what your education philosophy is now, do you remember where you were at or what your philosophy was when you applied for the position at Companion?

Yes, I liked what they proposed, [the assistant principal] and [the Principal].

What was your philosophy?

What was my philosophy then? I suppose I liked the idea of the middle school approach. I liked the idea of having people working in teams. I like working in groups with people. I like doing that with kids. I like learning like that. So I suppose that was probably the main element I propose I liked the idea of — that team approach to learning and I suppose I read more into that. That the kids would have a little bit more control over what they were doing as such. I suppose my philosophy there is probably more child centred education rather than structured form of education. It was then and always been more that children should have more say over what they are going to do. That doesn't mean that they shouldn't be responsible for it. I think they should be responsible. I think kids have far too little responsibility now under the current system because it is easy for them to duck and weave through the education system and not really do much because it is so prescriptive and teachers just can't tighten it down to doing what they would like. Unless you want to be draconian and say you must do this and you must do that. I don't know that they really learn a lot. For some kids they don't under that sort of arrangement. So I was much more for the concept of a few people being involved with kids and doing projects or doing a study of learning. One area that crossed boundaries of English and Maths and TAS. It was a lot more of a holistic approach rather than a subject based approach thing. I even had that idea then and I suppose I have more of an idea now that that is probably the way it should go. That kids like adults will do more if they are motivated from what they wanted. No matter how simple it might be for them, it would probably mean a lot more. It would take a lot longer to get there but it would be more meaningful than it is now.

You touched on the vision and philosophy of the school. How during the employment process was this articulated to you and what was that vision and philosophy that was articulated to you during that employment process?

I think more than any job I have seen it was quite clearly articulated that there was a vision and philosophy based behind the school and that was right from the minute that I
was applying for the job. I was given a copy of that. I read it fairly clearly and I talked
to it with some people and when I went for the interview, I can remember of a few
occasions during the interview that the attention was drawn to that. It had lots of
elements. It had that technology approach. It had that integrated learning approach. It
had middle schooling. It had a lot of elements to it that I thought could weave together to
make something work. So yes I thought it was quite clearly stated that was what we
were going to do at that time.

*From your experience of being in a beginning school like Companion, how is the vision
and direction of a beginning school developed?*

I think there is an enormous amount of factors that go into that. You can have vision
and direction and you have to have leadership which is great. I think Companion is
a good example of something that had really clearly articulated vision and direction.
But then there are so many other factors that go into either making that work or not.
Some of those factors would be just basically, well I can say in schools, just living
day to day. Surviving day to day and making the school run can make a lot of those
other things, those vision type approach become difficult. I watched over the first
year people struggle with functional things. I thought everyone there in the first year
held on fairly strongly to what they were trying and what they thought. I really think
most people gave it quite a good go in a lot of respects. But then there are so many
other intrinsic elements that go into that. The fact that you are not in a proper school;
that you are struggling to survive and the environment. You know that the
community is not happy. You are uncertain about your future and the kids are a
little bit.... Not up to what you would say your perfect ideal children. So it's hard to
remain focused and the other issue is that the vision is only born by people that are
there. The more people that come into a school, the more that challenge of that
vision and redirect it. The reality is that the vision of any organisation will be
collective. It is very hard for a leader to maintain that vision and keep it going.
Primarily because of the way that schools are run. Schools inevitably go back to that
approach of I am an English teacher and I am a Math's teacher and I am a music
teacher and I am a such and such teacher and I am in the library and I have got to do
this job. We work independent of one another. So as much as you may try to think
people to think as a collective under the ways that schools run with budgeting and
all of that kind of stuff, it always ends up being a matter of coming back to the
lowest common denominator. The departmental stuff has been around for years. I
don't think it is any one thing. I think it is everything. You can only take a slight
shift and the vision will change. It's probably not necessarily a bad thing. It is if you
really believe that is the way it should have been but one individual does not make
a vision. The others are really thinking things and they go down that path and that is
now the vision of the school. It’s probably what I saw happen in the second year was
that the handle on that initial vision was lost. Not because of the new people coming
to the school but primarily because it was trying to operate as a high school and
trying to get through difficult times, you start to fall back onto things that need to
be done. Programs and getting ready for reviews and getting ready for this and
getting ready for that. You lose track of what probably you could have been doing.
You just couldn't.
You mentioned a couple of times the effect of the year two and the new staff, how do you think a management team can ensure that the vision and philosophy of the school is maintained after the first year?

I don't know that they should have to ensure that it is maintained. I think the reality is that new people have as much right to shape a vision as people that came before them so I don't think that the management team can say that this is the way it is going to be. I don't think that they should ensure it. They have to work with people and encourage them to go down that path. It would take more than just operating as a normal school to do what you wanted to do. You would have to throw everything out right from the start if you wanted to do something different and I don't even think that the department and the way that things are structured even in large organisations like the Catholic Education office or the Department of Education would allow you to do it. Purely and simply because in order to operate properly you just can't have those boundaries.

What do you think are effective methods or what initial structures are essential in a beginning school for the implementation guiding philosophy in a beginning school?

I think Companion did lots of things right from the start. Everyone came there and they had a common vision. I think that was done brilliantly. There wouldn't be many organisations that would have done that. They would have just said let's start a school and started it and then I remember at XX when I started there that they were two years into starting the school before they had even formulated a vision or a mission statement and even when I was there and it was the fifth year down the track they were still trying to tie down what the vision and mission of the school was.

So after those people had been selected for staff and everyone knew and we had the initial vision statement then there was an approach throughout that first year that had that sort of collegiate together approach. People were united in what they were trying to do and training was organised that followed the vision. A lot of what we were doing had that feel and that direction where things were going and that continued into part of the next year however I felt at times that during that second year that it was difficult to keep that going. It was hard for people to right from the top down to maintain that direction because of that need to function as a traditional school. You had constraints of time tables and you had needs for doing reporting, you had so many different things that people wanted to do and I don't think it was necessarily new staff coming on board. It was so many other factors that did it. I think even the new staff were just browned off, tired out and a bit worn down from trying to deal with it. The stresses of not having a building and all of those other things.

I would like to move onto decision making in a beginning school. How do you think decisions are made in a beginning school?

In a beginning school there are smaller numbers of people and in the case of Companion there were freshness and a willingness to try something new. Generally most people were positive about most things and I thought there was a fairly
collaborative and positive decision making and I think people were more involved, well more than I had experienced. Maybe other people have experienced more, but more than I had experienced in schools. I think Companion was quite positive in that regard in a beginning school. That was right at the beginning but as time went on, some of those other factors came in and I felt that it was less of a collaborative approach. But it was still reasonably collaborative.

*Can you describe the beginning decision-making process at the school through the various levels and the years that you were there?*

There were regular meetings. They were fairly well clearly stated and what the objective was. People were at management levels told about what they were trying to achieve. So there was structure, goals and there were decisions made and paths followed. They weren't just imposed upon. That's never ever perfect but generally as a whole that happened.

*What do you think made these processes either effective or ineffective?*

They were effective at the start because people were positive and were willing to work on something new. There was a common vision and mission. I think that is primarily why it was effective and plus there was good management of what was happening. Meetings were well run generally and so I suppose that was what made it effective.

It makes it ineffective when I suppose when you lose focus and the focus becomes less directed and people become a little bit frayed at the edges and think well there are too many things happening. That's when it becomes ineffective. When people feel that the management is waive ring. That they are struggling with it and just going through the motions and it's not really the driving force any more. You might come back to it but you can see that there are other things driving the ship rather than the original mission and vision. That's when it becomes a bit ineffective and by the nature of all of the large organisations. It's probably not always a good idea to have everyone in on collective decision making because some people will ebb away at what you are trying to do. I found that happening in the second year.

*I suppose time is a great thing when you can look back over things and see what was effective and not. How would you have improved those processes to make them more effective?*

I don't think I would say that I could have improved them in direction and management. I don't think that I could have improved them or I don't think I could be over critical of that. I think that in the second year that as newer people came in that we probably needed to revisit things as a staff in terms of vision and mission and there had to be more done about that to start off with and then really set down some clear focus and goals. I felt that the focus and goals were there in the first year with integrated learning and with team approach and I legitimately thought people gave that a really good shot and in the second year that became a little bit waive red because we didn't revisit it as a whole staff collectively and really hammer that home that was what we were going to do. But maybe that was not the main goal. I
mean maybe it did lose a bit of an edge only because of what was happening in schools and that's not anyone's fault, it's just purely and simply it was very hard and still probably is I would say.

You mentioned a couple of times about difficulty of maintaining morale and momentum, what support mechanisms were necessary for teaching staff to maintain stamina, morale and pace that are essential for a developing school?

I think they need to know basic things like in life that they are secure and that things are developing and that they are achieving and that it is manageable and some of those things, there wasn't security there and still probably isn't. You don't have a secure environment. Things are changing constantly. I think that is not just once. That is the function of all schools and I don't think its right. It's just ridiculous that schools should be built around you. It should have that environment set up ready to go at least the majority of it. So that's one thing; security. I think you need to know that you are achieving and I think that probably in schools you don't stop enough and say 'yes, that's worked'. You have to be that focused and not burn people out. You say this is all we are going to do and we are going to focus and hit on this. But that is really hard to do because there are so many other constraints that are happening. You can just become overwhelmed with things that are happening and get bogged down with red tape and lose that drive and initiative to do stuff. I think that is about it.

You mentioned a couple of times about the secondary staff coming on board. How does the foundation on initial staff and second year staff related?

I think there was initially a little bit of friction there. Well not friction but wariness and one of the difficulties in beginning schools is that identity you build up as a small number of people working on something and then someone else comes in and they can rock the boat and people don't like it. It is forced upon you. In beginning schools that's a huge thing. That people come in and they have to meld together in a short period of time and then all tow the party line. That's why I was saying before that we didn't revisit that. We did a little bit but it was never rammmed home that we needed to work and pull together and this was what we were aiming for. I think that was a hard thing to do. To get everyone together and get them working towards one goal.

What effect do you think this had on the process of implementation and vision and philosophy?

What effect? It's like anything. You now have two directions and a little bit of a schism opened up between groups and then it becomes less effective in terms of that collaborative approach to decision making and working towards the same goals is largely broken down. So that is what happens, that's the affect.

I would like to change the focus now to teaching and learning. Companion adopted certain practices like the 75 minutes lessons, teams approach and learning styles. Do you think the learning outcomes for students were enhanced by adopting those practices?
In some respects it might have. I don't think there was any sort of real research done into it. Like I think it could have worked. I still to this day think that it could have worked however I didn't think the way that we did it was right in terms of traditional type structure. I don't think it can work under that. It is too hard to run 75 minute lessons with content base with any subject. It is hard enough in practical bases to keep their interest and I mean I liked it probably the best but I can understand how other people would struggle with that. Really that longer time span would have been better served with an approach that was much more of an open learning environment that it was with separate classes and different things. It needed to be a different approach and perhaps it would have worked. I don't know. With that group of kids we had I thought it worked alright. What would it have been like if they had been walking around with 30 minute periods? They might have even been worse so we didn't try that with them. Some of them in that first year were difficult kids. Maybe it wouldn't have been an improvement going around from one to another. I didn't think it was a raging success and that there was a marked improvement. It certainly wasn't the case where technology was greatly enhanced by having the extra time. Lots of things we tried to do there probably could have been better.

*On that point of technology, do you think technology played an integral role in adopting best practices?*

I don't think so for a lot of reasons. I think that it was technology itself that doesn't bring about best practices. It is the teaching and learning set up that you have that is going to allow you to use the technology. There were lots of problems with the technology with cabling and stuff that stopped people from using it. The machines themselves. But unless you get teachers and children more importantly to see the value of using technology in essence not just to enhance learning but to motivate learning, then it won't work. So I didn't think it really drove the educational agenda much at all in fact I think the concept of the lap tops probably on their own left a lot to be desired and you probably would have been better served by having a mixture of the two. I am not for one or the other. I would have liked to have seen both. To have a spot where people could have gone — a dedicated area. I think with Andrew running the technology would have found it much easier to have people come in and manage the technology, kids would have been less frustrated with all of the down time and moving stuff backwards and forwards. Hooking things up and teachers would have felt given the right training and everything that they had somewhere that they could do and knew that everything was going to work. There were some good things about having the lap tops but I didn't think the approach of doing it in the class with everyone taking a lap top and things like that didn't work. It was more a group project type of approach. Some people probably managed it. I don't think I managed it all that well with a lot of classes.

*I suppose as teachers, some of our goals are to see our students develop into lifelong learners. Can you identify any skills that indicated that the students at Companion had developed or were developing into lifelong learners?*
In short — no I don't see any mind blowing great differences there. The only thing that I could say that really did make them stand out and probably the most positive thing, no there were lots of positive things, but one of the most positive things was doing the conferencing. The conferencing was probably one of the things that those kids will have over others in the essence I thought that was a brilliant thing. Probably the best thing that came out of anything we were doing. So that would be something that is a lifelong skill. Technology wise I don't think they were learning anything that was greatly mind boggling and wonderful in terms of technology because it didn't really relate to anything they wanted to do. That's a hard thing to manage. The rest of it I thought was just like any other school.

What role do students play in the development of a beginning school?

I thought the kids lacked. They were very immature kids. They lacked leadership, the maturity; probably more so than another group.

If you could have got some older kids there, somehow to make them realize that this is how you behave in a high school it might have made a difference and the reality is that a lot of our time is taken up with behaviour problems that probably would not have existed in a normal high school with those same kids because they would have had older role models to look up to. So one of the parts they play in a beginning high school is that they actually take up more time than you would have expected. That shocked me because having come from a school where there were 7-12, dealing with Year 7 and 8 and Year 9 kids was not really that much of a problem but at Companion it was. It wasn't just because of the area, it was because these kids just didn't really know how to behave and they thought they were kings and all of that sort of stuff and they needed the older kids there to pull them into line. So you underestimate the effect that older kids will have in the high school.

The school community is made up of parents, parish priest, local community, students and CEO to name a few. How critical are the various roles of all the community in building a beginning school?

