

2014

How does the foundation staff of a new Catholic coeducation secondary school experience teaching social and emotional learning within school structures and as a regular component of an integrated curriculum?

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Recommended Citation

Hayes-Williams, Kerrie, How does the foundation staff of a new Catholic coeducation secondary school experience teaching social and emotional learning within school structures and as a regular component of an integrated curriculum?, Doctor of Philosophy thesis, School of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wollongong, 2014. <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/4256>

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HOW DOES THE FOUNDATION STAFF OF A NEW CATHOLIC COEDUCATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL
EXPERIENCE TEACHING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING WITHIN SCHOOL STRUCTURES AND AS A
REGULAR COMPONENT OF AN INTEGRATED CURRICULUM?

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

Doctor of Philosophy

In the School of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences in the University of Wollongong

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31 August, 2014

ABSTRACT

The building of new schools in Australia is not an uncommon occurrence, however, there is little research that guides education authorities on 'how' to address the challenges that staff experience as they endeavour to establish, develop and sustain the educational visions, so as not to revert to past practices. In a rapidly changing society, a model of education must equip young people with development of personal characteristics and attitudes to navigate the complexities and challenges of the world in which they live and work. A new school provides a unique opportunity to re-imagine a model of education that meets the needs of learners and teachers in the twenty-first century.

This thesis presents a case study of a new systemic Catholic secondary coeducational school, with a focus on exploring the foundation staff's experiences as they adapt to integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) as a regular component of a cross-curriculum in a new school setting. The purpose of the study is threefold: to document the staff's perspectives and experiences during the establishment and development phase of the school; to investigate the implications of teaching SEL as a cross-curricula innovation; and to add to the research literature on new schools and build on the research on SEL implementation.

Data collection consisted of in-depth interviews with nominated Diocesan staff and the school's foundation staff over a two-and-a-half year period and triangulated with secondary sources namely, school documentation, the researcher's reflections through journal notes and seminal studies on new schools and social and emotional learning. Data analysis occurred through three stages and were compared and contrasted with the available literature on new school or school reform and social and emotional learning.

Results supported earlier research on new schools development and social and emotional learning implementation. There were common experiences, both successful and challenging. Two successes were

the staff's consensus that SEL was an important addition to the Learning and Teaching Framework and the school's organisational structure, the Learning Advisory Program, designed to provide daily opportunities for staff to build relational (SEL) and academic outcomes. However, there were numerous challenges that impacted on the implementation of the school's educational mandate.

The implications of this research indicate that in order for a new school to successfully deliver SEL, the following issues need to be addressed: collective ownership of the school's vision and philosophy; the confidence and capacity of the staff to address SEL in the cross-curricula delivery; the style and level of leadership direction and support for SEL; essential professional development; stressors of new school workloads and the emotional and social adaptation to change and sustainability of the school's initial educational goals. The role of the education authority in the initial planning and the subsequent impact on implementation at the new school was also explored.

This study is another step toward developing a broader understanding of the complexities and drivers of new school development and the implementation of social and emotional learning in a curricula learning and teaching model. It adds to the limited research on new schools in Australia and highlights the issues of SEL implementation if not managed well from the leadership team.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was an incredible journey filled with countless cycles of enthusiasm, exploration, doubt, confusion and uncertainty but overall a privilege to share with many good people. Its completion would not have come to fruition without the generous support of many and it is with pleasure and gratitude that I acknowledge their interest and efforts.

Notably, I would like to express my immense gratitude to my supervisors, Associate Professor Wilma Vialle and Dr. Phil Pearson who are not only quality mentors but also friends. Their academic acumen, diligence, relaxed demeanour, encouragement and humour made for a positive working relationship and the impetus to persevere through many challenges to completion. To you both, my sincerest thanks.

To the Diocesan Education Office, my thanks for support of my research and the opportunity to contribute to new learning in education. To the principal and staff of the new school who participated in the study, I extend my humble thanks for their gift of time and interest, especially when there were so many competing agendas in establishing the school. To my work colleagues, I thank as they provided a rich fertile environment for robust discussions, exploring ideas and their continual support. Of special note is my sincerest thanks to my friend and colleague, Monika who shared this long and turbulent journey with me. Her unquestionable support, care and patience were deeply moving and instrumental in keeping me focused to finish.

To my close friends, whose interest, encouragement and generosity in making sure I was physically, socially and psychologically nurtured, was greatly appreciated and remembered., thank you.

Lastly, my heartfelt thanks to my parents and all my family members whose unwavering support, love, encouragement and belief in me was inspiring and always cherished. With deep gratitude, love and respect, I dedicate this dissertation in honour of my parents, Marj and Jim Male.

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CHAPTER 1 -INTRODUCTION

*The limits of the possible can only be defined by
going beyond them into the impossible.*

Arthur C. Clarke (1917-2008)

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This thesis represents a case study of a new secondary coeducational Catholic school, referred to as Cathedral College¹, in regional New South Wales, Australia during the first two and half years of its formation. Primarily, this study investigates the impact of the macro and micro influences on the foundation staff as they meet the challenge of not only starting a new school but also in the implementation and sustainability of a curriculum innovation. As the researcher was the Education Officer of the Diocesan planning team responsible for the innovation planning, and a friend and colleague of the school's staff, the details of their experiences are identified from the perspective of an insider. This perspective determined the researcher's role as participant observer.

Globally, educationalists continue to debate the relevance of the school curriculum for young people in the twenty-first century. Policy-makers and practitioners have long recognised the need to re-image and re-construct a model of education to engage young people and prepare them for meaningful participation in a rapidly changing society. There is general agreement (Beare, 2006; Caldwood, 2005; Fullan, 2006; Hargreaves, 2003; Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004) that such a model of education must equip young people not only with knowledge and skills but also with essential development of personal characteristics and attitudes to navigate the complexities and challenges of the world in which they live and will ultimately work.

¹ Cathedral College is a pseudonym

² Name withheld to maintain anonymity

The building of a new school offers a unique opportunity for the presiding education authority to re-imagine and re-structure systems and processes that reflect a new model of education that meets the needs of learners and teachers in the twenty-first century. In Australia, over one hundred new schools from government and non-government education sectors were opened between 2003 and 2008 (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2014) thus providing multiple opportunities to re-think the delivery of education. Despite this common occurrence, there has been a distinct lack of research documenting not only the development and implementation of a new school but also the systems and practices to support the sustainability of the school's educational mission.

Although the research literature on new schools is scarce, there is an abundance of research on the process of implementing innovations within an established school setting and this will further inform this study. The introduction of an innovation either in a new or established school requires those involved to commit and participate in the change process. External and internal forces on staff can significantly influence the success and sustainability of these initiatives in the school setting. For example, externally, the government mandates the implementation of national testing for all students or the local educational authority, the prescribed Learning and Teaching Framework, which necessitates compulsory changes for staff to enact. Change and innovation can also emerge internally from the context of the school staff and setting such as decisions to create open-plan learning environments, professional team collaboration or a cross-curriculum learning and teaching approach.

Historically, schools have demonstrated successful outcomes in the short-term of innovative learning and teaching enterprises (Doremus, 1981 (a), 1981(b); Tyack & Tobin, 1994 cited in Giles Hargreaves, 2006). However longitudinal studies of innovative schools repeatedly found that despite the enthusiasm and commitment of staff in the early phases of the innovation, over time when faced with ongoing internal and external issues they slowly reverted back to mainstream schools functioning or even became redundant and closed their doors (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Fink, 2000; Hargreaves, 2003; Margolis, 2005, Nicholas, 2008). For this study it is pertinent to broaden the review of the literature to encompass both new schools and established schools who choose to participate in the innovation process.

Guided by the research on new schools, school effectiveness, improvement and reform, change management and unhindered by conventional limitations of the traditional curriculum delivery and established school structures, this new school case study will document the perceptions and experiences of staff as they journey through the innovative process of teaching social and emotional learning (SEL) in the daily curriculum.

ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

The wellspring for this case study was constructed by a number of circumstances, which coalesced to provide the opportunity to investigate the experiences of the foundation staff as they navigated the challenges of getting a new school up and running but also implanting a curriculum innovation for which they were unfamiliar. First, a new Catholic, coeducational, secondary school was in the planning at the Diocese Education Office. Architects were employed, new designs based on open-planning learning spaces providing student-centred activities were being negotiated and collaborative discussions and decisions at the Diocesan Education Office were being made about a school '*of and for*' the future. Second, working at a consultative level with colleagues from the Curriculum and Pedagogy Team within the Diocesan Education Office, afforded the researcher a conversation about the possible delivery of SEL in a cross-curriculum approach to learning and teaching. The curriculum proposal was to be based on rich fertile questions collaboratively planned with staff meeting in professional learning teams, team-taught, shared with students in large groups and reflective of a backwards-design pedagogy. Third, there was emerging empirical evidence that explicitly teaching and developing the social and emotional competencies of young people through an integrated curriculum and daily social interactions built positive social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes (Collaborative for Social, Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2002, 2005, 2007), which supported the core business of schooling. Moreover, there was a paucity of literature available on new schools to inform and guide the Diocesan Education Office in the planning phase or the leadership team and foundation staff on the implementation and sustainability challenges to address.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There were three objectives for this case study. The first was to document the unique perspectives and experiences of the foundation staff during the establishment phase of the new school thereby informing future Diocesan school planning and implementation of systems and processes. Second, it was an

opportunity to add to the limited research literature on new school implementation and sustainability in the Australian educational setting. Third, it was an opportunity to ascertain the feasibility for staff in supporting and teaching SEL as a cross-curriculum innovation. To fulfill the objectives of this case study, a major research question underpinned by minor research questions was developed. The focus of the major research question and supporting questions focused on *how* and *what* was the experience of the foundation staff adapting to the SEL construct within a new school setting.

MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

How does the foundation staff of a new Catholic coeducational secondary school experience teaching SEL within school structures and as a regular component of an integrated curriculum?

MINOR QUESTIONS

1. How does the staff's vision and philosophy align with that of the new school?
2. How do new structures and processes support the implementation of SEL?
3. How does the capacity and confidence of staff influence the implementation of SEL?
4. How does the leadership team support the implementation of SEL?
5. What are the concerns and sustainability issues for staff implementing SEL?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Although new schools open on a regular basis in Australia [ABS], (2014), surprisingly there is a limited literature base to inform and support educational systems and the school leadership team and staff as to the challenges and issues that may typify new school implementation and sustainability. Each new school has its idiosyncrasies that build its developing norms and culture. This study not only documents and identifies the experiences and challenges the foundation staff encounter as they endeavour to establish the school's systems, structures and processes but it also investigates the added tension of staff implementing an innovative curriculum, one which each has little familiarity and experience in teaching.

The significance of this study, therefore, is that it will add to the literature on new schools and their sustainability. Further, it will evaluate the curriculum innovation as an evidence-based approach to promote students' social-emotional development and academic performance. The competence and relationship with the teacher bears significant influence on student achievement (Hattie, 2009). The experiences, therefore, of the foundation staff in a new school will add valuable insights into the feasibility and support required to deliver the innovation with fidelity and to be sustained over time despite impact of external and internal pressures.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is grounded on research executed as a member of one of the teams from the Diocesan Education Office responsible for the preparatory work in planning the new school and in my professional ongoing work in the school.

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature on the benefits and challenges of new school implementation and sustainability. To broaden understanding of the process and impact of innovations, various reviews of the literature on school effectiveness, school improvement and school reform including leadership and management, and the change process were acknowledged.

Chapter Three outlines the emerging mental wellbeing needs of Australian students and links the development of social and emotional competencies in young people as a much-underrated skill. The role of emotion and the social context of learning and relationships are explored with a focus on the benefits to students, staff and the school generally. Finally, the importance of staff capacity and professional learning opportunities underpins the sustainability of the innovation.

Chapter Four provides the contextual background and the relevant systems, processes and structures that defined the school's culture. It outlines the historical aspects of the school's beginning from the education system's perspective and follows the experience of staff in the first two and half years of its development. It also describes my role as researcher, friend, colleague and 'inside observer' during the investigation.

Chapter Five describes the research methods employed including the advantages of using case study research. In this chapter are details about the new school site, participants and acknowledged issues in my role as participant or insider observer.

Chapter Six articulates the findings of the research that are organised around the emergent themes from the data collated.

Chapter Seven, the final chapter discusses the implications of the findings and delineates a range of recommendations based on the findings from this research.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Active, inquiry approach	Learning fostered through enjoyment, engagement, and responsibility as students develop the skills as independent, creative, and reflective learners
CLE Creation Framework	Learning Advisors develop an enduring understanding, which is an engaging and relevant statement of the overarching understandings that students will gain through their study in the Connected Learning Experience (CLE) units of work. An integrated assessment task is designed, followed by a sequence of learning events. Evaluation is undertaken collaboratively, and the Learning and Teaching Principles are used as a template to achieve this outcome
Components of the curriculum	Living Catholic traditions, social and emotional learning and other cross-curricula content are embedded in each of the courses, which form every CLE
Connected Learning Experience (CLE)	Connected Learning Experience is an integrated unit of work, collaboratively designed, programmed and assessed using the CLE Creation Framework and incorporating two or three related subjects
Curriculum	The learning journey
Curriculum integration	Organising paradigm, based on syllabus outcomes, incorporating social and emotional learning
Dialogues of Learning	A structure in the Learning Advisory Program where every student meets with their Learning Circle Learning Advisor twice a term for a conversation to reflect on their academic, personal and social responsibilities'. During this time students set sustainable goals for the term and discuss strategies to achieve these objectives
Efficacy	Confidence in one's capabilities, individually and collective as a group of Learning Advisors
Emotional intelligence	The ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to access and generate feelings which facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth
Independent Connected Learning Experience (iCLE)	Schedule time for self-directed independent learning. iCLE is always conducted in Learning Circle groups. The role of the Learning advisor in iCLE time is to assist students to complete their CLE tasks

Learning Advisory Program	Specifically designed pastoral care structures that fosters the growth of students' passion for learning and in their relationships
Learning Advisor	Teachers working in the role of 'mentors of learning' with students, in both Learning Circles, Dialogues for Learning, CLE and iCLE
Learning Agenda	School timetable
Learning Circle	A small group of students allocated to a Learning Advisor. This group meets with their Learning advisor for Learning Circle for 15 minutes at the start of each day, and for 45 minutes for iCLE at the end of the day. The Learning Advisor conducts Dialogues for Learning with the students in the Learning Circle, writes reports for them and follow up on any issues of concern
Learning Teams	Intensely collaborative teams of three to four Learning Advisors who are responsible for designing and teaching a CLE
Learning to Learn (L2L)	A discrete program of student that runs along side the integrated programmed curriculum. Learning to Learn is a forum for teaching generic transferable skills for learning, social and emotional learning, subject specific best practice and learning technologies
Learning and Teaching Principles	Guiding principles that form the basis for learning and teaching at school
Mission statement	Defines the purpose of the school's existence and identifies the charter of the school through reference to the values and educational aspirations
New South Wales Board of Studies (BOS)	Australian state government education board in New South Wales providing the curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 12 and responsible for awarding of the secondary school credentials of the Record of School Achievement and the Higher School Certificate. All NSW schools are accountable to meet the NSW BOS curriculum requirements.
Neuroscience	The study of the human nervous system, the brain, and the biological basis of consciousness, perception, memory and learning.
Programing, Assessing and Reporting Online Tool (PAROT)	A dedicated online database designed to facilitate a collaborative planning of CLEs that satisfy the NSW Board of Studies accountabilities. It also facilitates students' Growth and Learning, by allowing Learning advisors to monitor and record students' Dialogues for Learning sessions and behavioural incidents

Pedagogy	Method or practice of teaching
Pastoral Care	Focused development of the whole person inclusive of staff, students, parents, parish and the wider community working cooperatively towards the explicit spiritual, academic, emotional, social and physical development of each person. Pastoral Care is developing empathetic relationships so that those in the school community are nurtured into wholesome maturity. It is an expression of the philosophy and vision of the school.
Positive education	Seeks to combine the principles of Positive Psychology with best-practice teaching and with educational paradigms to promote optimal development and flourishing in the school setting
Positive psychology	The study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions
Resilience	A person's capacity to overcome challenges and setbacks, to deal with change and adaptation and a belief in one's own self-efficacy to deal with change and adaptation.
School Support Officer (SSO)	Provide learning assistance to students with special needs within CLEs, or provide appropriate assistance to Learning Advisors in preparation of practical lessons.
Social and Emotional Competence	The ability to understand, manage and express the social and emotional aspects of one's life in ways that enable the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems and adapting to the complex demands of growth and development (Elias et al., 1997)
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)	The process through which young people develop awareness and management of their emotions, set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships, and demonstrate decision-making and responsible behaviours to achieve school and life success. How competencies are learned through the taught curriculum and the entire school experience (Weare, 2004)
Student Wellbeing	The student's physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and development. It describes the state in which people feel socially and emotionally well and capable

CHAPTER 2 – NEW SCHOOLS

The world we have created is a product of our thinking.

It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

‘New schools’ are defined in this study as true ‘start-up’ or beginning schools, ones that have just come into existence, newly constructed and are new to the local geographical area. New school designers have the opportunity to be innovative and responsive as there is flexibility for educational systems and staff to build their school cultures and curriculum delivery from scratch. New schools by design, therefore, have the potential for purposeful change, to execute successful research-based approaches unimpeded by the many entrenched traditions, structures and practices of existing schools.

New and existing schools open to accepting and benefiting from change are what Slavin (1997) proposed as ‘seed’ schools, or schools that could be characterised by their ‘readiness’ (for growth) phase of school organisational and development (p.7). In this period of growth, the purpose of schooling is to renew, refresh, develop or reimagine a school program and culture specifically designed to meet the needs of the students and the school community. However, the inevitable differences between schools exist in the curriculum delivery, the role of students, staff and community and other key factors (Hassel, Fullwood, & Terrell, 2004). In essence, all schools, no matter what stage of readiness for change and development, are unique and although there are common elements that tie the business of successful schooling together, there are as many variants that make each school unique.

It is imperative that staff in a new school understands and reflect on the critical features and challenges of change implementation and management. Their role in effecting change processes and practices with fidelity cannot be underestimated and are essential in providing new schools with the best conditions for their long-

term success. The sparse seminal research studies on new schools outline the essential characteristics of successful new schools, however, they do not provide any illumination on the *process* of establishing and sustaining their progress. To this end, the research literature on effective and improving existing schools, successful schools and school reform all serve to inform the study on new schools.

Bosco (2005) notes that institutional response to change, as exemplified by new school implementation, is generally preceded by a crisis that creates the conditions for change. New schools and institutional change reside initially with the presiding educational authority. The purpose of the new school is firstly directed and resourced by the system where relevant decisions are made to support the delivery of educational outcomes. Prior to a new school's opening it was the local educational authority that decided on the relevant architecture and the learning and teaching model that had to be balanced with national and state educational compliance and accountability requirements. Whether a new school is based on transformational change or on principles of existing traditional schools, will be further discussed.

This research explores whether the staff of a new school charged with the responsibility of transforming outmoded educational practices can sustain its intended purpose. Harris, Allen and Goodall (2008) suggest that schools supporting innovation should be considered at higher risk than established schools and therefore require significant more trust and support from all key stakeholders so as not to revert to past traditional practices. Regardless of the new school context, successful school reform involves the shared vision, active participation and purposeful relinquishment of approaches and ways of working that no longer meet the new school's purpose and stage of development. Change is common to all new schools, however, transformation and its sustainability presents an ambitious and challenging proposition for all involved.

The importance of a new school's survival can be dependent, in part, on the support from the wider community. Fullan (2001) and Oplatka (2004) point out there is often strong interest in a new school as parents are enticed by the educational possibilities of a contemporary learning environment for their children. A new school designed to deliver better educational solutions meets the increasing needs and demands of students and parents alike. Scott (2003) further supports this view by adding that a new school gains further credibility by the wider community if the District Office and new school staff continue to

demonstrate substantial but accessible evidence of maintaining the integrity of the school's initial purpose. This, in turn, has a positive impact on the willingness of the parent community to support the school through continued enrolments thereby increasing the school's future survival.

The staff of a new school, like any school challenged with innovation, faces the test of implementing and sustaining the intended educational vision with integrity and fidelity. Researchers agree (Bulkley & Fidler, 2003; Leonard, 2002; Loveless & Jasin, 1998; Tubin, 2008 cited in Tubin & Ofek-Regev, 2010) that the best intentions of educators to sustain the educational principles underpinning a new school are challenged by internal and external pressures and expectations. The authors collectively referred to issues that emerge over time which reduce the school's capacity to deliver its intended innovation. The inevitable decrease of system funding as the school completes its establishment phase; lack of resources that traditional schools have built up over time; pressures on staff impacting on the quality of curriculum delivery; and the quality and leadership of school personnel significantly impact on the delivery of the innovation. Instead, there is a fragmentation of the innovation implementation with staff focusing on only some aspects of the innovation that are either achievable in the short-term or sustainable because of external accountabilities.