I think they just have to be very supportive; that's really it. I thought they were quite supportive at most times when we were involved with things. I don't think the local community was. Our parents were. I think what hurt Companion more than anything was that feeling that we didn't belong and that the school wasn't going to happen as such as a real school for a while. Even just the knowledge that we weren't welcome in the area made it quite tense at the start. I thought the parents generally were brilliant in the support of the school. I thought the parish priest was. I thought everyone basically except the fact that we had been sold a dummy in the essence that it was always going to be a lemon right from the start and [the system] knew that. So the community in general and the way it was managed up front made it more difficult for the school. That feeling that you weren't really going to happen and that you were always under pressure.

What role does the teaching staff play in maintaining that vision and philosophy of a beginning school?
I don't think they have to tow the party line. I think they have every right to come into a school and make their mark and be part of what is happening. I think though that they have to be prepared to be involved with engaging that mission early and then give it some time and work towards it. I don't think they were engaged enough in what had happened and what was going to happen. They weren't empowered enough in the sense that they didn't really know what had come before and a lot of them didn't know what had come before and what the mission was. What we all strove for the year before and what we were all about this next year and knowing that we were all committed ourselves to doing that sort of thing. I don't think that happened. For them, their role is to be engaged in what's happening and give it a go. Their role is to give it a go. I don't think they have any right to come in and pull it down without giving it a go.

*What role did you play in establishing the school?*

... apart from social director. Drinks coordinator, social director. Oh well I set up parts of a department. I felt that I did that reasonably well. I had influence in the direction of what we were doing. I felt that the people I worked with respected what was happening. I respected them and I felt that professionally we were going places in some respects. So I felt that I was part of a team and an effective team.

*You left between the beginning of the second year and the third year, why did you resign?*

That has nothing specifically to do with Companion. It has a lot to do with my vision and many things. I suppose I was very disillusioned. It wasn't the people at Companion I was more upset about, it was the fact that I could see and I knew that it wasn't going to go anywhere. When I started at Companion I was at a point in my teaching career where I said to myself I have a great chance to build a department, see it through until its first year through till Year 12 and then go. Have the building and all of the infrastructure set up and then reassess whether or not I was prepared to stay at school any longer. I thought that the school owed me. I thought that it owed me the chance to do that and it wasn't [the Principal's] fault or anyone else's fault. It was [the system] and the people organizing it. They weren't going to deliver what they promised and I knew that it wasn't going to happen and I thought well I am not prepared to see it through. I wasn't prepared to do it any longer. Just disillusioned generally with how schools operate. I could see not specifically anyone's fault but I could see Companion just going down the same path as every other school. It was just going to be like any other high school and we weren’t really going to realize what we had set out to do. So I suppose I left earlier than I thought I would, but I thought I just can't do it anymore. I suppose I left because I felt that there was really no future there and I wasn’t just going to stay for the people anymore. I had done all of that before. If I was going to stay it would have to be for something more than that.
To: [the Principal]
Zeffie Nicholas
21st June 2001

RE: RESEARCH OF ZEFFIE NICHOLAS

THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES THAT STAFF FACE WHEN ESTABLISHING A NEW SCHOOL

I have been given information about *The Issues And Challenges That Staff Face When Establishing A New School* and discussed the research project with Zeffie Nicholas who is conducting this research as part of a Doctorate of Education supervised by Wilma Vialle in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong.

I have kept a copy of the letter and information sheet for the school records.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact ZEFFIE NICHOLAS (02 47 511 530) and supervisor WILMA VIALLE (02 42 214 434) or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Complaints Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Wollongong on 42214457.

I, [the Principal], consent to Zeffie Nicholas conducting research at Companion High School using data as specified in the Principal’s Information Sheet Letter.

Signature

Date:
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG: FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH CONSENT FORM
ZEFFIE NICHOLAS
SUPERVISOR’S NAME: WILMA VIALLE

I have been given information about The issues and challenges that foundation staff face when establishing a new school and discussed the research project with Zeffie Nicholas who is conducting this research as part of a Doctorate of Education supervised by WILMA VIALLE in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong.

I understand that, if I consent to participate in this project I will be asked to:

- undertake a face to face interview with a research assistant. The duration of the interview would be approximately one hour.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my treatment or relationship with the researcher ZEFFIE NICHOLAS or the school in any way.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact ZEFFIE NICHOLAS (47 511 530) and WILMA VIALLE (42 4214434) or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Complaints Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Wollongong on 42214457.

Please indicate in the space provided below whether you consent or not to participate in the research entitled The Issues And Challenges That Staff Face When Establishing A New School conducted by ZEFFIE NICHOLAS as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used for purpose of ZEFFIE NICHOLAS’ doctoral thesis and may also be used for any further research papers of publications.

Please circle the appropriate response.

I CONSENT / I DO NOT CONSENT to participate in the research of Zeffie Nicholas.

Signed

Name (please print)

Date

If you are consenting please supply a preferred contact telephone number:

Please return the consent/ non-consent form in the pre-paid envelope included.
Principal

Companion High School

21st June 2001

RE: RESEARCH OF ZEFFIE NICHOLAS

THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES THAT STAFF FACE WHEN ESTABLISHING A NEW SCHOOL

I write requesting permission to conduct educational research at Companion High School. I am conducting research into the processes involved in establishing a beginning secondary school.

The research project aims to:
- identify and discuss issues and decisions made in terms of whole school structures;
- outline and discuss the opinions and views of Foundation and Second year staff in regards to the issues and decisions made when establishing a secondary school;
- evaluate the leadership model in the school.

The research methodology involves a case study. This will incorporate using the school artifacts, namely, newsletters, Principal’s weekly letter to staff, Deputy Principal’s weekly bulletin, Curriculum Coordinator’s weekly memo, minutes from whole staff, Teaching and Learning Coordinators, executive and Curriculum Team meetings. It will also include using archival information on curriculum, as well as the use of the Curriculum Coordinator’s diary.

Anonymity and confidentiality of the school and staff will be maintained throughout the research process and subsequent publication of my doctoral thesis. Staff are able to withdraw from the research process at any time. Staff may also access any of their own information from the data pool.

A copy of the paper and findings will be made available to the school. Attached is the consent form for teaching staff to participate in this research.

I seek your response to this issue.
Yours sincerely

Zeffie Nicholas
Appendix 7

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH OF ZEFFIE NICHOLAS

TITLE: The issues and challenges that foundation staff face when establishing a new school

SUPERVISORS NAME: WILMA VIALLE

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG: FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Dear Colleague
I am conducting research into the decision making involved in establishing a beginning secondary school.

The research project aims to:
- identify and discuss issues and decisions made in terms of whole school and curriculum structures;
- outline and discuss the opinions and views of Foundation and Second year staff in regards to the issues and decisions made when establishing a secondary school;
- evaluate the emerging leadership model in the school.

The research methodology involves a case study. This will incorporate using the school artifacts, namely, newsletters, Principal’s weekly letter to staff, Deputy Principal’s weekly bulletin, Curriculum Coordinator’s weekly memo, and minutes from whole staff, Teaching and Learning Coordinators, executive and Curriculum Team meetings. It will also include using archival information on curriculum, as well as the use of the Curriculum Coordinator’s diary.

As you are aware there is a dependent relationship between you and the researcher and you should consider whether to participate in the research or not. You may refuse to participate in this research and the relationship between you and the researcher will not be adversely affected, nor will your relationship with the school presently or in the future.

I seek your consent to be involved in this research. Your participation would involve:

- undertake a face to face interview with my research assistant. The duration of the interview would be approximately one hour.

You would be identifiable in terms of being able to track your responses over the first two-year period of the school. You would not be identifiable in the presentation of data in the thesis. Participating staff would be identified within the thesis as Teacher 1, 2,... (position within the school and subject area). Details of your previous school experience may be used in the thesis.

You will be mailed the transcripts of your interview to verify their authenticity.

You will be contacted during July 2001 to schedule a convenient interview time.
You will be able to access and read the thesis on completion. You are free to withdraw from the research at any time. This withdrawal will not affect your relationship with the researcher. If requested by you the researcher can identify the related data and withdraw this data from the research data pool.

If you have any enquiries about the research, I can contact ZEFFIE NICHOLAS (47 511 530) and WILMA VIALLE (42 4214434) or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Complaints Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Wollongong on 42214457.

Yours sincerely

Zeffie Nicholas
Appendix 8  The school’s vision statement prepared by the Principal in 1998

OUR SHARED VISION
We hope to create a reflective, prayerful and accepting environment.
We hope to build a community which is Christ centred, practices forgiveness, understanding and actively accepting of others.
We welcome the possibility that we will be challenged in our beliefs, because we want our students to be critical thinkers with informed consciences.
We are committed to making our school a centre of learning and excellence, which provides a kaleidoscope of opportunities for all.
We aim to create a community of learners who will be technologically comfortable, flexible, adaptable and well informed about local and global issues.
We will foster in our students a strong belief in themselves as well as the ability to think logically, critically and independently.
We aim to provide a balanced curriculum through which varying needs and abilities will be nurtured.
The Philosophy

Curriculum A Catholic School’s Perspective

Companion’s curriculum:

* Recognises and values the individual worth and dignity of each school community member
* Incorporates a Catholic perspective through word and example via learning experiences in each of the Key Learning Areas
* Guides students to celebrate, critically reflect upon and actively integrate Gospel values into their daily lives
* Promotes Faith development as a lifelong process
* Affirms the richness of diversity in the school community
* Models justice and equity for all members of the school community
* Recognises and caters for the individual learning needs of students
* Promotes human excellence

The Middle School Years

A middle school years program has as its philosophy the unique needs and characteristics of the young adolescent. Young adolescents need to:

* Adjust to the profound changes of their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development
* Grow toward independence, while still needing security in their relationships with adults
* Gain experience in decision making and accepting responsibility for these decisions
* Develop a positive self image and confidence in their abilities through achieving success in significant events
* Progressively develop a sense of self and of personal and social values which become part of their life
* Experience social acceptance and gain affection and support applicable to their lives from their peers
* Think in ways which become progressively more abstract and reflective
* Develop a socio-cultural perspective of their world and gain skill in coping and interacting with that world
* Establish or maintain relationships with adults, who can provide advice and act as role models.
The philosophy is student centred not subject based. It accepts and respects each student and teacher as an individual of worth and dignity in his or her own right; it celebrates differences and encourages creativity and freedom of expression in keeping with ethnic genealogy and background experiences. It is outcomes based and devoted to excellence in classroom instruction, student motivation the quest for life skills and broad based learning and creative thinking.

There are ten key factors that affect the middle school years program working effectively, they are:

**A holistic approach entails**

- mainstreaming
- across the board approaches, that is, a need to cluster groupings, settings, teaching teams, separate disciplines and adopt teaching styles that are innovative and diverse

The adolescent persons are the primary focus. Some of the best models are seen in school communities where shared commitment to young adolescents is quite explicit.

**Teacher teaming**

-is most effective in situations where arrangements had been negotiated carefully in advance and ongoing forms of internal and external means of support are provided.

**Teacher research**

-is an empowering experience for those prepared to look critically at their own practices with disengaged and non participating students. There is a need to trial and evaluate these new approaches in their own environments.

**Genuine consultation**

-students tend to respond very positively when teachers actively listened to them and take their views seriously.

**Student participation**

-works best when mutual respect and trust between students and teachers is established and both groups have the opportunities to acquire and practice the pre requisite skills
- skills associated with ‘active learning’ such as listening, participating, negotiating and reflecting become part of normal learning.

**Time and space**

-more creative and flexible timings, groupings, settings for the learners with less constant movement and some sense of ownership of their space
-time out for tutoring and reflecting

For teachers, planned time together for teaming can be crucial.

**Practical activities**

-more relevant and challenging activities with some sense of being productive and competent can be highly motivating.
-best use of active and productive lessons arise when the activity exposes students to significant concepts, principles and theories.

**Varied approaches**
-providing less routine and a richer mix of independent, collaborative and experiential techniques bring gains to both individual and collective outcomes
-a broader repertoire is needed in teaching techniques and in media used in the application of the learning or the tasks to be performed and assessed.

**Pastoral care**
-embedding pastoral care issues within the curriculum helps ensure that the intellectual and social needs of the young adolescents are addressed simultaneously, rather than welfare being seen as something separate and different
-closer contact through more stable teacher – student partnerships is a major gain.

**Parent and community participation**
-adults other than teachers can be brought into new kinds of partnerships in the learning process
-committee work and formal linkages are less fruitful than working on something together as the main contact. Bridges are established and strengthened amongst community members often as serious long term engagements.

**Integration as a pedagogical philosophy**

At Companion, we focus of current teaching and learning methodology that incorporates strategies which involve problem solving, investigations, working cooperatively as part of a team, communicating, technology and dealing with subject areas in real life contexts in a variety of situations.

Adopting this approach to teaching and learning best suits the needs of the young adolescents in our care, our parents and the wider community. An integrated approach to teaching and learning establishes links. Its philosophy is based on the following guidelines:

* The “real world” is integrated
* Students do best when they see that their learning is connected
* Students are the focus
* Allows for “tracking” of students
* You can’t teach in isolation for 6 hours a day!

**Companion’s Approach to Teaching and Learning**

At Companion we value and recognise the individuality of all staff and students. As such, it is essential that classroom practices and learning experiences reflect the individuality of all students and attempt to cater for their needs. Classrooms are seen as places that are safe challenging and creative, where all involved have a valued opinion.
We must promote human excellence and celebrate the growth and successes of our students. Successes for students may be in the areas of creative, musical, artistic, technological, sporting, design, academic and interpersonal. All of these areas are equally significant and should be promoted and highlighted in a cross curricula mode.