Despite these challenges, Bosco, (2005) and Nicholas (2008) note there are benefits from documenting the establishment and sustainability of innovative practices in a new school that have the potential to impact far beyond the educational experiences of key stakeholders. In addition to providing a blueprint of characteristics, the documentation can also add new ideas and new speculations as to the infinite possibilities of what schools could be for the district and beyond. However, equally important and possibly accounting for innovation failures, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argue that it is neither practical nor appropriate to assume that successful innovation processes and practices in one school can simply be applied to a similar school with the expectation of similar results. No two schools are the same and neither are the staffs that bring with them multiple personal and professional characteristics that influence directly or indirectly successful innovation implementation. The authors exemplified this by referring to the successful literacy reform strategy developed over a period of ten years in New York District 2 but failed to produce the same results in San Diego with a two year implementation period.

It is risky therefore, to assume that the style of a new school or a popular innovation necessarily represents a potential system-wide solution (Levin, 2007). External systems pressure schools for speedy change and speedy results but to scale up the implementation too quickly to other system schools can be problematic. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) suggest this reflects the education system's need for 'immediate returns from their investment that are often frequently and politically motivated' (cited in Harris, 2011, p. 161). Every school system should be able to assess the potential value, readiness and challenges in adopting similar approaches within the context of their school community.

Despite a diversity of new schools appearing each year in Australia, there remains limited research on a clear and logical framework that describes, informs and guides educators on the comprehensive uniqueness and nature of establishing new schools. However, a significant Australian study by Nicholas (2008) endeavoured to discover the challenges and issues that staff members faced during the first two years of a new secondary coeducational Catholic high school. Nicholas (2008) proposed a set of recommended operating principles to assist future schools navigate the complexity of establishing, implementing and sustaining new school characteristics important in a successful school. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Nicholas (2008) utilises case-study research from Eastabrook and Fullan (1977), Fink (2000) and Margolis (2005), which formed the background for comparison, analysis of the implementation and sustainability of innovation in the life of new schools. The historical circumstances of each school case study are underpinned by the pervading social, economical and political environment of the time, which in turn reflects the various research foci and the differences between the schools. The findings of each study present common but varied responses to the idiosyncratic forces of change that inevitably challenge the sustainability of the desired school outcomes (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000, Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008).

NEW SCHOOLS BACKGROUND

Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) analysed the planning phase of a new school, *Bayridge* from 1970-1974, in Ontario Canada highlighting the issues and challenges and the initial decisions made by the educational system. This is an important phase of planning for the new school as a selected committee decided on the broad parameters for the school. Decisions were made on the school's vision and philosophy to provide

stakeholders with a positive school environment based on collaboration and cooperative activity, a flattened organisational structure, team teaching and an interdisciplinary curriculum. In essence, forward planning was to save the foundational staff time and energy in making these decisions, leaving them time, once appointed, to further develop structures, processes and practices that reflect the school's ideology.

In terms of sustainability, Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) point out that preliminary planning by others is concerning in the long term as it leads to questioning of the level of staff ownership of the school's design and the guiding vision and principles foundational to all other educational processes. With the second phase of implementation, a year before the school opened, the principal was appointed and the original committee was dispersed, however, the principal identified that in order for innovation and change to be successful, it was critical to have the support of the incoming new staff. The principal stated:

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.

(cited in Nicholas, 2008, p. 23)

Challenges of staff ownership influence the commitment and energy invested in any school innovation. Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) identified the following issues that negatively impact on the successful innovation of a new school and should be addressed:

- No allocated time for incoming staff for planning before the new school opened;
- Staff spent available time on practical considerations of getting through the day;
- Staff inclined to maintain pedagogical practices from previous school;
- Staff did not readily engage in school's vision and philosophy of interdisciplinary curriculum;

- Staff implementing the interdisciplinary curriculum sought and expected leadership direction;
- No connection of committee's prior planning with the principal's future planning;
- Lack of a collective forum for ongoing development and further planning during the final planning year;
- School mechanisms not in place for second year staff to receive orientation and opportunity to develop their professional approaches to learning and teaching; and
- Limited school structures and process to collaborate and work with parents and students in sharing the vision and philosophy of the new school.

(adapted from Nicholas, 2008 pp. 25-26)

Although Nicholas (2008) noted the principal and the new superintendent from the education system communicated the school vision and the proposed approach to learning and teaching as was decided prior to the opening, *how* this process was to be imbued into the life of the school was not clear or understood. Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) earlier stressed that the purpose of their study was to identify the factors that are often unheeded or overlooked by systems and school communities and to profile the necessary process for addressing these needs not only in establishing a new school but also in creating long-lasting educational change.

Whereas Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) were researchers commissioned by the Ontario Institute into Studies of Education (OISE) and 'outsiders' to the education system and Bayridge School, Fink (2000) was a foundation member and as a researcher, an 'insider' with a personal perspective of the lived experience. Fink studied the twenty-five year history of the Lord Byron school, a new and purposefully designed innovative school in which he worked. As a foundation teacher in this school in the early 1970s, he described the establishment years as a period in time when innovation was highly possible. He queried why this school with all its 'advantages more than any other school in Canada, lost its innovation momentum and experienced an attrition of change' (Fink, 2000, p. xiii).

The factors that contribute to sustaining innovation over time have been somewhat elusive to educators for what works in one school does not always apply in another (Hargreaves & Fink 2006). The management of change became Fink's (2000) study investigating and advancing practical commentary as to the implementation of new schools and innovation sustainability. He acknowledged that schools do not operate in isolation and extended the study to include factors from the district and state level that promote the success or otherwise of the design of a new school. Fink's (2000) frame of reference for analysis of change was in the relation to six themes: 'context, meaning, leadership, structure, culture and teachers' work and lives' (p. 6). The researcher also delineated the school's history into three distinct periods of evolution with the first, 'creative and experimentation', the second 'overreaching and entropy', and the third period of 'survival and continuity' (p. 11).

The findings from this comprehensive study add a deeper understanding as to the multitude and complexities of factors that contribute to the overall success of innovation in a new school. The impact of expectations and accountabilities external to the school and influences inside the school community can create significant pressures on staff. These pressures and stressors over time can slowly divert the school's direction from 'creative and experimentation' to one of survival, reverting to the similar experiences of the majority of existing schools. Fink (2000) found that the very purpose of the intended innovation such as open student-centred learning spaces was slowly abandoned, by staff request, as the school progressed. In this study, staff inexperienced in open-plan learning spaces, found the learning and teaching environment too challenging and made requests to create smaller learning spaces by erecting moveable walls similar to traditional school structures.

Not unexpectedly, Fink (2000) reported that in the extended period of the school's development, staff were feeling overwhelmed having to adjust to the ever-present internal and external pressures particular to a new school setting. Adding to this was the period of continuing deterioration where external funding sources from the system were significantly reduced. This is not surprising as the education system's initial funding to support the establishment of a new school is difficult to sustain and resources need to be shared between all system schools. General school funding is not inexhaustible; rather, school systems are constantly juggling limited budgets to adequately support schools. A new school receiving extra funding for establishment

purpose, where the focus was on innovation, would enjoy added support with an assumption that once a school's systems and processes are in place they would be sustainable and so funds would be reduced in line with other established system schools.

Over time, the Lord Byron school, once one of innovation, had succumbed to the pressures of internal and external changes and was viewed by the wider community as a mainstream school. Fink (2000) reported on the challenges staff and the school community faced with changes in government and subsequent education policy and reduction in funding to the public sector. This was further exacerbated by the necessary reduction in staff employed as a result of a significant reduction in students enrolled in the school. Although attempts by the new principal and the school leaders to reinvigorate the school community towards the vision and philosophy of successful innovation, which demonstrated a visible commitment to the school's original intention, student enrolment numbers continued to decline and the school struggled to remain open.

It is difficult to ascertain what factors contributed to the declining interest in the school, however, Fink (2000) deduced from his study there was a discernible 'life-cycle' or pattern of evolution to a new and innovative school that 'contributed to the enervation of change' (p. xiii). These challenges are summarised as follows:

- The changes in the external political and educational climate and subsequent changes to policies, support and resource funding;
- Decrease in community support and the judgment of what constituted a good school;
- Initial loss of a significant number of foundation staff with knowledge and commitment to the school's vision and philosophy;
- Newly appointed staff who did not share the school's vision philosophy as did the foundation staff;
- Early departure of the inaugural principal;
- Perceived imbalance between the school leadership team and the staff;
- Moveable walls erected in classrooms ending a period of openness;
- Flexible timetables became more restrictive and rigid;

- Staff turnover from stress and exhaustion;
- Many foundational staff demonstrating signs of burnout; and,
- Perceived lack of support from the leadership team as the school evolved.

(adapted from Nicholas 2008 pp. 33-34)

The study of Fink (2000) points to the complexities new school staff experience during the phases of change, adaption and sustainability. A different approach to understanding the establishment of a new school came from Margolis' (2005) study where she explored the experiences of four teachers recruited to work in a new American charter school. Charter schools are, by definition, unique and may look very different from traditional public schools. These schools are publicly funded, privately managed and semi-autonomous schools of choice, however, they have the same academic accountability measures as traditional schools but with more freedom over their budgets, staff, curricula and other operations.

The detailed account of teachers' experiences as they navigate the establishment process and practices of the new charter school reveal common experiences with teachers from new public schools. The enthusiasm and excitement that Fink (2000) experienced as a foundation teacher of Lord Byron School was the same as for teachers entering a new charter school, the promise of being part of something different, a part of 'creating a new school focused on correcting social inequities' (Margolis, 2005, p. 105). However, Margolis reported the tension and disappointment for staff as they observed the difference between the rhetoric of the charter school philosophy and their lived experience. The staff described the unwarranted attention from the leadership given to ensuring the school was successful as a business model rather than the educational model.

The four teachers report similar challenges of ineffective learning structures and inadequate time allocated to planning their work, which in turn significantly impacts on the quality of prepared curriculum materials. However, because positions and salaries were individually negotiated in charter schools, teachers were generally unwilling to express their concerns. Margolis (2005) notes the four teachers expressed feeling 'overwhelmed, exhausted and with little professional self-worth' (cited in Nicholas, 2008, p. 36) with

reported illnesses related to the stress experienced at school. A high attrition rate (seven from eighteen staff) occurred from the end of the first year to the beginning of the second year of school with only a single teacher enduring past the initial three-year period. These negative experiences from teachers reflect a common theme from previous authors (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977 and Fink, 2000) that what is central to any change or school reform is the role and experiences of those who have the main responsibility for developing and implementing the designated innovative processes and practices in school.