It is also our responsibility that we encourage creative, critical and analytical thinking skills in our students. Classroom activities and learning experiences will emphasise problem solving and the application of skills to the real world. Classroom practices and learning experiences at Companion High School will provide:

* students with positive role models who may contribute toward shaping their learning goals and enrich their educational experiences
* a challenge to students’ values regarding learning and contribute toward instilling in all students a desire to succeed
* an environment which allows for a myriad of learning possibilities and support structures for students
* a safe and accommodating learning environment which supports student diversity
* opportunities for students to interact in groups which encourage diverse levels of thinking and an array of viewpoints
* students with models of language which promote effective communication skills
* a variety of perspectives to solve problems
* promote literacy and numeracy skills
* promote the use of technology

**Companion’s Response**

- **Timetable structures**
  1. Longer periods, 75 minutes each, no doubles
  2. Fewer classroom changes during a day
  3. Some teachers teach and are responsible for more than one subject

- **Integrated Units of work**
  1. Cross curricula units, common elements and a common theme chosen and discussed by teaching teams, units planned together, possible sharing of teaching of unit by teaching team OR by individual KLA teachers
  2. Professional development provided for staff

- **Pastoral Care Structures**
  1. Pastoral Care structures organised so that each member of the teaching team plays an integral role in the development and progression of each child
  2. Vertical pastoral system
  3. Professional development provided for staff
• Technology
  1. Technology is integrated into everyday classroom practices
  2. Technological resources are available for staff and students
  3. Professional development provided for staff

• Classroom Practices
  1. Are inclusive
  2. Celebrate diversity
  3. Are challenging
  4. Are creative and innovative
  5. Respond to the special needs of all students
  6. Allow for student input and choice
  7. Are varied in approach
  8. Are regularly evaluated
  9. Model Best Practice

**Interdisciplinary Teams – Teaching Team Model**

![Diagram of Interdisciplinary Teams – Teaching Team Model](image)

- KLA 1
- KLA 2
- KLA 3

**COMMON ELEMENTS and /or COMMON Units of Work**

- Units of Work
### The Practicalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPA</td>
<td>CAPA</td>
<td>4 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOTE</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students have selected 3 from the following list:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Design and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Food Technology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Music</td>
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<td>• Visual Art</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sport Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Drama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **The stakeholders**

2. **Issues**

3. **Aspects**

4. **Philosophy**

5. **Quality teaching and learning**

6. **Teaching and learning structure**

7. **The middle school**

8. **The senior school**

9. **The School Curriculum Structures**

10. **Curriculum Issues that will form the foundation of the Curriculum Strategic Plan**

11. **Key Learning Area and Subject Period Allocation**

12. **Key Learning Area Hour Allocation Stages 4 and 5: meeting the mandatory requirements for the award of the School Certificate**

13. **Professional Development, Policy and Plan**
   - What is Professional Development?
   - Companion High School’s Commitment to Professional Development of all staff
   - The Needs of Adults as Learners
   - Teaching
   - Administration and support
   - Professional Development Plan
     - All staff
     - Beginning Teachers
     - New teachers to the school
     - Executive, experienced and senior teachers
     - Administrative and support staff
   - Outline of initial induction meeting
   - Outline of new to the school induction program
   - Outline of beginning teachers induction program
   - Professional Development Journal: The Year Gone by – The Year to Come

14. **Assessment and Reporting Policy**
-Our philosophy on Assessment and Reporting
-Assessment and Reporting Procedures
-School Certificate Assessment and Reporting Procedures and Policy

15. Special Education at Companion High School

16. Homework Policy

17. The Library

18. KLA documentation
   Vision Statement

19. Curriculum Proformas
1. The stakeholders that have influenced the development of the curriculum at Companion High School
2. To address the needs of students, the curriculum must provide experiences that are both pastoral and curriculum based that embrace the following issues in rhetoric and practice:
In order to achieve the mission of the School, the following beliefs were integral to the initial design, development and implementation of the curriculum.

3. Aspects

The Curriculum at Companion High School has been developed to cater for the needs of the students. The curriculum offered at Companion High School is broad based and the various aspects are:

- **Academic**
- **Pastoral**
- **Sport**
- **Co-curricular activities**, such as, debating, public speaking, chess club, history club.

(Staff are invited to become actively involved in the co-curricular aspect of the School and are encouraged to initiate activities that arise from student needs and interests).

4. Philosophy

The philosophy of the School and that of the curriculum is centred on the student and the wider School community. It accepts and respects each student and teacher as an individual of worth and dignity in his or her own right; it celebrates differences and encourages creativity and freedom of expression in keeping with ethnic genealogy and background experiences. It is outcomes based and devoted to excellence in classroom instruction, student motivation, the quest for life skills and broad based learning and creative thinking.

The design of the curriculum is underpinned by current theory and research into quality teaching and learning and reform in the middle years of schooling.

5. Quality Teaching and Learning

Quality teaching and learning occurs when staff have a sense of belonging to the School community, are valued by the School community, are supported, are appropriately qualified, are well prepared, are well informed about developments in teaching and learning and in curriculum development, value their own professional development, are supported in their professional development and are actively involved in decision making.

6. Teaching and Learning Structure

The structure for the curriculum will be divided into two schools. The Middle School for Years 7, 8 and 9, and a Senior School for Years 10 (and in the future Years 11 and 12).

The reforms for the Middle School Years of Schooling are seen to be quality inclusions in the design, development and implementation of whole school curriculum, not only for the Middle School Years, but also in the development of the Senior School Years.
As we develop, structures will be evaluated and modified to cater for the needs of our students.

7. The Middle School

The Middle School will be facilitated by a Middle School Coordinator.

The Coordinator is essentially responsible for quality teaching and learning. The guiding philosophy that the Middle School will be based is that young adolescents need to be able to:

- Adjust to the profound changes of their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development
- Grow toward independence, while still needing security in their relationships with adults
- Gain experience in decision making and accepting responsibility for these decisions
- Develop a positive self image and confidence in their abilities through achieving success in significant events
- Progressively develop a sense of self and of personal and social values which become part of their life
- Experience social acceptance and gain affection and support applicable to their lives from their peers
- Think in ways which become progressively more abstract and reflective
- Develop a socio cultural perspective of their world and gain skill in coping and interacting with that world
- Establish or maintain relationships with adults, who can provide advice and act as role models.

In order to achieve the aims and philosophy for the Middle Years of Schooling, the curriculum will take into account the reforms into this stage of learning. The reforms for the curriculum must:

- Be holistic in its approach
- Include quality pastoral care structures
- Include teacher teaming
- Involve teacher research
- Include genuine consultation
- Involve student participation
- Be varied in its approaches to time and space
- Engage the students in practical activities
- Include approaches to classroom instruction that are varied
- Involve parent and community participation
Our Response

In response to the following practical aspects will be implemented:

- **Timetable structures**
  4. Longer periods, 75 minutes each
  5. Fewer classroom changes during a day
  6. Some teachers teach and are responsible for more than one subject

- **Integration of the curriculum**
  3. Core Teaching Teams exist, they will be provided with the opportunity to make links and explore connections. This discussion allowing them to plan their instruction accordingly
  4. Professional development provided for staff

- **Pastoral Care Structures**
  4. Pastoral Care structures organised so that each member of the teaching team plays an integral role in the development and progression of each child
  5. Vertical pastoral system
  6. Professional development provided for staff

- **Technology**
  4. Technology is integrated into everyday classroom practices
  5. Technological resources are available for staff and students
  6. Professional development provided for staff

- **Classroom Practices**
  10. Are inclusive
  11. Celebrate diversity
  12. Are challenging
  13. Are creative and innovative
  14. Respond to the special needs of all students
  15. Allow for student input and choice
  16. Are varied in approach
  17. Are regularly evaluated
18. Model Best Practice

8. The Senior School

The Senior School will be characterised by the same features that have been outlined for the Middle School Years of Schooling.

It is hoped that a Senior School Coordinator will be appointed to facilitate quality teaching and learning in this stage of learning. Until that time the Curriculum Coordinator will be responsible for the facilitation of this stage of learning.

The focus for curriculum design, development and implementation for Year 10 2001, Year 11 2002 and Year 12 2003, will be based on ensuring that students are:

- Well cared for pastorally
- Eligible for external certification by the Board of Studies (NSW)
- Offered a wide variety of subjects
- Offered subjects and experiences that will endeavour to cater for their
  - academic needs and abilities,
  - stage of development,
  - vocational and / or academic pathway

Our response

Pastoral Care
Students will be provided with the experiences and support that will allow them to develop emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. The pastoral care system has been designed to value, nurture and promote each child (See Pastoral Care section of the Handbook).

External Certification
- Students will be provided with the necessary mandatory subjects and hours to qualify for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate (See Key Learning and Area and Subject Allocation for current subject choices).

Variety of Subjects
- Students will be offered a variety subjects in Stage 5 and Stage 6 (See Key Learning and Area and Subject Allocation for current subject choices).

Subjects and Experiences
- Subjects and courses offered will follow the guidelines as set down by the board of Studies as either Board Developed courses or Board Endorsed courses.
- It is in the selection and combination of subjects that will allow for the provision of the academic and developing needs of the students.
- Stage 5 students will participate in activities that will help them make decisions about their academic progression into Stage 6.
• Stage 5 and 6 students will be provided with opportunities to participate in vocational education and guidance activities throughout stage 5 and 6.
• The curriculum in stage 6 will involve not only an academic base, but also a Vocational Education and Training base.
9. The School Structures

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care Coordinator
Facilitates and maintains the Pastoral Care vision and structures of the school.

Homegroup Support Team
Facilitated by the Pastoral Care Coordinator. Team acts a liaison and resource support for the Homegroup teacher.

Executive Team
Facilitated by the Principal. Team members are the Assistant Principal, the Bursar, the Religious Education Coordinator, the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the Information Technology Coordinator and the Curriculum Coordinator.

Homegroup Teachers
Key stakeholder in the student at school

Middle School Teaching Team
Facilitated by the Middle School Coordinator. Team members are Year 7 and 8 Core subject teachers. The role of the Middle School Teaching Team is to provide an integrated, student centred curriculum that caters for the diverse and special needs of Year 7, 8 and 9 students.

Classroom Teachers
Facilitators of syllabus content, as well as, the development of the whole child, and to promote and foster a love of lifelong learning.

Key Learning Area Teams
Facilitated by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator. The role of the Key Learning Area Team is to promote and foster the spiritual growth of the student, provide quality teaching and learning experiences, to promote and foster a love of lifelong learning in their subjects, to ensure the implementation of Board of Studies curriculum and to be actively involved in both the curricula and co-curricula activities in the school.

Curriculum

Curriculum Team
Facilitated by the Curriculum Coordinator. Team members are the Middle School Coordinator, the Senior School Coordinator, the Cluster Vocational Education and Training Officer, Literacy Coordinator and 2 staff representatives. The role of the Curriculum Team is to maintain the Vision of the College and be integral in facilitating its implementation.

Teaching and Learning Coordinators Team
Facilitated by the Curriculum Coordinator. To ensure the effective operation of the Key Learning Area, to encourage human excellence both in staff and students, to use their subjects as a tool for the promotion of lifelong learning skills, to promote and encourage quality practice in teaching and learning.
### 10. Curriculum Issues that will form the foundation of the Curriculum Strategic Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Whole school model  
  – sub schools  
  – junior school / senior school structures  
  - staff structures and model  
  - Preparation for whole school review 2002  
  Stage 4 model  
  – further development of team teacher model  
  - integration of the curriculum  
  - 75 minute periods  
  – Evaluation of models implemented on a yearly basis  
  Stage 5 model  
  – development of model, structures and courses  
  - additional studies  
  – pathways options  
  - career options  
  - Being an effective learner  
  Stage 6 model  
  – development of model, structures and courses  
  - pathways options  
  - career options  
  - Being an effective learner  
  - industry training and VET  
  Timetable  
  – Formation of a committee  
  - Class sizes  
  - Vertical curriculum  
  - Different cycle models  
  Patterns of study  
  Learning Space  
  – The library as a possibility?  
  Pastoral Care  
  – A model  
  - Link Pastoral Care model to curriculum model  
  Philosophy of all school structures  
  Development of school curricula, programs, assessment etc  
  Teacher training, undergraduates  
  Co and extra curricula activities  
  Role of Curriculum Coordinator  
  – explicit statement of role  
  - projected role  
  – philosophy of Curriculum Coordinator  
  Assessment and Reporting  
  – Policy and Procedures  
  - Stage 4  
  - Stage 5  
  - Stage 6  
  Assessment  
  – criterion referenced assessment  
  – School Certificate | - Higher School Certificate  
  - Student and Parent Information  
  - Staff Information  
  – authentic assessment  
  - plan of assessment tasks across all years, consider calendar structure  
  Reporting  
  – Written report  
  – Student conferencing  
  Professional Development  
  - Induction of beginning teachers  
  - Experienced teachers  
  - Coordinators  
  Teaching and learning, theory and practice  
  Teaching and learning, assessment and reporting  
  – Policy  
  - SC and HSC Marking  
  - Committee  
  - Facilitator  
  - Associations  
  - Professional Reading  
  - Professional Development Personal Journal  
  - Staff Development Days  
  - Professional Development Afternoons  
  - Committee  
  - Pastoral Care of all staff  
  - Homegroup teacher training |
### Issues

**Focus areas identified in 1999 and 2000:**
- special needs students
- pastoral care
- child protection
- bullying
- planning and organisational skills
- student leadership
- drug education
- student management
- technology
- teaching and learning
- the school certificate
- the higher school certificate
- assessment
- reporting
- gospel values in the curriculum
- outcomes based programming
- maintaining accurate records
- interview skills
- literacy
- numeracy

**KLA release time**

### Teaching and Learning

- Classroom practices
- Project Based Learning
- Learning through technology
- Teacher team structures
  - Programs
  - Registration
  - Evaluation
  - Learning theory
- MI
- de Bono
- Bloom
- PBL
  - Cooperative Learning
  - Merit System
  - Being an effective learner
- Literacy

### Committee

- 1999 action plan
- 2000 and beyond
- Numeracy

### Facilitator

- 2000 and beyond
- Key Learning Skills

### Programming teaching and learning theory in school curricula

- The teams approach
- School Camps
- Curriculum based
- Pastoral based
- Religious based