The summary table below illustrates the variance and similarities between researchers' perspectives on new school case studies.

Table 2.1: Summary of Staff Challenges and Issues in New School Settings

Eastabrook & Fullan (1977)	Fink (2000)	Margolis (2005)	Nicholas (2008)
• Educational vision and philosophy	• Planning re-culturing new staff	• Time sharing and building school vision	• Educational vision and philosophy
• Leadership	• Plan and effectively manage external pressures	• Teachers' personal lives validated	Leadership and management
• Decision-making and communication	• Decision-making	• Adequate time for staff reflection	• Effective decision-making and communication
• Staff ownership	• Staff conditions	• Structures to promote staff relationships	• Basic managerial functioning – structures
• Teachers' capacity and knowledge	• Adequate time for planning and preparation	• Adequate time for preparing curriculum materials	• Appropriate professional development
• Teachers' personal lives	• Maintaining positive relationships and communication with wider community		• The wider community
• Adequate time and planning			• Clear role definitions
• Resourcing	• Acknowledge effort of staff	• Adequate and appropriate resource for staff	• Support
• Staff turnover	• Planning for staff leaving	• Staff exhaustion	• Future planning

Nicholas (2008) stresses that although the case studies literature provides valuable information about the complexity of challenges of new school formation, development and sustainability, it does not provide

insights into the mechanisms and processes for addressing these issues. For example, the ‘*what*’ has been identified as important to address in successfully sustaining school innovation such as staff ownership of the school’s vision and philosophy but it is the ‘*how*’, the processes for ensuring this takes place in a collaborative and cooperative manner to ensure its continuity over time that is missing from the literature.

Nicholas’ (2008) case study of an Australian Catholic co-coeducational secondary school, *Companion High School*, during the first two years of its establishment provided an opportunity to document the challenges and issues the foundation and second year staff encountered when establishing a new school. Her results add to the research literature by providing a guide when establishing a new school to the essential structures that promote sustainable practice. Companion High School was under study for seven years, which allowed for Nicholas (2008) to monitor and evaluate both as a participant researcher and through the staff interviews, the sustainability of school structures initiated in the establishment phase of development. This study is relevant to the current study as it provides a blueprint of essential features of new school structures in the context of an Australian Catholic co-educational secondary school setting. These features are important to address not only in establishing but also in sustaining new school intentions.

As a foundation member, Nicholas (2008) was in a prime position to act as an ‘insider’ or participant researcher, ‘to document the school’s life in a descriptive, explanatory and evaluative manner’ (p. 110). There were fourteen first year staff and eight, second year staff who participated in the study reflecting a diverse range of teaching backgrounds, expertise, years of experience and gender balance. Data were collected over a three-year period (1999-2001) and Carney’s Ladder of Analytical Abstraction (1990) was utilised to organise and analyse the data. This was a qualitative study and multiple data collections were employed to gain triangulated source evidence from staff interview, field notes and school archival records. Nicholas (2008) built on previous research (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005) in formulating research questions on themes of educational vision and philosophy, decision-making, supporting staff, relationships between staff, and the roles of the school community. These factors were identified as impacting on the effectiveness of new schools. Semi-structured interviews yielded data to inform what staff believed were the essential structures and processes necessary not only to establish a new school but also to sustain the school’s initial vision and innovative practices over the long term. Nicholas (2008) summarised

responses into eight themes deemed essential for the principal and staff to develop effective processes to ensure structures were successfully implemented and therefore sustainable over the school's future growth. The themes and structures for attention were 'vision and philosophy; effective decision-making and communication; basic managerial functioning; the wider community; appropriate professional development; clear role definitions; support; and future planning' (p. 135).

Nicholas (2008) commented that over time, some of the school's initial structures and practices such as those associated with Pastoral Care, continued to be sustained by staff. However, other school structures such as the designed curriculum structure where staff had previously agreed pedagogical practices and planning reverted, in part, to the normal structures and practices of prior school experiences. Staff commented on a number of challenges impacting on the sustainability of the curriculum structures which included: the frenetic pace of change at school; the lack of planning processes to ensure the staff employed in the second year had ownership of the school's vision and philosophy; and the significant numbers of foundation staff (40%) who left the school after the second year. Participants reported the exodus of staff was directly related to their disenchantment about not being on a permanent school site; the emerging tensions between themselves and the second staff intake; the education system not delivering on their promises; and the school showing signs of reverting to the traditional ways of schools, something they chose to leave when they accepted their position at the new school.

During the planning and establishment phase of Companion High School, collaborative and open decision-making and communication processes between stakeholders was notably present. The leadership team deliberately created staff structures and processes for cooperative planning, open dialogue and collegial support. Nicholas (2008) reported that collaborative and open decision-making and communication processes were essential for the foundation staff of the new school as routine and strategic decisions were made to ensure that the school developed functionally and the business of schooling was operational. This supports researchers (Hill, Holmes-Smith & Rowe, 1993; Pointek & Dwyer, 1998) who suggest that without such processes the effectiveness of any school success is questionable.

On reviewing the literature on sustainability (Nicholas, 2008) noted that a critical element of the school design was the deliberate succession planning by the principal of incoming staff to build ownership of the school's vision and philosophy as a new or reforming school. At Companion High School, the principal initially created the school's vision and philosophy, which was then discussed and renegotiated with the foundation staff but despite the promise of involving second year staff, little change occurred. Nicholas (2008) recommends a need for continued attention by the principal and all staff to the school's vision and philosophy as the school grew if the original school's purpose and innovation are to be sustained.

As a result of her study Nicholas (2008) established eight essential structures, which were then compared against the internal and external forces impacting the school. She recommends that education systems and new school educators consider the following integrated set of designed characteristics and issues to address (see figure 2.2) to improve the opportunities for success and sustainability.

Table 2.2: Recommended New School Design Characteristics

<p>Leadership and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership should be effective, proactive, inclusive, supportive and distributive • A clearly articulated school vision and philosophy • The vision and philosophy must be shared and developed collaboratively with all key stakeholders • Establish 'rituals' to provide opportunities for staff to continually revisit the vision • Leadership structures designed to support staff • Leadership structures are effective in addressing issues arising from within and outside the school • Leadership structures flexible and allow for ongoing changes and modifications • School mechanisms of gaining continual feedback about the processes and outcomes of the establishment phase of the school • School structures are clearly defined, functional and uphold the work of staff • Communication processes are open and inclusive • Decision-making processes are collaborative, consultative, open and inclusive • Plans to address staff turnover from all levels within the school • Operational mechanisms state the method in which innovations are expected to be implemented and sustained • The school's establishment phase requires an inclusive and supportive environment for all key stakeholders
<p>Staff Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must be supported through an ongoing process of professional development that specifically focuses on changing instructional practices aligned with the school vision • Staff professional lives are considered to ensure sustainable involvement and practice • Staff given adequate reflection time • Staff given adequate time to plan and implement particularly at the establishment phase of the school • Staff are integral to the establishment of a new school and must be included in planning • There are structures and processes operational to ensure staff and community ownership of innovations to be implemented

Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology used as a tool to assist in the planning, implementation, evaluation and modification of structures and processes at the establishment phase of the school
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and appropriate resources available to assist in the establishment of the school
Student Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emphasis on providing relevant twenty-first schooling that is focused on improving all outcomes for students
Professional School Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement and consideration that the school is primarily a ‘human system’ where relationships and interrelationships are critical to success and sustainability • Educational change is viewed as positive and continual • The initial stage of establishing a school is seen as part of an ongoing process of change which supports a true re-culturing of the school community
Complete Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a school is well planned
Theory of Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A theory of process must drive the establishment of the school
Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable practice is the ultimate goal of establishing a new school

(adapted from Nicholas, 2008, pp. 200-201)

Nicholas (2008) elaborates further by suggesting the following design principles should be considered as the foundational elements for new schools to transform the theory of school reform into practice:

1. A philosophy that the school is a **human system** comprised of interconnected and interrelated of supra and sub systems;
2. A **vision** stated and acknowledged by all key stakeholders, guiding the direction of the school;
3. A **school design** developed by stakeholders in a collaborative manner prior to the school opening;
4. 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;
5. Operations and practices that are **inherent**, **implicit** and an **embedded** part of the school;
6. Operations and practices where **evaluation** and **modification** of practices are guided by **consistent** and **emergent feedback**;
7. Structures that **support** the work of school staff **aligning** school practice with **external** accountability **issues**; and
8. **Structures**, **operations** and **practices**, which **disperse control** and **authority** about all issues in regard to the school.

(adapted from Nicholas 2008, p. 202), emphasis in original

LEADERSHIP

At the centre of successful new schools is the quality and effectiveness of the appointed leadership positions within the emerging school structures. Despite the increasing interest, investment from systems and schools and research, there are limited studies focused on Australian educational leadership (Mulford, 2008; Watson, 2005). Importantly, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) noted the application of research undertaken on educational leadership internationally is culturally biased and cannot and should not necessarily apply in the Australian setting. Clearly, this is an area for exploration for until there is reliable and measurable research on the quality of leadership and its relevance and application in Australian schools, recommendations should be cautiously considered.

However, understanding the role of leadership in the Australian context, both the public and Catholic education represent decentralised systems where principals are given a high degree of autonomy (Victorian Education, 2012), and subsumed power to create, manage and support the desired school culture including driving sustainable performance outcomes. There is general agreement amongst researchers that the quality of school leadership not only matters but also is critical in determining the effectiveness of the school (Beare, 2001; Harris, Moos, Moller, Robertson, & Spillane, 2007; McGhee, 2001, Mulford, 2008). Notably, there is also strong evidence that school leadership has an impact (directly and indirectly) on student outcomes second only to the influence of teachers in the classroom (Barber, Whelan & Clark, 2010; Mortorell, Heaton, Gates & Hamilton, 2010; Hattie, 2003, 2009; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins, 2006; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). The extent of this influence, however, reflected on what the leader decided to focus on within the school. For example, the principal's decision to create small learning groups within a subject area created more individual learning opportunities for students but at the expense of small pastoral groups where building relationships was the goal.

Understanding the effectiveness of school leaders in the working context of a new school dynamics cannot be overestimated (Day & Leithwood, 2007) and having a capable and insightful school leader is a critical factor in successfully guiding the foundation staff to establish, implement and develop sustainable systems and practices. What is considered an effective leader of a new school in the current complex, changing and

challenging educational landscape has not been well researched, however, this has been identified as requiring explicit policy development at both a school and system level (Mulford, 2008).