### Issues

**The library**
- Policy writing

**Whole School Initiatives**
- Information process
- Literacy
- Cooperative planning and teaching
- Curriculum development and planning
- Information Technology

**Resourcing the Curriculum**
- Resourcing for Student Interest
- Catering for special groups within the school
  - Aborigines and Torres Islanders
  - Girls
  - Boys
  - GAT students
  - Itinerant Support (hearing and visual impairments)

### Community Liaison

- Community Liaison Officer
- Expo night
- Cultural displays
- The curriculum
- Assessment and reporting
- Conference evening
- P & F meetings
- Open Day
- Orientation Day
- Information Evening
- Elective Information Evenings
- Local Catholic primary schools, links between CHS and primary schools as “mentors”, take performances to the schools etc

### School Curriculum Handbooks

- Assessment and Reporting
- Examinations
- School Certificate Stage 5
- Higher School certificate Stage 6
- Elective choices for Stage 5
- Subject choices for Stage 6
- Assignments
- Professional Development
- Learning at Companion High School
- Homework
- Gifted and Talented
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Examinations
- Sport
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Vision&lt;br&gt;- Student access&lt;br&gt;- Staff access&lt;br&gt;- Software purchase&lt;br&gt;- Legal requirements&lt;br&gt;- Model for staff professional development sessions as we grow&lt;br&gt;- Time for training after school&lt;br&gt;- Maintenance&lt;br&gt;- Future development&lt;br&gt;- Hardware&lt;br&gt;- Educational Goals&lt;br&gt;- Student Skills&lt;br&gt;- Teacher training, hardware&lt;br&gt;- Development of school infrastructure&lt;br&gt;- Integration of technology into the curriculum&lt;br&gt;- Learning Space&lt;br&gt;- Development of BEC courses to cope with the changes in the new millennium&lt;br&gt;<strong>Post Compulsory</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Stage 6&lt;br&gt;- VET&lt;br&gt;- JSSTAFE&lt;br&gt;- Early Admission schemes&lt;br&gt;- Career education, goal setting from Year 7 integrated into the curriculum&lt;br&gt;<strong>Board of Studies</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Board of Studies Dissemination of information&lt;br&gt;- Assessment Certification and Examination&lt;br&gt;- Mandatory requirements&lt;br&gt;- BECs</td>
<td><strong>Examinations</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Procedures&lt;br&gt;- Policy&lt;br&gt;- Space&lt;br&gt;- Furniture&lt;br&gt;<strong>Academic and non Academic Award Ceremonies</strong>&lt;br&gt;- End of term&lt;br&gt;- End of the year&lt;br&gt;<strong>Students with special needs</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Procedures&lt;br&gt;- Policy, integration and inclusivity&lt;br&gt;- GATS Committee&lt;br&gt;- GATS facilitator&lt;br&gt;- Acceleration, whole grade and subject differentiation of the curriculum&lt;br&gt;- Clubs&lt;br&gt;- Learning space and learning contracts&lt;br&gt;- Learning Difficulties&lt;br&gt;- Other disabilities&lt;br&gt;- Central files for students, what works?&lt;br&gt;- Staff awareness and professional development&lt;br&gt;<strong>School facilities</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Our school, the real one&lt;br&gt;- Furniture&lt;br&gt;- Classroom facilities&lt;br&gt;- Storage space&lt;br&gt;- Technology access&lt;br&gt;- Equipment and resource access&lt;br&gt;- Display areas for student work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 11. Key Learning Area and Subject Period Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
<th>Stage 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>5 periods</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE</td>
<td>3 periods</td>
<td>PDHPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSIE</td>
<td></td>
<td>HSIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td></td>
<td>RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td></td>
<td>TAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPA</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>CAPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>1 period</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>5 periods</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE</td>
<td>3 periods</td>
<td>PDHPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSIE</td>
<td></td>
<td>HSIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td></td>
<td>RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>4 periods each</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students have selected 3 from the following list)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Students have selected 2 from the following list)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Design and Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Design and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Food Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Food Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Music</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visual Art</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Visual Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sport Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sport Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drama</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outdoor Endeavours</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Outdoor Endeavours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Textiles and Design</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Textiles and Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technics Wood</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Technics Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Key Learning Area Hour Allocation Stages 4 and 5: meeting the mandatory requirements for the award of the School Certificate

- **English**  
  125 hours per year  
  525 hours in total

- **Mathematics**  
  125 hours per year  
  525 hours in total

- **Science**  
  125 hours per year  
  525 hours in total

13. Professional Development, Policy and Plan

**What is Professional Development?**

Professional Development refers to the policies, procedures and activities that assist staff to meet their personal, academic or professional needs in ways that are consistent with the vision and objectives and with the known anticipated needs of the School.

Staff at Companion are called to share in the mission of the Church. This call, or vocation, is integral to the ministry of service in which all staff at the School participate. Companion is not simply a place where lessons are taught; it is a place that is guided by an educational philosophy and vision, enlightened by the Gospel. We are actively involved in the formation of the whole person.

Professional Development is an ongoing process of learning, growth and support, which allows staff to increase their awareness of self and to acquire further skills, knowledge and understanding.

Teachers in Catholic schools need to recognise that knowledge, skills and attitudes develop over time with effort and reflection. The teaching profession is complex and requires a multitude of skills and personal attributes. Constant change within the profession demands continual enhancement of knowledge and teaching practice. Teachers are expected to take responsibility for their continuing education, growth and development.

Support staff at Companion participate in an important way in the educational vision, mission and organisation of the school. They have a responsibility to be aware and extend their knowledge of the Catholic ethos of the school. They also must take responsibility to develop their professional and personal skills, so that they may participate fully in the School’s activities.

At Companion leaders should be committed to their own professional development. The role of leaders within the School demand specific knowledge and skills and it is imperative that they seek relevant professional development. It is the responsibility of all School leaders to maintain a commitment to all staff for professional development. School leaders should maintain and ensure a balance between the professional development goals of each individual and the educational goals of the school. School leaders play a crucial and integral role in the development of all staff through the support
they give and the structures, which facilitate and enhance professional development within the school.

**Companion High School’s Commitment to Professional Development of all staff**

The principal purposes of Professional Development are to optimise the quality of working life and to achieve excellence by enhancing and supporting the existing strengths and potential contributions of all members of staff to Companion. Companion’s Professional Development Policy will recognise and reflect the link between the needs of the School and the needs of the individual staff members. Professional Development will be linked and integrated with Companion’s functioning. It will be a part of normal planning, management and work practices.

Professional Development is an ongoing process and as such the Professional Development policy at Companion will:

- Support the religious ethos of the School.
- Focus on issues that promote student learning and development.
- Foster the professional and personal growth of all staff.
- Be conducted according to the principles of adults as learners.
- Acknowledge and take note of current research.
- Provide a balance between theory and practice.
- Recognise, respect and utilise the expertise and experience of all staff.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the individual.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the School.
- Respond to the stated and perceived needs of the System.
- Respond to educational agendas set by the System.
- Respond to educational agendas set by state and national governments.
- Where appropriate involve all stakeholders in joint planning.
- Strengthen the attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, skills and practices of all staff to empower them to bring about improved practices in the classroom, the School and the wider community.
- Provide opportunities for all staff to develop a professional development plan, which is linked to career pathways.

The Professional Development Policy and Plan will cater for the stated and perceived needs of:

- Executive
- Administrative and Support Staff
- Senior and Experienced teachers
- Inexperienced Teachers
- Beginning Teachers
- New Teachers to the School
The Needs of Adults as Learners
It is generally accepted that adults bring a wealth of experience to an educational setting. The needs and characteristics of adults as learners are:

- Adult learners have an accumulation of experience that becomes a resource for learning.
- Adult learners learn more effectively if the new learning is presented in the context of real life situations, that is, task or problem centred learning, and develop a readiness to learn in order to cope with real life situations.
- Adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before they undertake to learn it.
- Adult learners have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and being self-directed and need to have some input into the planning of their education.
- Adult learners have strong internal motivators to learn.

Companion’s Professional Development Policy will apply the principles of adult learning to the planning and implementation of all educational programs. It hoped then that the identified needs of all staff will be catered for and interest and support of the Companion’s programs and activities will be maintained.

Teaching
“Teachers need their own ‘curriculum’ for improvement, a defining framework for initial training, continuing professional development, appraisal and performance based assessment, related to the core of their work – developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of their students. Improvement in the quality of teaching is justified by an improvement in the quality of outcomes for students.”
(A Charter for Teaching, Schools Council, 1990: 60-61)

The elements of teaching are as follows:
- Knowledge of teaching subject area
- teaching practice
- assessment and reporting
- the school community
- professional growth
- professional development

The Professional Development plan of Companion aims to provide opportunities for teaching staff to participate in activities, which will enhance and further develop knowledge, understanding and skills.

Administration and Support
The areas of development of the administration and support staff are as follows:

- the school community
- professional growth
- professional development
The Professional Development plan of the School aims to provide opportunities for administrative and support staff to participate in activities which will enhance and further develop knowledge, understanding and skills.

**Professional Development Plan – All Staff**

The plan for Professional Development at Companion will be multi-faceted. Its approach will focus on individual needs and still address the needs of the School.

It is envisaged that all staff will:

1. Participate in the beginning of the year whole staff activities.
2. Complete a goal setting and reflective task at the beginning of each year, “The Year Gone By – The Year to Come
14. Maintain a Professional Development Log
15. Participate in external activities organised by other Catholic schools, the system, outside agencies and cross-sectorial groups that enhance and develop all dimensions of their profession.
16. Disseminate information gathered from courses attended to relevant stakeholders.
17. Participate in the Companion’s Professional Development Afternoons.
18. Participate in school based and KLA based professional development days.
19. Be invited to participate in informal appraisal activities.
20. Be invited to participate in formal appraisal activities (dependant on positions of special responsibility held within the School’s structure).
21. Participate in the School’s Staff Reflection Days.
22. Be provided with the opportunity to be facilitators and presenters of current educational initiatives and best practice.
23. Be encouraged and supported to participate and undertake further studies.
24. Be encouraged to be actively and fully involved in all aspects of the Companion’s life and development.

**Professional Development Plan – Beginning Teachers**

As well as all the envisaged goals for “All Staff”, Beginning Teachers will:

1. Participate in the “New to the School Induction Meetings”.
2. Undertake the Beginning Teacher’s Induction Program.
3. Participate in a mentor / buddy system.
4. Participate in a Beginning Teacher’s Day during Term 4.

The Beginning Teacher Induction Program will span the most part of an academic year.

The Program aims to cover a majority of the elements of teaching, that is, content of teaching and learning, teaching practice, assessment and reporting, the school community, professional growth and professional development.

The Program will be multifaceted in its approach. It will be driven by both formal and informal means.

The different facets of the program are:
The formal induction program
The school’s professional development program
The mentor program
Formal Observation
Informal Observation
Formal and Informal discussion with colleagues

The different facets of the program will be facilitated by key personnel within the school, namely, the Principal, the Assistant Principal, the Religious Education Coordinator, the Curriculum Coordinator, the Information Technology Coordinator, the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the Information Services Manager, the Office Administrator and the school guidance counsellor.

*Professional Development Plan – New Teachers to the School*

As well as all the envisaged goals for “All Staff”, New Teachers to the school will:

1. Participate in the “New to the School Induction Meetings”.
2. Participate in a mentor / buddy system.

*Professional Development Plan – Executive, Experienced and Senior Teachers*

As well as all the envisaged goals for “All Staff”, Executive, Experienced and Senior Teachers will:

1. Act as mentor / buddy for new and beginning teachers.
2. Be provided with the opportunity to participate in activities, which will further enhance their educational vision, reflective skills, and their need to be conversant with educational research.
3. Be provided with the opportunity to undertake courses, which may enhance their leadership style and skills.

*Professional Development Plan – Administrative and Support Staff*

As well as all the envisaged goals for “All Staff”, Administrative and Support staff will be encouraged to:

1. Actively update and enhance necessary skills.

*Outline of New Staff to the School Induction Meeting*

It is envisaged that all new and beginning teachers will participate in an Induction Meeting. The Induction Meeting will cover all areas of the School’s life and functioning. The Induction Meeting will be held in the first few days of the school academic year.
These meetings will only serve as an introduction to the School. All new staff will also be invited to participate in an ongoing induction plan. An outline of the meetings is as follows:

- School routines, procedures and general information
- School policies, curriculum documents and resources
- Pastoral Care
- Information Technology and Services

Outline of New Teacher Induction Program

- The Religious Dimension of the School
- The School Community
- Professionalism and legal responsibilities
- The Office
- Our Pastoral Program  General
- Our Pastoral Program  Homegroup
- Our Pastoral Program  Student Management
- Our Pastoral Program  Child Protection and Working with Children
- Teaching and Learning  Our Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning  Styles and Strategies
- Teaching and Learning  Assessment
- Teaching and Learning  Reporting
- Information Technology  Technology at Companion High School
Outline of Beginning Teacher Induction Program

- The Catholic School
- The Religious Dimension of the School
- The School Community
- Professionalism and legal responsibilities
- The Office
- Our Pastoral Program General
- Our Pastoral Program Homegroup
- Our Pastoral Program Student Management
- Our Pastoral Program Child Protection
- Teaching and Learning Our Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning Classroom Management and Discipline
- Teaching and Learning Lesson writing and program writing
- Teaching and Learning Effective Organisation Of Time
14. Assessment and Reporting Policy

1. *Companion High School’s Assessment and Reporting Policy will:*

   - Recognise and value the individual worth and dignity of each school community member.
   - Incorporate a catholic perspective through word and example via learning experiences in each of the Key Learning Areas.
   - Affirm the richness of diversity in the school community.
   - Model justice and equity for all members of the school community.
   - Recognise and cater for the individual learning needs of students.
   - Promote human excellence.