The research literature on leadership has generally focused on the personal styles demonstrated such as instructional, transformational, distributive and sustainable leadership in school improvement or reform and the subsequent application of each in the school setting. Both instructional and transformational leadership are regarded by educators as important management styles for leading school business. The similarities between instructional and transformational leadership, however, are stronger than their differences. Hallinger (2007) summarises the common responsibility and role of both the instructional and transformational leader are to 'create a shared sense of school purpose; develop a climate of high expectations, innovation and improvement; provide staff with intellectual stimulation and continuous development and, act as a role model' (cited in Mulford, 2008 p. 41).

Instructional leadership is understood as 'top-down' authority with the leader actively intervening and monitoring classroom practices and the transformational leader responsible for developing and motivating teachers to produce positive student outcomes (Gurr, 2002, 2008; Hallinger, 2003, 2005, 2007; Leithwood & Duke, 1999). Instructional leadership is primarily attributed to the implementation of first-order change where change is considered incremental, based on improving efficiency. Examples of first order changes in schools are demonstrated through reviewing and modifying processes such as merit systems, alternative assessment procedures, and multi-aged student groupings. Transformational leadership with second-order change on the other hand involves significant change, a departure from what is expected. Change of this depth changes the school system in fundamental ways such as the school's ethos and staff beliefs and attitudes underlying their actions (Marzano, Walters & McNulty, 2005). The dynamics of 'change' are discussed later in this chapter.

The role of leadership has historically been assigned to the principal; however, leading school improvement and reform in the twenty-first century is too complex and demanding for one person's responsibility. Distributing leadership responsibility amongst staff is an inclusive approach for others to understand and own the school's educational agenda (Childs, Brown, Keppell, Nicholas, Hunter & Hard, 2013; Harris, 2008)

thereby broadening the support for innovation and change. This creates a lateral rather than hierarchical structure for communication and decision-making and hence a flatter structure of governance. Distributive leadership is not merely a delegation of tasks and responsibilities but, if authentic, provides opportunities for multiple perspectives and collaborative decision-making.

The benefits of the distributive leadership model, particularly if the distribution is extended to teacher leadership, is to create broader school commitment and collective capacity by increased involvement and ownership of school decisions; to create extended opportunities for staff professional development; and, to support sustainable progress regardless of any potential leadership changes (Leithwood et al., 2006; Spillane, 2006). Moreover, teacher leadership, as discerned by Lieberman and Miller (2004), suggested that teachers who ‘formally or informally acquire leadership positions can also make change happen’ (p. 154). However, there have been mixed results from school reform research that examined the impact during the change process from successful teams of teachers who were in positions of influence. Teachers in these positions reported concerns about peer perceptions such as the fear of being ostracised, their lack of credibility amongst colleagues and their capacity for leadership (Cambrun, Rowan & Taylor, 2003).

Sustainable leadership as applied to education capacity and change is still in its infancy, however, researchers have endeavoured to broaden our understanding of school reform from the perspective of the education system as a whole entity (Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003, 2006). It is not enough, Fullan (2005) believes, for leaders in schools to restrict their thinking and leadership influence to remain solely with concerns of the school setting. He suggests that sustainable leaders demonstrate knowledge and skills in thinking and working competently and extensively within their school but concurrently connect and participate in making explicit links to the external systems. Implementing, developing and sustaining schools of the future will require such leaders who have the capacity to work with other elements of the broader education system and wider communities.

Hargreaves and Fink (2003), reviewing research literature on North American high schools over the past three decades, identified seven interconnected and inseparable principles of sustainable leadership that can lead to productive change in schools and school systems. The authors deviate from Fullan’s, (2005)

explanation of sustainable leadership, to name the following principles underpinning considerations by leaders when seeking sustainability of the desired innovation:

1. Depth – it matters
2. Length – it lasts
3. Breadth – it spreads
4. Justice – it does no harm to and actively improves the surrounding environment
5. Diversity – it promotes cohesive diversity
6. Resourcefulness – it develops and does not deplete material and human resources
7. Conservation – it honours and learns from the best of the past to create an even better future.

(cited in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, pp. 18-20)

Notably, the authors outlined the process of *how* to sustain effective leadership rather than *what* constitutes sustainable leadership, something that is often neglected in the research literature. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) maintain that to achieve sustainable leadership and action, leaders need to be assertive in the school and system environment, monitor the environment to ascertain what is working well and what is declining; defer success gratification instead of seeking immediate results; be transparent and open to scrutiny; and create systems that are relevant to staff use and congruent with human capacity.

Mulford (2008) argues that new models of school leadership are emerging, suggesting a broader and deeper understanding of the multiplicities, complexities and contextual nuances that inherently influence school organisation and leadership in this millennium. This means that a successful leadership style for one person in a new school does not mean its application in an existing school will bear the same impact or that one leadership style is preferential to another – one size does not fit all (Spillane, 2006). New models of leadership, particularly for new schools, will need the adaptation of leadership practices to meet the changing needs of firstly establishing the school, then implementing the school program and finding effective ways to sustain the innovation. As the new school develops, and systems and practices become embedded in routines, different styles of leadership including a composition of all may inevitably be required so that the

school development is continuous, adaptable and sustainable.

Hallinger (2007) recommends that adhering to rigid leadership styles is also not helpful and suggests an integrative model of educational leadership that addresses the current and future needs of the school context. A new school differs widely in terms of the needs and resources demanded of beginning schools and therefore in the type of leadership necessary to move staff forward to sustainability. It may initially require an instructional approach where leadership drive and model clearly set goals and are more active in organising and coordinating structures and processes in order to get the new school established (Fullan, 2002; Jackson, 2000). Leo (2007) extends this notion of leadership to include the inherent role of social relationships and the socio-cultural factors on student motivation and academic achievement. Moreover, Gurr (1997) stated that effective leaders should demonstrate a:

responsiveness to the changing educational climate and to the school community, an accountability dimension, an explicit mention of moral leadership and importantly an emphasis that they (principals) are also leaders of learning.

(cited in Gurr, 2008, p. 13)

Nicholas (2008) notes in her study that staff report *depending* on the school leadership team to initially make decisions on appropriate mechanisms that would guide the overall implementation phase of the new school. This meant that the principal would set up appropriate processes to make collaborative decisions and communicate with staff such as the rationale underpinning the design of the new school and an appropriate process for staff to act on the design. The school leader and appointed leadership team, Nicholas (2008) suggests, must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the complete school design and possess the leadership capacity to collaboratively address with staff issues in relation to those critical design elements. Although the issues of leadership style and leadership structures within the new school were not evaluated in her study, respondents raised this issue as impacting on the effectiveness of sustaining effective school practices.

A report from McKinsey and Company (2007, cited in Barber et al., 2010) suggests that not only is the role of school leadership important, it is becoming more critical as the international trend is towards the assignment of school management to the school level which is increasingly more important to the success of the system. Tapping the collective capacity of the school community to inculcate significant change and reform can be a profound and daunting task for leaders. However, since teacher quality is the most important in-school factor impacting student achievement (Fogarty, 2001; Fullan, 1993; Hattie, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2006), the ability of the school leaders to drive teacher effectiveness is a major measure of their success as leaders. High-performing leaders need, however, to do more than understand theories of leadership or what makes effective teaching; they also need to be able to take effective action to achieve student outcomes and teacher effectiveness.

The establishment of a new school requires strong leadership to systematically re-imagine organisational structuring and the management of human and school resources, which traditionally is a fundamental departure from teachers' prior practices in their previous schools. However, transformational change does not occur in a vacuum and involves the significant efforts, direction and guidance from school leaders with the school staff and wider community. Companion High School in Nicholas' (2008) study is typical of new Australian Catholic schools in the twenty-first century — complex and uniquely individual — and as such demand effective leadership to ensure the school's vision and philosophy is enacted and sustained by all community stakeholders. Strategically, it is the school principal and leadership team that is seen as responsible for articulating, guiding and reinforcing the school's vision and philosophy of education.

The opportunity for education systems to re-conceptualise a model of successful evidence-based reform approaches and design a new school to reflect these ideals begins with excitement and enthusiasm to embrace change and new growth. However, designing a twenty-first century schooling process does not start from a 'blank canvas,' rather it is inevitably influenced by existing schools. Like all schools, the foundation staff of a new school experiences the impact of external and internal changes such as system and community expectations and school leadership and mandated curriculum delivery. Without strong leadership and staff commitment, continuous pressures and educational accountabilities can erode the goals of a new school and over time inevitably become remodeled or versions of the 'old'. Beare (2001) points out that

there is an unavoidable compromise between what reformers ideally want and what is possible to achieve. Transformation of schooling is considered in the context of change and if it is to be achieved, starts with the dream of a 'schooling process which meets the needs of the future - if circumstances were ideal' (Beare, 2001, p. 85) where schools can develop or be transformed as 'educational clades, not clones' (p. 98). Generally, transformation is deemed successful if it is significant, systematic and sustained over time (Caldwell, 2005).

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Change is an essential and natural part of a school's growth and development. Any form of school improvement or reform is fundamentally aimed at the process of making a valued difference for students. O'Donnell (2007) notes change about transformation is how schools could, might or should be. She argues:

To maximise student learning and improve the effectiveness of the school organisation, change is a necessary process involving the willing or unwilling participation of all. Sustainable planned growth and development of a school requires an understanding and appreciation of the factors that impact on the change process. (p.11)

Transformational change is not only complex but also uniquely experienced by those in each school setting. New schools have the opportunity not only to change conventional school structures, processes and practices but also to interrupt the status quo and create future possibilities for staff and students.

Currently, consistent findings from the research literature are insightful, and reveal an emerging coherent landscape of successful and transformational school reform and change. Various researchers (see, for example, Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005; Mid-continent for Education and Leadership [McREL], 2000) write about limited or incremental changes, which are top-down, mechanical, superficial responses as first-order changes. First-order change as stated earlier requires schools and those within to change and adapt to policies and procedures in response to the changing needs of the internal and external school environments (O'Donnell, 2007). In this process, change comes from the staff's existing knowledge

and skills that are already in use in the school environment, however, first-order changes alone do not make long lasting and improved change.

The ability of leaders to understand and manage the change process is fundamental to the level of implementation success (Hallinger, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2004; Starr, 2008). Leading and managing change in schools must be balanced if staff are to respond constructively to the destabilisation they may experience as they move to change their beliefs and practices. Researchers, Degenhardt and Duignan (2010) highlight the need for leaders to:

Anticipate the struggle to maintain sufficient stability and equilibrium for (the) people to function on a daily basis without excessive psychological and organisational stress, while taking account of the need for the school to be constantly destabilised in acknowledging and responding to new needs'

(cited in Duignan, 2012 p. 49).

In analysing the failure of two major education reforms (progressive movement and the large-scale curriculum development projects) in the United States during the twentieth century, Elmore (1996) concluded that both these reform movements failed because they did not change fundamental patterns of functioning of the first-order kind at the centre of school practices. These first-order changes include changes to school, classroom and administration structures, instructional practices and assessments and communication avenues with community stakeholders. In the research on school improvement and school effectiveness, attention is directed to the narrow outward changes of student academic performance and the fundamental reasons for change in schools are ignored.

Like Heifetz and Linsky (2002) and O'Donnell (2007), Leithwood and Riehl, (2003) advances that if school reform is superficial it cannot be expected to transform schooling to maximum growth for both students and staff unless the school leaders and staff examine their philosophical beliefs about learning, teaching, the nature of the learner and how these then manifest in teaching, the classroom and school environment. Those

changes that bring significant and sustainable reform such as changing the underlying beliefs driving processes and practice are assigned as second-order changes that researchers (see Marzano et al., 2005; O'Donnell, 2007; Starr, 2008) contend are essential for transformational change to be achieved and sustained over time.

According to Fouts (2003), one of the reasons school reform has limited success is because the focus on change has essentially been first-order change, which is neither profound nor sustainable. Unless staff fully understand and accept the school's vision and philosophy (second-order change) transformational change remains tokenistic. The impression of change is created outwardly through superficial changes but the subjective experience for staff and students remains largely unchanged as the ideas driving daily instruction and practice also remain unchanged. For example, a first-order change may be to reduce class sizes, which in theory enables the teacher to develop closer relationships and more individual focused teaching with fewer students in the class. However, unless the teacher alters his/her philosophy on personal relationships with students and instructional practices in class, the same conditions prevail and second-order change is ignored.

There is less resistance from staff with first-order change, as it generally does not disrupt their fundamental beliefs and attitudes. Second-order change or fundamental change that is transforming, however, is often an unsettling experience for teachers as it involves a radical shift in thinking (Duignan 2006; Fullan, 2001, 2003) to become learners themselves, to think seriously about their beliefs and practices and to adopt different and often confronting ideas about their contribution to the school, classroom and the student. Fouts (2003) suggests that although second-order or philosophical changes encounter initial resistance with educators, when they are provided a safe and motivating process to explore and align their own beliefs and instructional practices with the intended reform, there is classroom teaching and learning success. The Mid-continent for Education and Leadership (McREL) (2003) group argues that it is risky to view second-order change as more advantageous than first-order change in any organisation as each adaptation meets different challenges, needs and environments. Those who are engaged in the process should ultimately determine the need and intensity of change. When educators adopt new ideas about instruction (second order changes), they might select strategies (first order changes) to put those ideas into practice. Together, first and second order changes help provide a qualitatively different experience for students and raise achievement.

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) also submit the differences between technical (first order) and adaptive (second order) change whereby the former is the complex process and challenge of finding solutions for problem in which staff do not yet know the solution and the latter is finding solutions to problems where the answer is known. In comparing the two, they note that adaptive change occurs at a deeper level of a person's psyche: in their hearts and minds. Fullan (2003) and Hinde (2003) stress the importance of leaders not to ignore the emotional and relational challenges that they and their staff may encounter as they navigate the establishment phase of the school journey. However, underpinning leadership capacity is the concept that leaders are well equipped with their own emotional intelligence so as to address conflicts and guide staff to successfully outcomes (Goleman, 1995, 2006; Herbert, 2010).

The emerging work of Scharmer (2007) challenges earlier notions of leadership and proposes that the level of success is a function of the quality of a person's awareness, attention and consciousness to the whole system in which they function. Transformational change in the twenty-first century he states requires 'a new consciousness and a new collective leadership capacity to meeting challenges in a more conscious, intentional and strategic way' (p. 1). He contends the collective failure of leaders to sustain transformational change comes not from knowing what to do or how to lead teams but in consciously understanding and attending to the emotional and social drivers of their leadership intentions and actions. Each person in a leadership role, even in the same circumstances, brings individual temperaments and personal characteristics that influence the process and degree of change possible. Scharmer (2007) refers to this inner place from which leaders operate as their 'blind spot' or the 'invisible dimension of leadership' (p. 14). To entertain this idea requires a deliberate shift in mainstream thinking about sustaining the status quo of the past. From Scharmer's perspective, this means not being content with limiting our understanding of what leaders do and how they utilise strategies and processes in that role but to be open to exploring the 'source from which people act such as when they act at their highest possible level or, alternatively, when they act without engagement or commitment' (p. 22). It is the intersection of a person's personal and emotional dimensions of their inner world (what they say, do and see) and the invisible realm (sources of attention and intention) from which there are future possibilities. Scharmer's work illuminates a more holistic understanding of the depth of experience brought to each relationship and situation. Leadership in

this century, he argues, ‘means shifting the structure of collective attention at all levels’ of human interaction (p. 12) thereby creating greater possible futures in transformational change.

The ultimate challenge of transformational change and sustainability, Fullan (2003) suggests, is in addressing the inevitable personal conflicts those experiencing the change go through.

Without learning new ways – changing attitudes, values and behaviours – people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in new environments. The sustainability of transformational change depends on having the leaders and the people with the problem, internalise the potential change.

(Fullan, 2003, p. 9).

Although a new school starts afresh, the staff employed bring with them existing beliefs and attitudes about change, the new school, the mandated vision and philosophy and their ideas about adapting to the new environment. Although it may be an exciting time for new staff that are motivated to ensure an effective entry into the establishment phase of the school, it can also be a very unsettling and challenging time emotionally and socially. Hinde (2003) supports Fullan’s view and argues that the emotional and relational consideration of any change on new school staff is often overlooked or discounted in the process of planning for innovation, often resulting in staff resistance and failed implementation. Acknowledging, accepting and giving staff’s feelings and thoughts (both positive and negative) credible attention and consideration, support staff to navigate the change path more successfully. Hinde (2003) also highlights the leader’s folly of ignoring or putting off those resistant to the change process. Instead, he suggests valuing the resistor’s input as providing insight otherwise not considered. Transformational change challenges staff habits, beliefs and values (Smith & Lovett, 2003), which if in conflict with the vision and philosophy of the new school can not only challenge their sense of self and professional competence but also can lead to resistance over time.

A further consider for leaders is the type and level of leadership required to support staff in establishing, developing and sustaining the school’s educational vision must reflect the magnitude of change required by

the innovation (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy; Labone, 2004; Marzano et al., 2005; Wheatley, 2005). Both first and second order change and the flexibility of adapting leadership styles to the needs of staff are essential for the leadership team and staff of a new school. The dilemma, the authors' propose is that:

The common human response is to address virtually all problems as though they were first order change issues. It makes sense that we tend to approach new problems from the perspective of our experiences.

(Marzano et al., 2005, p. 67)

Therefore, leaders overseeing new schools or advancing innovation must be conscious of the mental set from which they operate and acknowledge and action this solution from a second order perspective. In order to do this, the authors' forward, leaders must address the following seven out of twenty responsibilities the authors have found to be imperative for transforming and sustaining leadership:

1. Knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment
2. Optimiser or the driving force behind the new innovation, instilling belief in success
3. Intellectual stimulation by being knowledgeable about the research and theory of the innovation and sharing this among staff
4. Change agent by challenging and moving forward on the innovation without a guarantee of success
5. Monitor/evaluation the impact of the innovation
6. Flexibility by being directive and nondirective as the situation warrants
7. Ideals/beliefs about the innovation are modeled

(adapted from Marzano et al., 2005, p. 70-72)

Regardless of leadership style, the responsibility is to create with staff a shared sense of purpose, develop and sustain a positive school climate and provide staff with the intellectual invigoration, professional

learning opportunities for continued development and success (Hallinger, 2007).

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The challenge for staff in new schools is to ensure that their commitment and efforts in creating schools of the future are sustainable in the long-term. Hargreaves and Fink (2003) suggest that sustainability is more than whether change lasts but rather it is how an initiative and innovation can be implemented without compromising the development and implementation of others (initiatives and innovations) in the school environment both in the present and in the future. The authors argue that sustainability should be viewed as maintaining learning that lasts over time; supported by available or achievable resources; is a shared responsibility by staff; does not impact negatively on the surrounding environment; and builds future capacities' (p. 67).

Building the individual and collective capacities of new school leaders and staff to manage the change process of a developing school is critical to ensuring its continued improvement (Marzano et al., 2005; Nicholas, 2008). The traditional notion of school improvement is considered outcomes-oriented, such as improving student learning outcomes. However, Stoll (2009) suggests 'capacity' and thus sustainability should be considered more universally as an outcome like school improvement rather than a process that captures the essential 'complexity, interconnectedness and potential of different facets of the change process' (p. 116). This endorsed Mitchell and Sackney's (2000) and Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas' (2006) view that a school's capacity to adapt to change is not only influenced by the interdependence between personal, interpersonal and organisational factors but the outcome depends on the synergy between these interrelationships. Specifically, Stoll (2009) adds to Hargreaves and Fink's (2003) position by articulating the importance of teachers' contribution to building school capacity and sustainability. This, they determined was evidenced by their commitment to engage in continuous professional learning and in the life of the school community. Building the collective capacity of staff in new schools, like the process of change, is vastly complex and multifaceted (Fullan, 2006; Stoll, 2009), extending beyond the internal responsibility within the school but to also incorporate the capacity of external education systems that provide the new school with necessary supports.

Stoll (2009) proposes several limitations that although manifest differently in different schools should be

addressed if the new school was to build capacity and sustainable outcomes. A critical factor for leadership to consider in developing new school capacity is the professional capacity of incoming staff to implement the externally directed innovation with fidelity. Hatch (2001) points out that staff must be equipped with enough personal and professional capacity to be able to take on the broader challenge of adapting to both the internal and external expectations if school capacity and sustainability are to be successful. However, if there is insufficient capacity among staff to start with, Stoll (2009) suggests it is 'irresponsible' for school leaders to let those employed, simply get on with it' (p. 118). An example of this came from research of England's National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies (Earl, Watson, Levin, Leithwood, Fullan, Torrance & Volante, et al., 2002) and England's Key Stage 3 (Middle years) Strategy Pilot (Stoll, Stobart, Martin, Freeman, Freedman, Sammons, & Smees, 2003). The authors note that there is a risk that when school leaders were prescriptive in their instructional strategies, there is the potential for staff to rely on or become over-dependent on the directives rather than develop their own professional capacities. In this way Mulford (2008) suggests some staff may mitigate initiative and self-direction that by default may inhibit their own professional development and ultimately the school's capacity.