2. *Assessment at Companion High School*
   
   Assessment is the process of gathering evidence of what a student can do for a purpose. There are three different types of assessment, they are:
• Diagnostic assessment is often done at the beginning of a course, to assess the skills, abilities, interests, levels of achievement, or difficulties of one student or a class.
• Formative assessment occurs continually throughout the year. It is used to monitor students’ progress and provide meaningful and immediate feedback.
• Summative assessment occurs at the end of a unit of work, activity, course, term or program. It is used to determine student achievement and program effectiveness.

Methods of assessment should be authentic and should emphasise learning and thinking, especially higher order thinking skills. Tasks should focus on students’ ability to produce a quality product or performance. The tasks should integrate and produce knowledge. Students should be provided with the opportunities to excel.

Assessment activities should be clearly related to the stated outcomes being assessed. Students should be able to show what they know and can do in relation to the outcomes. Activities and tasks should provide an authentic opportunity for students to show what they know and can do. A variety of assessment strategies should be used so that students have the opportunity to show what they know and can do in different ways. A single activity can often provide information about more than one outcome. The emphasis should be on the nature and quality of the evidence rather than on the amount of evidence. An assessment activity is valid if it measures what it sets out to measure. It is reliable if it is able to produce consistent results. Self-assessment can be an important aid to learning and provide useful feedback for teaching. Professional judgment involves teachers matching what the student has been able to demonstrate against the standards framework of the syllabus objectives, stage outcomes and work samples.

Assessment should also include the provision of activities that will allow teachers to effectively report of the learning skills. The learning skills will be the constant factor of reporting from Years 7 to 12.

**Tools that help you assess:**
• student responses to questions including open ended questions
• student explanation and demonstration to others
• questions posed by students
• samples of students’ work
• student produced overview or summaries
• practical tasks
• investigations and projects
• students’ oral and written reports
• quizzes
• pen and paper tests involving multiple choice, short answer questions and long response questions

**The types of instruments that could be used to appraise student work are:**
• research projects
• critical analysis responses
checklists
peer appraisal
self evaluation journals
student presentations
portfolios
team teaching

**Reporting at Companion High School**
Reporting is the provision of information about student’s progress to the student and other stakeholders.

Reporting occurs at different times for different purposes. It should take into account the needs of the student and their well-being. Reporting should also take into account the needs of the parents and the other stakeholders and audiences.

Reporting should provide comprehensive, accurate and constructive information. Effective reporting is characterised by the use of a variety of strategies and approaches.

The process of reporting may be formal or informal, planned or unplanned

The reporting system at Companion High School will be two fold. It will be comprised of a written report and a student conference.

**The Written Report**
This report will be characterised by subject summaries, comprehensive and diagnostic teacher comments and learning skills.

The learning skills are seen as an integral component of not only the final product of a report, but more significantly they are seen as the basis of good teaching and learning practices. It is through these skills that students will begin to build lifelong learning practices and higher order educational skills. At Companion High School we seek to foster a love of learning and to promote learning as a lifelong process. Success in a learning environment requires a range of skills in the areas of literacy, communication, organisation, problem solving, interaction, technology and in some subjects, mathematical skills. Effective learning depends upon the integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The skills are listed below:

- collects, analyses and organises information
- communicates ideas and information
- manages time and plans work
- works with others and in teams
- uses mathematical ideas and techniques
- applies problem solving strategies
- uses technology
The levels and descriptions that will be used to report on student progress in these skills are listed below:

**Excellent**  Has consistently and effectively demonstrated the skill

**High**  Has regularly demonstrated the skill in a range of familiar situations.  
At times, has the ability to demonstrate the skill in unfamiliar situations.

**Satisfactory**  Has consistently demonstrated the skill in familiar situations.

**Elementary**  At times has demonstrated the skill in familiar situations.

**Still to be achieved**  Has not yet demonstrated the skill at an elementary level.

**The Student Conference**

This conference is a student, parent, teacher conference where students present examples of their work over a time period. This work will be collated into a Student Portfolio. Students prepare for the conference in the weeks leading up to Conference Night.

The student conference will be convened by the homegroup teacher. The conference will be approximately twenty minutes in duration.

The process of preparing a portfolio allows the students to take responsibility for planning and reporting of their progress. It contributes to their development of decision-making and goal setting skills in allowing the students to select samples of work, which are indicative of their strengths and weaknesses in each KLA. It further affords students the opportunity to develop reflective skills in preparing their student evaluation. It invites and encourages parents to engage in dialogue regarding their child’s progress and management of home tasks. It encompasses both the curriculum and pastoral systems, in an effort to promote the development of the whole child.

**Portfolios**

**What is a portfolio?**

- A collection of work that allows students to display every aspect of their capabilities, they produce a more accurate and holistic portrait of the student…” a portfolio is more than a ‘folder’ of student work; it is a deliberate specific collection of accomplishment” (Hamm and Adams, 1991, p.20).

**What is included in a portfolio?**

- Examples of best work from each of the different subjects.
- Examples of work where improvement is needed for each subject.
• Collated portfolios will include a creative cover, contents a written comment about the items: why they were collected and how the student feels about them.
• A self evaluation of their written report

It may include pieces such as:
• Homework
• Quizzes
• Assignments
• Group work
• Problem Solving
• Journals
• Projects
• Cassettes of speeches, singing, playing of music

**When should students start selecting pieces of work for their portfolio?**
• At the beginning of the school year. Both Classroom and Homegroup teachers are encouraged to promote the portfolio early in the school year.

**How many pieces of work are included for each subject?**
• As a guide two for each subject would be adequate.

**Who decides what goes in the portfolio?**
• The student along with teacher guidance.

**How it is physically kept / collated?**
• The students collect pieces from the beginning of the term and store them in a box in their homeroom.

**Who will oversee the process and the end product?**
• The classroom teacher and the homegroup teacher are involved with the process.
• The homegroup teacher is responsible for the end product

**When do parents see the portfolio?**
• At the Conference Night

**Material and Resources needed for Student conference**

• **Material for students**
  1. Guidelines for the type of work to be collected.
  2. An evaluation sheet for the items selected for the portfolio.
  3. An agenda for the conference
  4. An evaluation sheet for the written report

• **Material for Homegroup Teachers**
  1. Everything the students have and more…
  2. Information package about portfolios and conferencing to use with students
3. Homegroup lesson on the Conference Night
4. Interview guidelines
5. Interview schedule
6. Teachers interview record

- **Material for Parents**
  1. Letter informing them about our reporting system
  2. P & F meeting to discuss the system
  3. Invitation to attend the Conference night

### 3. The School Certificate Policy

At Companion High School, assessment practices will:

- Recognise and value the worth and dignity of each school community member
- Incorporate a Catholic perspective through word and example via learning experiences in each of the Teaching and Learning Areas
- Affirm the richness of diversity in the school community
- Model justice and equity for all members of the school community
- Recognise and cater for the individual learning needs of students
- Promote human excellence.

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

1. Followed the course developed or endorsed by the Board
2. Applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school
3. Achieved some or all of the course outcomes
4. Attended sufficiently to fulfil course requirements

Assessment for the award of a School Certificate grade will be a cumulative process. Assessment activities will clearly relate to the stated outcomes being assessed.

**Types of tasks**
Teaching and Learning Areas will ensure to utilise a variety of strategies to assess students.

**Number of tasks**
Teaching and Learning Areas will have between 4 to 6 assessment tasks during the year that the student will be awarded a School Certificate grade.

**Placement and timing**
Teaching and Learning Areas will write and distribute their assessment schedule during the first month of a subject being studied by a student. The schedules will give details
about the types of tasks, the weighting of each task and the term and week in which the
task will be completed.

Teaching and Learning Coordinators must give 2 weeks written notice as to the due date
of any task, except for any task that will be administered during the Formal Assessment
period. The Curriculum Coordinator will give notification of this Formal Assessment
period.

(See Appendix 1 for Assessment Schedule and Assessment Task Notification)

**Submitting tasks**
The tasks are to be submitted during class time on the due date given. Alternatively, if
there is no class on the due date then the task should be submitted to the classroom
teacher before the end of the school day. If the classroom teacher is absent on the due date
of the task, the Teaching and learning Coordinator will make alternative arrangements
and inform the students.

Students are required to sign the Subject Assessment Book when:

1. They are given an Assessment Task Notification.
2. They submit their assessment task for marking.
3. They receive their marked assessment task back from the classroom teacher.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to:

1. Distribute the Assessment Task Notification.
2. Mark the assessment task.
3. Retain the grade or mark for the task in the Subject Assessment Book and in the
   Teaching and Learning Area Central Register.
(See Appendix 2 for Subject Assessment Book Proforma)

**Late submission of tasks / Failure to Submit a Task**
Failure to submit an assessment task on the due date without a legitimate reason will
result in an award of zero for that task.

The task must still be submitted in order for the student to be considered overall
satisfactory for a School Certificate grade in the subject in question.

**Absence from tasks**
It is the student’s (or parent / guardian’s) responsibility to notify the school office by 8.30
a.m. on the day of the task.

Students will be required to undertake a supplementary task upon their return to school, or
at a time to be negotiated with Teaching and Learning Coordinator of the subject. The
Teaching and Learning Coordinator has the discretion to award a mark or grade for the
missed task based on the student’s performance in previous similar tasks.
Upon returning to school it is the student’s responsibility to provide suitable documentation, which outlines the nature of their absence, for example a doctor’s certificate.

If students are absent from a task for a reason, which is deemed not legitimate by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, the student may be awarded a zero mark. If the assessment task requires group participation and all members of the group are not present on the due date of the task then:

1. The absent students will need to abide by all rules stated in this policy.
2. The students present will be given the opportunity to submit their material for the group task. These students will still have the opportunity of being awarded a maximum grade.

**Illness / Misadventure**

Illness / misadventure may arise when the student is present for the assessment task, however, feels that their performance in the task may be less than their best as a result of illness or physical injury, or any event beyond the student’s control, for example, death of a friend or family member.

In this case, the student has the right to lodge an appeal to the Curriculum Coordinator.

The student will be required to supply documentation regarding the illness / misadventure. The outcome of the appeal will be the responsibility of the Curriculum Coordinator in negotiation with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator.

**Malpractice in tasks**

Malpractice is constituted by the student not conforming to the rules and regulations of the assessment supervisor and the rules of the School.

Students are required to comply to the rules of the School where they undertake the assessment task. They must follow the teacher’s and supervisor’s instructions, they must behave in an appropriate manner towards teacher’s and supervisors and other students and they must make a serious attempt at completing the assessment task.

Students will be liable of malpractice if they submit work which is not their own, correctly referenced or of which they have previous knowledge, for example, stolen examination papers.

Students found liable of malpractice will be awarded a zero mark for that task and be disciplined by the Principal and Homegroup Teacher.

**Maintaining records**

It is the teacher’s responsibility to maintain accurate records of student performance in each component of the assessment schedule. Teachers are required to submit all assessment marks and grades to a central register, which will be monitored by the
Teaching and Learning Coordinator and Curriculum Coordinator. Teachers are to ensure that their records are current, accurate and accessible if needed in case of teacher absence.

**Assessment of accelerants**
Students may accelerate in single courses or in all courses. Students will be entered for their Stage 5 accelerated course/s in the calendar year in which they complete it.

**Reporting to students on performance in assessment tasks**
Feedback to students will be prompt. It is the teacher’s responsibility to provide feedback which includes comments that inform the students of the strengths and areas in need of improvement of the attempted task.

Teachers may also award a mark or grade to the assessment task.

**Procedures for informing parents on the non submission / non completion of tasks**
It is the responsibility of the Teaching and Learning Coordinator and the Curriculum Coordinator to notify the parents of a student who has not completed an assessment task. This notification will be in writing and will include a return slip that parents will be required to complete to ensure that they are aware of their child’s non submission or non completion of a task. Copies of the notification are to be kept in the student’s file in the School Office.

(See Appendix 3 for Failure to Complete/Submit an Assessment Task)

**Procedures for informing parents and warning students when they are in danger of receiving an “N” determination**

If at any time it appears that a student is at risk of receiving an N determination in any course, the Principal must:
1. Warn the student as soon as possible, providing the opportunity for the student to correct the problem.
2. Advise the parent or guardian in writing.
3. Request from the student and parent / guardian a written acknowledgement of the warning.
4. Retain all copies of relevant documentation.

Students may be at risk of receiving an “N” Determination if they do not satisfactorily complete a School Certificate Course. To satisfactorily complete a School Certificate Course a student must:
1. Follow the course developed or endorsed by the Board.
2. Apply himself / herself with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school.
3. Achieve some or all of the outcomes of the course.

(See Appendix 4 for Warning Letter-Unsatisfactory Completion of a School Certificate Course)

**Student Appeals**
Students may appeal the following decisions:
1. “N” Determinations in particular courses.
2. Grades.
3. Principal’s determinations of unsatisfactory completion of course(s). Attempts will be made to resolve appeals within the school as simply and informally as possible. Where the appeal cannot be resolved, the student can appeal to the Board of Studies.

**Special Provisions**

Any special provisions that are necessary for students with special needs, will be organised by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator. This will be done in consultation with the Special Education staff.

**15. Special Education**

Companion High School aims to form a real Christian Community which promotes growth based on Gospel Values. Through our vision statement (1999) ‘we hope to build a community which is Christ centred, practices forgiveness, understanding and is actively accepting of others’. We also aim to ‘promote a balanced curriculum through which varying needs and abilities are nurtured’.

The School recognises that students learn at different rates and in different styles. It also recognises that some students require greater levels of support and different curriculum options if they are to achieve their potential in all areas of school life.

The School understands that the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom requires the provision of adequate and effective support services. Such support services should be available for the students, their families, the staff and members of the wider school community.

The Companion Community is committed to providing a wide range of learning opportunities which maximise the chances of success for all students and to the establishment of effective learning principles and strategies in all curriculum areas. It is hoped that a Special Needs Team be established in the future.

Companion High School is an inclusive school, where all school staff: subject / class teachers, special education teachers and assistants, other specialist teachers, itinerant teachers, the Principal, Executive and the Special Needs Team have significant roles to play in supporting students with special needs. Additionally, parents, peers and the students themselves have much to contribute. Involvement of all these people provides a range of valuable perspectives and expertise which will assist greatly with educational planning and the implementation of support strategies.