A noted barrier to effective implementation and sustainability of innovation for staff of a new school is for the school leaders and external systems to provide adequate time to learn about, implement and reflect on how to achieve successful outcomes. Staff capacity to change is enhanced by appropriate school-based professional development and the time to plan and apply their learning in the school context. Researchers also suggest that staff will adjust their pedagogy as a result of relevant and timely professional development opportunities (Desimone, 2009; Richmond, 1997). Teachers cannot change their practices if they do not learn new and meaningful practices to replace them. However, this can only occur when staff can directly apply what they learn in the contexts of the school environment in which they are teaching. In other words, if the staff cannot conceptualise themselves applying what they are learning through professional development to their students or to their current teaching circumstances, they tend to dismiss the research (Hinde, 2003, 2004).

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) purport that sustainability for schools must involve the whole staff in developing their individual and collective capacity for change and adaptation. Primarily this means that staff

actively engages in purposeful reflection, inquiry and action that help evaluate their personal and professional contributions demonstrating their commitment to the vision of the new school. When the quality of staff's learning and evaluation aligns with the vision of the school, sustainability is more successful. Sustainability, from this analysis Stoll (2009) notes is:

The honest appraisal of the conditions and outcomes that exist in the school; sustainability of inquiry and reflection; sustainability of conversations inside and outside the school; and sustainability of continuous learning designed to enhance students' success. Sustainability is the goal; capacity is the engine that will ultimately power the sustainability journey.

(Stoll & Earl, 2003 cited in Stoll, 2009 p. 121)

New schools have the opportunity to build internal school capacity by creating the regular and continuous 'spaces' within the school timetable to integrate the aforementioned processes. However, unless the process of building staff capacity is deliberately and strategically embedded in school structures and practices, becoming a habitual way of thinking and acting (Costa, 2008) then sustainability is significantly impeded. Capacity building in schools, Hill (1997) suggests, should become an essential habit of all staff and any successful innovation or improvement strategy should be accompanied by staff resolving to put in place the necessary elements to *ensure* the staff have the capacity for this to be sustainable. Building on this, Stoll (2009) advocates that issues of school leadership capacity, community capacity and system capacity should be addressed in order to support the successful development and sustainability of the school curriculum, school culture and new forms of school structures. It is essential that future education authorities and school staff address issues of implementation and development so that the rate and complexity of the change is managed well and successfully maintained (Burke, 2002).

The following chapter investigates the research underpinning the benefits of teaching SEL in a whole-school approach and outlines the strengths and challenges experienced by the new school staff.

CHAPTER 3 – SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

We must remember that intelligence is not enough! Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experience of social living

Martin Luther King (1947)

The beginning of a new school provides the incoming principal and staff with a myriad of opportunities to build a community reflective of their agreed values and aspirations. These can include a contemporary curriculum, flexible and supportive organisational structures, and processes for relationships among those in the school community to thrive and flourish. What place then, does teaching and developing students' social and emotional competencies have, if at all, in this new learning environment? The international and national empirical evidence strongly indicates that schools' attention to the development of students' social and emotional competencies not only builds a positive school climate but also if implemented with fidelity boosts academic achievement, both of which are desirable school and community goals.

The moral imperative and challenge for all schools is to educate and prepare students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for success in school and life beyond, however, what learning is fundamentally valued and prioritised by families, the public and educators, is changing. To be fully literate in the twenty first century means more than achieving standardised test scores and academic success. There is a growing consensus that the quality of life *also* depends on a person's ability to be responsible for their personal health and wellbeing, socially skilled with others including those from culturally diverse backgrounds, equipped to make responsible decisions, develop values and demonstrate ethical behaviours and be a contributing world citizen (Elias, 2003, 2009; Jennings & Greenberg, 2008).

Whilst these sentiments are noble and easily agreed to by educators, the reality in any school today is that although significant numbers of students come to school mentally well and readily engage with school life,

the classroom and the learning process, there are many who come to school with personal challenges such as varied abilities and motivation to learn, mental disorders, impaired social skills, inappropriate behaviour and disconnection to school (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [AIHW], 2010; Blum & Libbey, 2004; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Personally challenging for both staff and students, those with limited social and emotional competencies demonstrate less attachment to school which in turn negatively impacts on their learning, behaviour and general wellbeing and personal relationships, the very goals that staff work to promote.

SEL however, has emerged over the past two decades as a promising evidence-based approach that has the capacity to build an individual's social and emotional wellbeing. The development of social and emotional skills targets the prevention and intervention of students demonstrating 'at-risk' behaviours but at the same time promotes learning and life success (Elias, 2003, Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes & Shriver et al., 1997; Zins & Elias, 2006 cited in Payton, Weissberg, Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor, Schellinger & Pachan, 2008). There are pressing reasons why youth today need different types knowledge and skills so they can successfully navigate their personal and academic world. The mental health and wellbeing of students and staff in schools has been identified across all Australian education sectors as being of interest and concern. What is evident in both primary and secondary schools is that although there are many students who achieve and are engaged in the active process of learning in and out of the classroom but there are also many who struggle to achieve academically, are disengaged from teachers, peers and the school and aim to leave or 'drop-out' as soon as allowable (Blum & Libbey, 2004).

The need to address these growing concerns is also substantiated by reports on a broad range of indicators concerning Australia's children and young people's health, development and wellbeing (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2007; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2008, 2012; Australia Research Alliance on Children and Youth, [ARACY], 2008). Nationally, the health status and wellbeing of young people is reported on every two years by the AIHW. A snapshot from the data collected in 2007, noted that 26% of those between 16-24 years with a mental disorder and 9% reported having high or very high levels of psychological distressed as measured by the Kessler (K10) scale. Of this group 13% reported rate of substance use disorders. Within the 12-24 year old group of young people 11% reported being daily

smokers; 30% and 12% drank at 'risky or high-risk levels' in the short term or long term respectively; 19% had used illicit drugs within the last 12 months. From a physical health perspective, 35% were overweight or obese with 5% meeting the Australian Dietary Guidelines although this improved within the 15-24 year old age group with 35% meeting the same Guidelines (AIHW, 2012).

The annual *National Survey of Young Australians* (Mission Australia, 2011) added further support for supporting wellbeing interventions with responses from 45,916 young people aged 11 to 24 ranked their top three personal concerns. In summary some statistics included, concerns with *school or study problems* increased from 25.5% in 2010 to 37.3% in 2011, *coping with stress*, 35.4% compared with 31.1% in 2010 and *body image* with 33.1% an increase from 31.1% in 2010. However, the report noted that consistent between 2010 and 2011 was the top items valued by the group namely, *family relationships and friendships*, 74.3% and 59% respectively. Interestingly, *school or study satisfaction* was the third top issue highly valued by 36.9% of respondents, which was an increase from 29.3% in 2010.

Student wellbeing is a complex construct and even with targeted interventions aimed at reducing the symptoms such as mental illness and inhibiting at-risk behaviours (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman, Harris, Jones et al., 1997; Roberts, Kane, Thomson, Bishop, & Hart, 2003), a significant proportion of adolescents still reported experiencing mental health difficulties with the possibility of developing co-morbid mental health illness later in life and/or engaged in at-risk behaviours such as substance abuse. In considering risky adolescent behaviours earlier research by Dryboos (1997) and Eaton, Kann, Kinchen, Shanklin, Ross, & Hawkins (2008 cited in Durlak et al., 2011) also found that 30% of secondary school students engage in multiple high-risk behaviours such as substance misuse, sexual activity, depression and attempted suicide that ultimately interfere and threaten school achievement and potential life success.

The social and emotional wellbeing of young people today is quickly becoming a permanent agenda to incorporate within schools. In Australia, at federal, state and school levels of education, student wellbeing policies and programs are being funded to address anti-social behaviour and other mental health problems of young people, as well as to promote pro-social, affective and social outcomes for all students (Mindmatters,

2000; National Action Plan for Mental Health, COAG 2006-2011; Personal Development, Health and Physical Education [PDHPE] Syllabus, 2003). Governments and communities are increasingly holding schools accountable for programs and practices to foster positive student social and emotional wellbeing and to respond to the challenges of poor mental health.

Bernard, Stephanou and Urbach (2007) conducted the first Australian Social and Emotional Wellbeing survey with more than 10,000 students from pre-school through to year 12 and over 7,800 teachers. Commissioned by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the survey explored teachers' perceptions of their students' social and emotional competencies and the students reported on their personal social and emotional competencies. The survey measured the presence or absence of positive indicators of social and emotional wellbeing. These included contributing factors such as environmental factors (positive child-adult relationship, decision-making, pro-social behaviours) and social and emotional factors like resilience (rational attitudes and coping skills), positive school orientation (social skills and values) and positive work orientation (learning capabilities, work confidence, persistence and organising cooperation). The findings indicated that students reporting positive social and emotional wellbeing also reported fewer negative indicators of wellbeing. Additionally, these students demonstrated increasing degrees of resilience, positive social and work orientation, and perceived helpful interactions with adults, peers and adolescent programs in all settings they attended. The reverse was true of students reporting low levels of social and emotional wellbeing. These students demonstrated greater numbers of negative indicators and fewer numbers of positive or protective indicators of social and emotional wellbeing (Bernard et al., 2007). The researchers raised the following important issues for students and staff that emerged from the survey results:

- Significant numbers of students experience social and emotional difficulties;
- In secondary schools, levels of social and emotional wellbeing decrease with age;
- Students at all stages of the social and emotional wellbeing continuum demonstrate childhood challenges.
- There are consistent differences between teachers' perception of students' social and emotional wellbeing and students' perceptions of their social and emotional

wellbeing;

- Significant gender differences were scored on individual social and emotional characteristics with girls demonstrating higher levels of social and emotional wellbeing;
- Parenting is an important contributor to students' social and emotional wellbeing and in particular conversing with students about their feelings and how to cope with them;
- Teachers' actions are equally important to building students' social and emotional wellbeing. Teachers of these students experience positive learning outcomes, relationships, similar conversations about school, making friends and how to cope with challenges; and
- The community contributes to the student's wellbeing. Students with high social and emotional wellbeing perceive multiple opportunities to participate and view the wider community as interesting and supportive.