**16. Homework Policy**

Homework is an extension of classroom learning opportunities which reinforce, support and enrich learning at school.
Examples of homework which may be given:
- Collection of materials such as newspaper articles or magazines advertisements
- Completing worksheets
- Responding to questions set in class time
- Reading
- Refining artwork
- Assignment work
- Other tasks which reinforce daily work

Students will be expected to complete homework on a regular basis. Homework will be allocated regularly in each Key Learning Area and parents are encouraged to monitor the completion of homework by their child. Homework is to be recorded in the student’s school diary.

**Failure and / or Inability to Complete Homework**

Teachers should either write in the student’s diary or notify the parents via the school’s “Homework” note, when a child fails to satisfactorily complete a homework task. It is reasonable to expect that parents respond regarding their child’s failure or inability to complete the homework. The student should complete the task, or if not practicable, an alternate task within an agreed timeframe.

Should a pattern emerge where a student fails to complete homework without a satisfactory reason, then the teacher should place the student on an afternoon catch up session at a mutually convenient time for the teacher and the student’s parents. A note should be sent home to parents to notify them of the session. A copy of this note needs to be given to the Home Group Teacher for their records.

17. The Library

**Hours of opening:**
The library is open every day, all day, from 8.30 each morning.
The Library is available to students for private study after school.
During class times, the library is available for private study and class research.

**Procedure for using the library:**
Classes can be booked into the library using the booking sheet located at the entry to the library. Generally, it is appreciated if you let the teacher librarian know if you will need the services of the Teacher Librarian during your lesson. A copy of the assignment task makes helping students much more effective. If you wish the teacher librarians to source your assignment task, notice must be given in advance.

Up to five students may come from class with a note. Students will be asked to sign the book at the desk to indicate their safe arrival, and show the teacher on duty their work task. It is necessary to check the booking sheet to ensure that there is space for private
research, and to let the teacher librarian know before the lesson if direct supervision or resourcing of a task will be necessary.

**Borrowing:**

Students can borrow up to 4 items at one time, either fiction or non-fiction. Normal borrowing is for 14 days. Reference books and periodicals are not available for loan; audiocassettes are available for 3-day loans.

Staff has no limit on their borrowing needs. Resources are generally catalogued for 14-day loans, and prompt return of the resource is appreciated. Departmental resources catalogued in the Library and returned to staff are lent for a year.

**Text Book Issue:**

Text books (Class sets) are catalogued from the Library. They are set for a yearly loan. This means that a text can be issued for the entire year or part thereof. Books are generally stored in classroom storerooms, and can be issued, and returned, to the students from the library.

Teachers need to organise a convenient period with the library staff to issue, or return a class set of texts.

**Other Services for students (and staff):**

These services are offered to the students, and repeated here for your information, so that you know what students can access.

The library is able to offer these other services to help students:

- **Photocopying,** using the library ID card costs 10 cents per sheet. The card may be revalued for any amount of money, at any time from the library revaluator. (Staff need to ask the library staff to credit their library card for single copy copying)

- We are able to **laminate** pictures and documents, up to A3 size. Costs to students are $1.00 for A4, 50 cents for smaller than half A4, and $2.00 for A3. (Staff may book laminating jobs with the library staff, or use the laminator as needed.)

- The **computers** and **Internet** are available at all times from the library for library research purposes. At lunchtime, the Internet can be booked for research, by showing a copy of the assignment task to the teacher on duty at the time of booking. **Printing** from the computers is also possible, at 10 cents per copy.

- **Computer discs** (for students!) may be bought from the circulation desk for $1.00 each.

- We have **Inter library** arrangements with some of the surrounding school and local libraries to obtain photocopies of articles you may require from periodicals.

- **Book Club** is managed from the Library (about once each term).

- BUT the most important service of all is we are always on hand to help you with any research tasks and questions you may have.
**Library rules and policy:** *(student information)*

In our small library we need some rules to ensure that everyone can have maximum benefit and enjoyment.

- Bags, hats, food and drinks must be left outside the library at all times.
- No running or noisy, disturbing behaviour is allowed.
- The circulation desk and workroom areas are out of bounds to students. Please do not walk through, or stand behind the circulation desk.

**Library Computer rules:**

You may not:

- Alter any settings on the computers,
- Install any software onto the computers,
- Use any disk from home to retrieve files without checking it first with the teacher,
- Save files to disk or hard drive without permission,
- Run any software on the computer other than that provided by the school,
- Play games on the computer.
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This section on CURRICULUM has not been included as it repeats the information in Appendix 9
Companion High School
OUR SHARED VISION

We hope to create a reflective, prayerful and accepting environment.

We hope to build a community which is Christ centred, practices forgiveness, understanding and actively accepting of others.

We welcome the possibility that we will be challenged in our beliefs, because we want our students to be critical thinkers with informed consciences.

We are committed to making our school a centre of learning and excellence, which provides a kaleidoscope of opportunities for all.

We aim to create a community of learners who will be technologically comfortable, flexible, adaptable and well informed about local and global issues.

We will foster in our students a strong belief in themselves as well as the ability to think logically, critically and independently.

We aim to provide a balanced curriculum through which varying needs and abilities will be nurtured.

We aim to create an educational climate which is purposeful and where common goals are pursued.

We will encourage staff, parents and students to view failure as an opportunity for growth and renewal.
Staff Directory

The names have been removed to protect the anonymity of participants
Role Descriptions

Principal

Within the Diocese, the Principal’s role is identified from four perspectives:

- Religious Leadership
- Community Leadership
- Educational Leadership
- Administrative Leadership

As a Religious Leader, the Principal is expected
- To exercise spiritual and prophetic leadership which is grounded in Catholic faith and personal example
- To foster a collaborative environment which promotes the development of Christian community within the Catholic tradition
- To give priority to faith education and to the expression of that faith in service, community, prayer, ritual and celebration of the Word
- To ensure the provision of quality religious education through the diocesan programs
- To establish policies and practices which create a climate of care for students, reflecting in particular the gospel values of reconciliation and hope
- To recognise parents as prime educators of their children and to involve them in the total life of the school
- To enable the development of a school community characterised by a distinctive Catholic Identity

As Educational Leader, the Principal is expected
- To promote the school as a centre of learning, striving towards excellence in all areas
- To establish effective learning and teaching practices
- To lead the school community in development and review process

As Community Leader, the Principal is expected
- To collaborate with the pastor and parish community so that the school is identified within the local church community
- To promote within the school community a sense of belonging to the diocese
- To work cooperatively with educational agencies and the broader community

As Administrative Leader, the Principal is expected
- To establish appropriate organisational, communication and administrative procedures which satisfy requirement of the Diocesan Schools Board, diocesan system policies and relevant government Acts
Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal will:

• Be a collegial and informed support to the Principal both practically and emotionally in the effective and efficient management of the school
• Assist the staff and the Principal in developing quality teaching and Learning Practices and ongoing professional development of staff
• Assist the Principal and the School Leadership in the development of strategic planning and vision statements
• Act in the place or for the Principal in her absence
• Be responsible for the day to day management of the school in terms of
  - student conduct
  - hiring appropriate relief staff
  - ensuring that the plant and maintenance of the school is maintained
  - developing school rosters regarding playground, buses etc are established and maintained
• Assist the Principal in the selection of staff and their ongoing induction into the school community
• Have a sound understanding of Diocesan and Board of Studies Policies
• Maintain effective communication between staff, students, parents and the Pastor of the Companion community
• Contribute to the College’s spiritual and religious development by being a witness to Catholic Faith values
• Oversee the establishment of the College’s timetable in consultation with the Principal and the executive
• Help maintain a positive support role in the pastoral development of staff and students
• Assist in the financial planning and budgeting of school resources
• Assist in the organisation of whole school activities such as, ceremonies, parent / teacher interviews, School camps and social functions
Religious Education Coordinator

The Coordinator of Religious Education will:

- Involve pastors, teachers and parents in the development and ongoing evaluation of the Religious Education Program
- Communicate the Religious Education Program to the school community
- Involve pastors, teachers and parents in school celebrations
- Liaise with pastors, teachers and parents in the development of Sacramental programs where appropriate
- Encourage the involvement of students in their local parish and the wider community
- Assist the Principal in liaising with pastors re liturgical planning and celebration
- Coordinate whole school liturgies and prayer assemblies
- Assist the Principal in developing a school prayer policy
- Act as a resource person for school prayer
- Assist teachers in their preparation of liturgy
- Coordinate the celebration of liturgical seasons, major feasts and events
- Coordinate the school retreat program
- Ensure that the Religious Education Program is developed in accordance with the Diocesan Religious Curriculum K – 12
- Coordinate the development of the Religious Education Program
- Ensure that the Religious Education Program is based on the Gospel of Christ the Lord in whom the entire revelation of God is summed up
- Ensure that the languages of the faith form the basis of the teaching / learning process
- Assist teachers to implement the Religious Education Program at the classroom level
- Assist teachers in the development of units of work for each year program
- Assist teachers in the development of Sacramental Programs
- Regularly evaluate the Religious Education Program with staff
- Be responsible for the development, implementation and review of program registers
- Develop, with staff, appropriate assessment and reporting procedures
- Provide special care and assistance to beginning teachers and teachers with no formal Religious Education qualifications
- Regularly review classroom programs and registers
- Assist teachers in developing meaningful and effective teaching / learning strategies in the classroom teaching of Religious Education
• Inform Religious Education teachers of appropriate in-services and provide opportunities for them to attend
• Ensure a forum for the dissemination of information gained through Religious Education In-service
• Facilitate demonstration lessons and team sharing
• Encourage teachers to study Religious Education at a tertiary level
• Arrange school based Religious Education in-service
• Organise Religious Education staff development days in consultation with the school Principal and CEO personnel
• Inform staff of current understanding and developments in Religious Education, Church teaching and Church documents
• Coordinate the use of resources
• Assess the suitability of existing resources
• Manage the allocated budget for Religious Education
• Purchase new resources
• Ensure that Religious Education resources are readily available to classroom teachers
• Facilitate the availability and use of Religious Education resources and personnel outside the school
Curriculum Coordinator

The Curriculum Coordinator will:

• Act as the Principal’s representative on school curriculum teams.
• Co-ordinate assessment and reporting procedures Years 7-12.
• Promote quality teaching and learning by modeling good classroom teaching practice.
• Co-ordinate the school’s professional development programs.
• Collaborate in the reflection, induction, development and ongoing performance review of staff.
• Keep up to date with the current developments in the Teaching & Learning process through professional reading and in-service.
• Encourage the development and maintenance of a school environment, which is conducive to learning.
• Facilitate opportunities for the professional development of staff.
• Co-ordinate curriculum registration and evaluation throughout the school in conjunction with the Teaching & Learning co-ordinators.
• Co-ordinate the curriculum initiatives and curriculum development throughout out the school.
• Liaise with the parent body regarding curriculum development within the school.
• Is a resource person for staff on issues related to effective Teaching & Learning strategies.
• Co-ordinate the process of subject selection in Year 8 and Year 10.
• Co-ordinate the production of school handbooks related to the curriculum.
• Assist with the parent/staff information evening as they relate to curriculum issues.
• Liaise with the Assistant Principal to assist in producing the school’s timetable.
• Disseminate information from the Board of Studies to the school community.
• Assist with the Teaching & Learning co-ordinators with the supervision of teaching staff.
• Liaise with the pastoral teams / pastoral co-ordinator on matters of student welfare as they relate to classroom and curriculum issues.
• Develop initial policies as they relate to all curriculum matters. Policies will be evaluated and reviewed at different times during the school.
• Facilitate the incorporation of the school’s pedagogical philosophies into programming and classroom practices.
• Co-ordinate student entries for Higher School Certificate, Preliminary and School
Certificate.

- Co-ordinate Curriculum issues as they relate to Years 10 and 12.
- Co-ordinate JSSTAFE courses.
- Co-ordinate Vocational Educational courses, their resourcing and teacher training.
- Develop examination policy and procedures and timetables as they are required and to publish those for the information of staff and the student body.
- Produce and publish Preliminary and Higher School Certificate Assessment Calendars for staff and the student body.
- Assist with the organisation and preparation of the Academic Award ceremonies for both the junior and senior schools.
- Ensure that the requirements of the School Certificate, Preliminary Year and Higher School Certificate Year are known to the school community.
Information Technology Coordinator

The Information Technology Coordinator will:

- Assist, encourage, work with and advise students in the use of learning technologies
- Be a contact point for students in the area of technology in the school
- Provide opportunities for students to develop and extend their skills in their use of learning technologies through the provision of extension activities
- Oversee the student technology team and work with them as they become an effective team to solve computer problems
- Inform students of news and items of interest that relate to the school’s vision of integrated technology
- Provide advice to the School Executive in the area of hardware and software acquisition and implementation
- Participate in and oversee the writing and implementation of school policy and guidelines that relate to the technology and its implementation into the curriculum
- Provide assistance and expertise to the Curriculum Coordinator and Teaching and Learning Coordinators in the use of learning technologies and their integration into the school’s curriculum
- Facilitate the professional development of staff in the area of learning technologies through the provision of staff workshops and training sessions
- Provide an awareness to the staff about professional development opportunities as provided by external organisations
- Assist staff with the acquisition of skills that are necessary to effectively utilise learning technologies in the classroom
- Monitor the acquisition of skills by individual staff members in the area of learning technologies
- Raise the awareness among the school community about the resources available in regard to and provide through learning technologies
- Model the use of learning technologies within the classroom
- Model responsible and ethical use of technology
- Assist staff in the implementation of strategies which enhance the use of learning technologies in the classroom
- Team teach and provide a supportive service for staff and students in the classroom
- Provide advice and feedback to parents regarding the integration of learning technologies in the curriculum
- Encourage parents in their use and acceptance of technology
- Inform parents of news and items of interest that relate to the school’s vision of integrated technology
• Provide a contact point in the School for the Cluster Support Officer and the Learning Technologies Group of the CEO

• Liaise between the school, the Cluster Support Officer and the Learning Technologies Group of the CEO

• Liaise between computer hardware and software suppliers

• Liaise between staff and students with the writing of guidelines, policies and units of work

• Liaise between the school and the ISP to oversee the email facility

• Effectively administer the school’s Novell Network

• Provide information to the Cluster Support Officer and the Learning Technologies Group of the CEO concerning the status of the school’s network

• Create and administer staff, student and guest accounts on the school’s Novell Network

• Maintain the security and privacy of data on the school’s Novell Network

• Ensure the security of data located on the school’s file servers

• Ensure that the school’s network is backed up regularly

• Maintain the currency of software licenses throughout the school

• Ensure that computers, both laptop and desktop, are in full working order and loaded with legally purchased software

• Maintain the currency of antivirus software throughout the whole school

• Maintain the currency of material located on the school’s intranet

• Maintain a registry of the school’s technology and take steps to repair damaged or malfunctioning hardware
Pastoral Care Coordinator

The Pastoral Care Coordinator will:

- Actively promote and be witness to an atmosphere of student care.
- Be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation, of an integrated Pastoral Care program.
- Develop, implement and evaluate small group and individual Pastoral Care initiatives.
- Co-ordinate home group support for home group teachers.
- Foster a team approach to caring for the needs of students.
- Be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the Pastoral Care policy and procedures.
- Gather resources and disseminate information and support for homegroup teachers in student management
- Link parents, students and staff for matters concerning Pastoral Care.
- Work with Principal, Assistant Principal and Counselor in difficult situations.
- Liaise with community and referral agencies.
- Develop an induction and orientation program for the new students.
- Develop the induction and orientation program for Year 6 students into Year 7.
- Develop, implement and evaluate a Year 7 – 12 leadership program – convenor SRC
- Develop, Implement and evaluate a mentor program.
- Co-ordinate the transition process – Year 10 into Year 11 and Year 11 and beyond Year 12.
- Assist in the induction of new and beginning teachers.
Teaching and Learning Coordinator

The role of the Teaching and Learning Coordinator focuses on the organisation and administration of one or more of the areas of study within the curriculum.

Specific responsibilities would include:

- To coordinate the development of courses which meet the needs of the students in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate syllabus and the philosophy of the college.

- To supervise the preparation and implementation of programs, policies and procedures. Examples of this include registration, resource organisation, homework, bookwork, and assignments and library usage. This may involve delegation and supervision of other staff members in the KLA.

- Holding regular meetings within the KLA, which foster a team approach, to policy formation and decision making.

- Attending meetings as representative of the KLA where required by the Curriculum Coordinator.

- Coordination of activities and events within the curriculum (e.g. Excursions) and outside of the curriculum (e.g. Choir) which support learning within the KLA. At the beginning of each year, Teaching and Learning Coordinators will set the extra – curricular activities and events they will be coordinating in that academic year.

- Providing assistance to teachers in terms of obtaining effective methods, materials and resources for the purpose of more effective teaching. This may include classroom management and teaching strategies, educational initiatives, expected learning outcomes and specifics particular to the area of study within the KLA.

- Providing support and assistance to fellow coordinators.

- Monitoring professional development of individual teaching staff. Encouraging involvement at appropriate in-services, post graduate courses and network meetings.

- Establish and maintain record keeping.
**Homegroup Teacher**

The Homegroup teacher will:

- establish positive relationships with all members of the group
- establish links with parents
- encourage links between various year groups
- accurately maintain and monitor the homegroup roll
- will be the initial point of contact for student, staff and parents
- maintain records of student progress and behaviour
- monitor student’s progress – academic and pastoral
- keep staff informed about the student
- be responsible for daily administrative tasks e.g. collection of sport money
- formulate a management plan for students where necessary
- monitor school procedures e.g. uniform
- be instrumental in the Student Conference process
- be responsible for the final collation of reports
Special Education Teacher

The Special Education teacher will:

- Work collaboratively with all members of the School Community to develop programs, modify curriculum, develop appropriate assessment strategies, identify resources and implement effective strategies to create learning and social opportunities for students with special needs
- Encourage and promote an inclusive school and classroom philosophy
- Assist students to access Special Provisions and Credentialing for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate and other school examinations
- Collaboratively plan and prepare students with special needs for transition
- Assist with the development and implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Provide specialist teaching to students on a one to one basis or group basis as appropriate
- Assess students’ skills and abilities and literacy levels and assist subject teachers to monitor and evaluate student progress
- Facilitate referral and assessment procedures with CEO Special Education Division members, after consultation with the Principal, teachers and parents
- Liaise with parents in the Special Education program
- Liaise with outside agencies after consultation with the Principal, teachers and parents
- Organise and facilitate the annual Special Education review
- Develop programs for and supervision of the Special Education Teacher Assistant(s)
- Assist the Principal with enrolment procedures and school preparation, particularly for students with special needs
- Assist in the preparation of funding submissions
- Contribute to staff development and parent education programs
Office Administrator & Bursar

Office Administrator

Overall responsibility for management of the School Office.

Bursar:

The overall purpose of this position is to ensure the school’s finances are administered securely and in accordance with sound business practice.

The specific duties include:

• Collection and balancing of
  i) School Fees
  ii) All monies collected
  iii) Petty Cash Accounts.

• Receipting of School Fees
• Payment of accounts
• Preparing Monthly Bank Reconciliations and CEO and DEET returns
• Ordering of materials and equipment
• Supervising Faculty budgets
• Customer contact including interviewing parents claiming hardship or other reasons for fee relief
• Maintaining the Oasis system
• Maintaining the Assets register
• Typing / Word Processing.
Administration Staff

The purpose of this position is to be:

- Responsible for all typing as required
- Responsible for printing / photocopying for teaching staff
- Responsible for the overall regular maintenance of the print room and its equipment
- Assist in the set up of demonstrations and practical periods for the Technology and Applied Studies KLA.
- Responsible for First Aid Officer and the purchase of equipment
Grounds person & Maintenance

- He or she will be responsible for the upkeep of the school grounds and facilities and be responsible to the Principal.

- The allocation of tasks and duties will be determined by the Assistant Principal. Any difficulties or problems should be referred back to the Assistant Principal.

- In 1999 the hours are for 22 hours per fortnight to be negotiated by mutual agreement with the Assistant Principal. Annual Holidays of 4 weeks will be taken in school vacation periods after consultation with the Assistant Principal.

- The person will be attired in suitable clothing for the type of work needing completion both indoor and outdoor. Punctuality and personal communication skills will be essential when dealing with the staff and students.

- The grounds person will report, arrange and supervise any work needing outside tradespersons in consultation with the Assistant Principal.

Specific duties will include
- Where possible the Grounds person will complete handy person tasks that are within his/her range of skills.
- Ensuring that the visitor and student entry areas are well maintained.
- Maintain and develop gardens
- Generally maintain the grounds so that they are safe and usable for students
- Some general lifting and movement of equipment may be involved

- From time to time the duties, work practices, hours of employment and performance of the Grounds person will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal
The Library Assistant is responsible for undertaking a range of duties involved in the daily running of the school library and the provision of services to teachers and students. These duties will include:

- **Circulation Desk**: processing of all loans, returns and special reserve needs.

- **Shelving**: shelving of resources and maintaining tidy library areas where the need arises.

- **Reference Enquiries**: assist staff and students with general research and reference enquiries and in the use of library catalogues, CD ROMs, internet, audio visual equipment and the applicable areas of the library where the required information may be located.

- **Photocopier**: Assist staff and students in the use of the photocopier. Maintain the photocopier by ensuring sufficient paper, toner and change is readily available.

- **Processing**: process all resources and ensure that all items are fully labeled, secured and covered before displaying on the shelves.

- **Teacher Assistance**: assist the Teacher Librarian with classes. Assist staff with classes by helping students find resources and provide help with computers and equipment. Maintain the operation of the library when the Teacher Librarian is teaching or absent from the library. Assist with supervision of students during recess and lunchtime.
Principal’s Secretary and Enrolment Officer

The overall purpose of this role is to support the Principal in all aspects of her position, this includes time organisation, privacy and confidentiality.

The various tasks associated with the role may include:

- Dealing with significant requirements of staff, parents, students and visitors
- Word processing / typing
- Data entry and basic computer operation
- Reception/switchboard
- Admissions registrars
- Enrolment procedures
- Issues of Transport passes
- Maintenance of pupil record cards and registers
- Mailing
- Newsletter
- Checking on absentees and maintenance of absentees in Oasis
Secondary Student Support Officer

The Secondary Student Support Officer (SSSO) will:

- Foster family values and the Catholic ethos of the school in working with staff, students and their families
- Work with the Principal, Executive and Administration personnel as part of the pastoral network within the school
- Advise the Principal on matters and issues pertaining to the welfare of the school community
- Support and contribute to the development of community within the school
- Work as a member of the school’s Critical Incident Management team
- Promote and uphold all legislative requirements and diocesan policies
- Contribute to the Special Needs Committee, case conferences and meetings when required
- Undertake other duties as requested by the Principal
- Provide a professional counseling service to students in the school
- Contribute to the development and implementation of educational programs and social skills training
- Consult with the person making the referral to the Secondary Student Support Officer in order to assess and determine the appropriate approach and/or intervention
- Provide feedback to relevant personnel and parents as appropriate
- Refer students in consultation with the Principal and relevant staff members to the Marist Education Centre and other agencies when appropriate
- Contribute to the development and implementation of parent education programs within the school
- Assist parents to locate appropriate counseling and support services
- Contribute to staff development and an awareness of student welfare issues within the school
- Assist staff if requested to locate appropriate counseling and support services for their own personal and professional needs
- Develop and maintain a positive network and working relationship with local welfare agency personnel and health professionals
- Provide a liaison link between agencies, other welfare services, school, families and students
- Refer to and consult with agencies as required
- Maintain professional skills through activities such as reading, professional development, study and clinical supervision.
Pastoral Care Policy

Pastoral Care at Companion High School emanates from several intrinsic beliefs about our role as educators:

- we strive to draw the best from our students, always seeking to extend and challenge
- our focus is always the positive qualities and strengths of each individual in our community
- it reflects the Christian ethos that we “are created in the image of God and transformed by Christ”.

Like Companion, our patron, we set out to make a difference in our lives and in the lives of others. Companion was courageous, a risk taken and a man of action. In relating to our students and to one another we model these qualities. In our Pastoral Care policy we place central importance on the values of reflection, conversation and forgiveness.

St Companion is the patron saint of missionaries. Although each one of us is not expected to be missionaries in the way that Companion was, we can emulate Companion by simply touching others with Christ’s love, by acting in His name and reaching out and living as Christ showed us.

Pastoral Care is an expression of the vision of Companion High School. It

- is experienced whenever people of the school community integrate creatively to make positive choices about life.
- is a comprehensive concept, a partnership that embraces the whole life of the school.
- focuses on growth, potential and relationships
- is reflected in everything we do

Pastoral Care at Companion High School is:

- an expression of our school community (staff, students, parents) in caring for one another
- the integration of the academic, social, religious dimensions of our schools curriculum so that an atmosphere of care pervades the whole school culture.
- the holistic development of each person in the Companion community
- a summation of Companion’s vision to educate holistically
• facilitating learning with an environment of care
• integral feature of good learning and teaching
• responds to needs of people in the school community

Pastoral Care is not
• something extra added to the school curriculum
• teaching a series of topics on Personal Development
• a separate subject
• counseling or guidance service
• separate from teaching and learning

The key principles which guide our approach to Pastoral Care are:
• everyone in the school is involved in Pastoral Care. It is the responsibility of the whole school
• it is characterised by a sense of love, kindness and celebration of living – it is not problem centred
• each student needs to belong to a small group, that is, Homegroup
• it is integral to teaching and learning
• it relies on a network of relationships
• it reflects a culture of care in the school at all levels – staff and students
• respects individual’s rights and freedom
• incorporates a variety of approaches and strategies to cater for students “who don’t fit’
• responds to students needs supportive and caring environment
  self esteem
  self discipline
  effective learning
  social relationships
  career guidance
  family breakdowns
  purpose in life
Homegroup Teacher Routines & Procedures

Homegroup commences each morning at 8.30 am.

1. Students are to line up outside and wait for the teacher.
2. Late students must report to the office after 8.30 am.
3. Prayer should be the start and finish to the day. It may be teacher or student lead.
4. The roll is to be called morning and afternoon each day. The roll is to be filled in as per the guidelines at the front of the roll book. The roll must be a priority.
5. Read out Daily Announcement sheet.
6. Record and collect sport money on Thursday.
7. Distribute newsletters, notes etc.
8. Each day students should leave the homegroup classroom neat and tidy.
9. At the end of each day homegroup classes should clean and tidy their room and attend to the outside bins closest their homegroup classroom.
10. Lock up the homeroom at the end of the day.
11. Homegroup Teachers are responsible for parental contact concerning pastoral issues such as behaviour, uniform and class work. They are to be the first point of reference in the pastoral system and must work with their students on all aspects of school community life.
Communication

Good communication is as essential for good administration as it is to building good relationships. The following methods will be used throughout the year.

• **Publications – In house**
  - Principal’s weekly letter
  - Assistant Principal’s Weekly Bulletin
  - Curriculum Coordinator’s Memo
  - Daily student notices, staff will need to write any messages before 8.15 am and then they will be printed for homegroup.

• **Daily Staff Notice Board** - The whiteboard in the staff common room is used to inform staff of specific messages.

• **School Newsletter** - every second Monday, distributed to parents via students and also to teachers.

• **Meetings**
  
  **Briefing & Prayer**
  Will take place each Monday and Wednesday. Staff will be asked to participate in a roster for prayer at each briefing. Briefing is for whole school administration and general affirmation.

  **Professional Development Afternoons**
  Scheduled for Monday afternoons. The emphasis of these meetings is professional development and will encompass the areas of Curriculum and Pastoral care. For more details regarding specific topics see the Term Calendar. All staff are encouraged to become actively involved in the facilitation of these meetings.

  **Teaching & Learning KLA meetings**
  Are scheduled on an optional (at the discretion of the Coordinator) rotational basis either on a Thursday or Friday from 8.00 - 8.30 am. See Term Calendar for specific dates. These meetings will be facilitated at a KLA level.

  **Teaching & Learning Coordinators Meetings**
  Scheduled as an after school meeting once a month, please refer to Term Calendar for specific dates.

  **Teaching Teams Meetings**
  The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate communication between core teaching teams, the emphasis of these meetings should be both curriculum and pastoral care issues. Scheduled on a Tuesday from 8.00 - 8.30 am. See Term Calendar for specific dates.
- Twilight Meetings
Only scheduled when there is an essential need. Advanced warning of a proposed date will be given. Usually will run to about 7 pm.
Emergency Procedures for Staff

- Inform Principal, Assistant Principal or REC of the nature of the emergency.

- Lisa to account for all Admin staff and collect school rolls.

- All Admin staff assembles at Grassed area between the primary school & Companion High School.

- REC & Assistant Principal to check that all buildings are vacated and if safe to do so close any doors or windows left open.

- Homegroup teachers meet their students and carry out a roll call.

- Homegroup teachers report to Lisa regarding absentees and roll call head count.

- Pam to contact relevant emergency services.

- Lisa reports to Principal or Assistant principal the results of all roll checks.
The School Day

The school day is broken up into a 4 period day (approximately 75 minutes each) with a 10 day cycle (Week A and Week B).

There will be no bells between classes. Music will be played to indicate movement back to class. This system can only succeed if staff and students are punctual to class.

There will be staff briefing and prayer every Monday and Wednesday morning from 8.10 – 8.30 am.

Monday after school meetings will be dedicated to professional development, involving aspects of the total curriculum and pastoral care. Please do not schedule any other events until after 4.15 pm. These meetings will run from 3.00 – 4.15 pm.

A school assembly period is timetabled for Thursday of Week A.

School Security

Access

All staff will have access to the school at any time. Each staff member will receive a staff key, which will give access to the school gates and the staff building and administration building. They will also be given a key, which accesses the security screen door. Staff must use their personal security code to access the security system and turn off the alarm to the relevant room. All these procedures are under the care of the Assistant Principal.

If you are unsure of the how, what or where please see the AP.

Locking up of classrooms

All staff are responsible for locking their own rooms each day. In the event of a teacher having to leave early then he/she should ensure the staff member responsible for their block, locks their door. A check will be made but this is a backup and should not be relied upon to provide security for your room.

Staff Duties and Responsibilities

• First Aid

If a student needs first aid treatment there are some key questions and priorities to be considered. Please refer to the appendix titled Accident Management Procedure.
• **Playground supervision**

Supervision of the students in the playground prior to the start of school will commence at 8:15 am. Staff are to move around the entire school area.

The first break supervision is only a toilet break and a chance to stretch the legs. All staff on this supervision will be teaching in period 1 and need to monitor student movements and then move them to class for the next period.

There will be three staff on duty at recess and lunch. One staff member will supervise the Technics / Creative Arts overlapping into the covered courtyard. A second will cover the Science / Food Tech. Courtyard overlapping into the covered courtyard and canteen. It is hoped to have a grassed playground space available in 2000 this area will be supervised by the third staff member on supervision. These routines may change but the main concept will be 3 on duty at the recess and lunch breaks. If the teacher on duty has any concerns they should send a student to the office for the Assistant Principal or another teacher to assist them.

Please read the appendix on Duty of Care in the handbook.

Supervision in the playground is to be active. It involves making sure the students are safe at all times as well as ensuring the yard is clean and free of rubbish. Please ask all students to pick up any rubbish, which is near them. Avoid where possible becoming involved in protracted conversations which limit your supervision responsibilities.

• **Staff Absence**

If you are ill or have an emergency please feel free to contact the Glenn (AP) at any time.

My home phone number is 02 45 725872. I often have the school mobile and can be contacted on 0408640419. My own mobile number is 0142043625. The answering machine at school on 02 47 293209 or fax 47 293291 can be used as a last resort.

Planned absence in advance must be passed on to the Assistant Principal. This ensures it is placed in the diary for the given day. **Please do not leave post it notes or mention it by conversation alone, a form for this purpose is located in the staff room.**

Have work set via use of the form marked by the same name. Copies of this are located in the staff room with other stationery. Replacement lessons forms are also located in the staff room and must be filled in with the appropriate work.

Leave of a personal nature should be approved by the Principal.
• **Staff dress code**
  
  Staff are requested to be attired in a professional manner in accordance with the expectations of the community for a teacher. Staff are requested not to wear jeans or shorts on normal school days, while male staff are asked to wear ties when the male students also wear ties. Teachers in practical subjects should wear ties to school and remove them when needed. PDHPE staff should wear clothes of a practical yet professional nature when involved in practical lessons.

• **Tea, Coffee and Social Club**
  
  For the duration of 1999 the School will subsidise the cost of tea, coffee and milk, as well as morning teas and gifts for engagements, births etc. Staff are requested to pay $10 per term towards these costs. As the staff numbers increase this method will be reviewed. Payment for this will be made to the Principal’s Secretary, Wendy Snell.

• **Photocopying and Typing**
  
  The technology is in place for the staff to print directly to our digital copier and printer from laptop computers connected to the network. This means that class sets may be printed in this manner **after 11 am each day**.

  Class sets can also be handed to Kath Williamson for printing with a 24 hour turnaround. Typing can also be submitted with the return dependent on workloads.

  Emergency typing must go through the Office Administrator, Lisa.

**Visitors to the School**

The school is very open in terms of access to the general public who may come down the drive. They are not readily observable. If you encounter anyone on the property please ask if you can help them and if they have been to the office. If they have not escort them to the office.

This is a protective measure for the safety of students and property. Obvious trespassers should be asked to leave and if needed contact the Assistant Principal or senior staff member for assistance.

**Our Students**

**Responsibilities and Expectations of Students**

• Access to teachers at lunch and recess

  Students in normal circumstances will not have access to teachers in the staff room at recess or the first half of lunch. There is no communication system into the staff room for the administration staff to contact teachers. Please make specific arrangements to meet students outside or away from the Student Office area.
• **Evacuation Procedures for Students**
  In case of fire or an emergency evacuation, all students must follow these instructions.
  Leave everything behind take nothing with you.
  Close all windows and doors when you exit.
  Walk calmly and quickly don’t run or push others.
  Use the pathway to the grass area between Companion High School and Corpus Christi School.
  Assemble with your homegroup teacher and stay with them.

  **If fire blocks the path next to TE1 then exit by the school road and assemble up at the Companion High School Visitors Car park. Wait there for your teacher.**

• **Homework**
  Homework is an extension of classroom learning opportunities which reinforce, support and enrich learning at school.

  Students will be expected to complete homework on a regular basis. Homework will be allocated regularly in each Key Learning Area and parents are encouraged to monitor the completion of homework by their child. Homework is to be recorded in the student’s school diary.

  Teachers should either write in the student’s diary or notify the parents via the school’s “Homework” note, when a child fails to satisfactorily complete a homework task. It is reasonable to expect that parents respond regarding their child’s failure or inability to complete the homework. The student should complete the task, or if not practicable, an alternate task within an agreed timeframe.

• **Learning**
  Students are expected to participate fully in all class activities to the best of their ability. Failure to be active participants in their learning should result in the classroom teacher consulting with the homegroup teacher to firstly inform them of the issue and to also find out whether there may be circumstances surrounding the child. Parents should be contacted if it is an ongoing issue. This may be done by letter or a phone call.

• **Late Arrival to School**
  Students should report to the front office if they arrive after 8.30 am. They are expected to supply a note to explain their lateness. The administrative staff will sign each late child’s diary.

• **Late Arrival to Class**
  Homegroup Teachers and Classroom Teachers are encouraged to check the student’s diary if they have just arrived at school to ensure the student has signed in. Other late
arrivals to class should be accompanied by a note from a teacher.

- **Sickbay**

  A student must seek the teacher’s approval to attend sickbay. In general please send another student to accompany the sick student. A record of students at sick bay will be kept by the administrative staff, including nature of illness, time in and time out. A note will be given will be given to students by admin staff when the student is returning to class.

- **Student Diary Use**

  Students are to be encouraged to use their diaries to maintain an accurate record of their work. Both classroom teachers and homegroup teachers should promote the use of the student diary and regularly check to see if students are using it. Teachers can communicate to parents via the student diary.

- **Student Sickness or Leave Absence from School**

  If a student is ill or taking a short leave of absence parents have been asked to phone the school and inform the administration staff. This information is then marked on individual rolls.

  After rolls have been marked the administration staff call home to find out the whereabouts of each student absent, this information is then marked on individual rolls.

  Upon returning to school a student should supply their homegroup teacher with a note explaining the absence.

- **Medication**

  All medication has to be approved and dispensed by Wendy Snell.

- **Uniform**

  **Hair** – for girls it should be of a natural colour and be kept in a neat and tidy manner. Boys hair should be of a uniform length and also of a natural colour without any severe or prominent layering or undercuts.

  Excessively short hair is also not acceptable. The School reserves the right to reject any haircut it deems unacceptable. In severe cases a student may be sent home. But in general a period of mutually agreed time between the parents, student and School would be reached to have the haircut rectified.

  **Jewellery and Makeup**

  **Girls** - only may wear a set of studs or simple earrings to school to be worn only in the lobe of each ear. A simple signet ring and chain (inside the uniform) may be worn. Makeup should not be worn at any time to school, including nail polish.
**Boys** - no earrings of any description are to be worn. A simple signet ring and chain may be worn. Boys are also not allowed to wear makeup.

**Shoes** – Black leather school shoes are to be worn with only a slight heel. Joggers or sport shoes are to be worn only on sport days with the correct sports uniform.

**Non-uniform clothing** – In general only school uniform can be worn. If a special circumstance should occur then a note should be written in the diary and a separate letter sent home if appropriate. On sports days a student should come in their sports uniform. If a part of it is in the wash or unavailable to be worn, then students **must** wear normal uniform and change at school into clothes appropriate for physical activity.

If clarification of the dress code is needed please discuss it with the Assistant Principal.
**ACCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1 INJURIES</th>
<th>LEVEL 2 INJURIES</th>
<th>LEVEL 3 INJURIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Minor injuries</td>
<td>♦ Cuts requiring</td>
<td>♦ Suspected spinal injuries, severe fractures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Injuries not requiring medical treatment.</td>
<td>stitches, eye injuries, teeth.</td>
<td>♦ Loss of consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Injuries, suspected fractures, dislocations, head injuries.</td>
<td>♦ Ambulance required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Medical treatment advised.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED**

| 1. Assess student injury. |
| 2. Send student to clinic. |
| 3. Accident report to be filled in, if required. |

**PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED**

| 1. Assess student injury. |
| 2. Send for qualified person to assess student (if available) |
| 3. Supervising teacher to inform parents of accident. |
| 4. Parents to pick up student if at all possible. If parents can’t attend, their instructions are to be followed. |
| 5. Supervising teacher to make follow-up phone call to family that night. |
| 6. Accident report to be filled in and a copy given to the AP. |
| 7. Level 2 injuries are to be reported to the Principal as soon as she is available. |

| 1. Assess student injury. |
| 2. NEVER move the student. |
| 3. Call off the activity. |
| 4. Send for a qualified person to assess the student. (if available). |
| 5. Phone for an ambulance. |
| 6. Supervising teacher to contact the student’s parents. |
| 7. Supervising teacher or designated staff member to travel to hospital either in ambulance or in own transport. |
| 8. Supervising teacher to remain at hospital with student until the parents arrive. |
| 9. Supervising teacher to make follow-up phone call to family that night. |
| 10. Accident report to be filled in and a copy to AP. |
| 11. Immediate report to the Principal |
COMPANION HIGH SCHOOL STATEMENT

DUTY OF CARE POLICY – DRAFT 1999/2000

1. We must establish with parents a code of behaviour that is based on the well being of all members of the Companion High School Community. The code will be appropriate to the age and maturity of our members, and will be based on the Catholic Gospel Values. This code then is to be clearly explained to the students so that they are fully aware of the Community expectation.

2. Students are to be instructed in the correct use of all equipment and made aware of possible dangers relating to misuse. This should be repeated at regular intervals.

3. Where possible clear labeling of correct use of equipment or acting in a manner which endangers themselves or others, the teacher must intervene.

4. If a teacher observes students misusing equipment or acting in a manner which endangers themselves or others, the teacher must intervene.

5. All practical based subjects are to adopt safe practices in all aspects of their subjects. In particular sporting activities are to be conducted in a manner, which is accordance with rules and competitions appropriate to the age and sex of the students. Staff is cautioned NOT to over extend their level of competence. Students in contact sports must be adequately trained and prepared for the sport, and care of body type and position considered. If possible staff should seek coaching credentials or expert advice.

6. Appropriate supervision of students is required at all times of the school day in accordance with school supervision rosters. In class students are not in normal course of the lessons to be left alone.

7. Any planned school activity or excursion requires diligent supervision by staff for the entire course of the event. Overnight or water activities must have staff with resuscitation and first aid qualifications. (Refer to CEO policy guidelines or discuss with the Assistant Principal).

8. Teachers must maintain appropriate levels of discipline to:
   (a) Prevent students from injuring themselves,
   (b) To prevent them from injuring other pupils or members of the public
9. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL TEACHERS TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM HARM.

The greater risk the more vigilant the supervision. It is our responsibility to see the problem whenever possible to prevent an accident from occurring.

10. Staff who fail in their duty of care risk and the possibility of criminal charges. This having been stated we must remember that accidents CAN, DO AND WILL HAPPEN. GOOD PLANNING AND SUPERVISION WILL LIMIT THIS WE THEREFORE NOT WRAP OURSELVES IN A PROTECTIVE COCOON AND STOP FROM CHALLENGING OUR STUDENTS, PHYSICALLY, EDUCATIONALLY OR SPIRITUALLY.