(adapted from ASG Australian Social and Emotional Survey, 2007, pp. 5-7)

Although 82-86% of students in the national survey reported experiencing good mental health, an earlier critique from Eckersley, Wierenga and Wyn (2005) challenged reporting on a single dimension of mental health as indicating levels of wellbeing. From their study, the researchers estimated up to a third of Australians show significant psychological distress and up to 50% a general dissatisfaction with life. This was not reflected in the self-report method in the ASG *Australian Student Social and Emotional Survey* as responses were reported on the single dimension of being satisfied with life or having a mental illness to indicate the level of mental health. Eckersley et al. (2005) recommended that when attempting to define mental health, an investigation of the person's complete mental functioning along a continuum of mental illness and mental health symptoms should be considered.

In reporting their findings from the AGS Australian Student Social and Emotional Survey (2007), Bernard and his colleagues directed governments, parents and school communities to consider the following issues. Despite the general findings almost 50% of students in the survey did not believe they learnt about their feelings and how to manage their stress and 40% did not learn how to or have the knowledge and skills to resolve interpersonal problems. The data from this survey highlighted important findings that formed seven critical recommendations for educators, parents and community to consider:

1. Priority for making social and emotional wellbeing as important to the mission of education as academic achievement;
2. Preventative SEL curricula need to be introduced at all levels of schooling for all students;
3. Schools need support to develop the capacity to deliver SEL; ongoing professional learning for teachers that support the social and emotional development and wellbeing of students at lower levels of social and emotional wellbeing;
4. Ongoing assessment of student SEL and wellbeing;
5. The staffing and design of student welfare services should cater for the distribution of levels of social and emotional wellbeing in their student population;
6. Parent education in children's social and emotional wellbeing; and
7. SEL for boys.

(Bernard et al., 2007 pp. 107-119).

Clearly, the concern for the social and emotional wellbeing of young people was not limited to the Australian population. In an American national study assessing 148,189 year 6 to year 12 students of their social abilities, Klem and Connell (2004) reported that less than 50% of students perceived they were competent with sympathy, decision-making and conflict resolution skills with 29% indicating that their school provided a safe and supportive environment. Of significant interest was students moved to secondary school, 40-60% reported being frequently disengaged from schools. This report highlighted the challenges secondary schools encounter with adolescents but also points to the need for a long-term approach to developing these skills that ranges from kindergarten through to year 12 at school. Just like the discipline of Literacy or Numeracy begins early in the school journey, and is planned, and developed over the 13 years of schooling

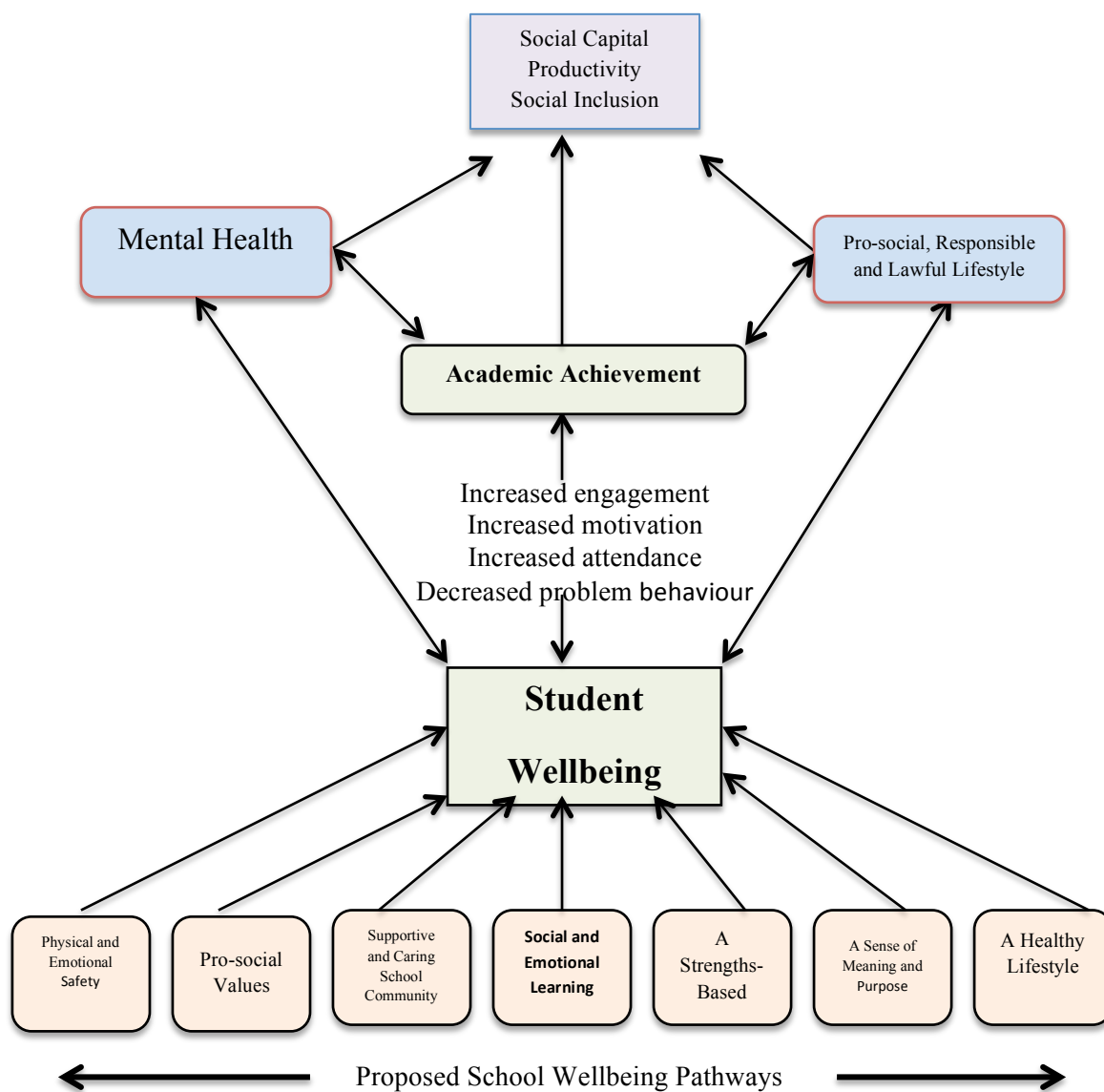
to mastery, so must the discipline of SEL so that mastery of basic skills can be attained before leaving school.

Schools have been progressively responding to the evidence linking social and emotional wellbeing with positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for students (Elias, Greenberg & Weissberg, 2000; Zins & Elias, 2006; Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004) and rising to the challenge of integrating student wellbeing into the core mission of schooling. Noble, McGrath, Roffey and Rowlings (2008) were commissioned by the Australian Department of education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to conduct a scoping study to explore the value of developing a student wellbeing national framework that encompassed a holistic and comprehensive approach to student wellbeing with the view of integrating it in the school curriculum. The scoping study explored empirical evidence and analysis of Australian and international literature, policies and initiatives on the links between student wellbeing and student learning outcomes; the impact of student learning outcomes on wellbeing such as bullying, physical and mental health, overweight and obesity, poor nutrition, drug use, interpersonal relationship and the impact of a whole school approach to student wellbeing. Ultimately the researchers proposed a Wellbeing Pathways Framework namely:

1. Building a supportive, respectful and inclusive school community;
2. Developing pro-social values;
3. Providing a safe learning environment;
4. Enhancing SEL;
5. Using strengths-based approach;
6. Fostering a sense of meaning and purpose; and
7. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

(Noble et al., 2008, p. 6)

The authors noted that the research evidence for each pathway revealed a positive impact on students' educational outcomes and wellbeing. They contended that students who demonstrated strong levels of wellbeing and were competent in accessing many of the suggested pathways were more likely to experience 'better mental health, achieve higher academic outcomes, complete Year 12 or equivalent and engage in a socially responsible lifestyle' (p. 32). These personal characteristics, achievements and outcomes they posited significantly contribute to Australia's economic productivity and continue to build its social capital. The overall framework is represented below (see figure 3.1).



(Noble, McGrath, Roffey & Rowling, 2008, p. 32)

Figure 3.1: Diagram of the Proposed School Wellbeing Pathways

Of interest to this study appears in Pathway 4, explicitly naming SEL, and the empirical evidence supporting its inclusion in the framework. The comprehensive literature review undertaken by the researchers (Noble et al., 2008) established that the development and application of social and emotional skills during a child's school years are foundational to the core business of schools. In other words, students who demonstrated social and emotional competency such as cooperating with others, managing their emotions, coping with setbacks and solving problems effectively were more successful socially and academically.

There was strong support from members of the state, territory and non-government authorities to the proposed National Student Wellbeing Framework commenting that it provided a much-needed focus by placing higher significance on student wellbeing. The authorities acknowledged that student wellbeing should have a higher status in the curriculum and the proposed framework importantly was based on a whole school approach, was pro-active and integrated and linked to other national policies and provided a benchmark of quality. However, the proposed Student Wellbeing Framework has not been mandated any educational authority to date. Interestingly, the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008), the revised National Safe Schools Framework (2005, revised 2011), the National Values Education Framework (2007), and the National Action Plan on Mental Health (2006-2011), collectively and explicitly acknowledge the strong link that exists between students' sense of self-worth, their emotional and social wellbeing, enjoyment for learning and confidence and optimism for their future. An underlying theme to all the frameworks is that school-based universal prevention approaches, such as SEL and early intervention, can make a significant difference to students' wellbeing and their engagement with learning and school.

There is also compelling evidence (Seligman, 1998) that an individual's psychological state affects health. Depression, anxiety and a negative view of life can hamper the state of one's health in the short and long term. The converse is also apparent: when individuals demonstrate optimism, are motivated, and have higher levels of achievement, they report enjoying better mental and physical health. Seligman's work in advancing the *Positive Psychology* movement, principled his work on valuing an individual's subjective experience: well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (past), hope and optimism (future), and flow and happiness (present). At the individual level it is about positive traits such as courage, interpersonal skill,

perseverance and at a group or social level it is developing in oneself values that promote citizenship such as responsibility, altruism, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman, 1998). A branch of Positive Psychology, easily transferred to the school setting is *Positive Education*, which is education for both traditional skills and for happiness. The high prevalence worldwide of depression among young people, the small rise in life satisfaction, and the synergy between learning and positive emotion all argue that the skills for happiness should be taught in school (Noble & McGrath, 2008; Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013).

At a time in Australian schools, when staff report significant stress, experience increasing system expectations and accountabilities, manage an overcrowded curriculum, cope with competing agendas (mandatory or voluntary), and work with limited resources and funding, SEL offers educators an efficient and teachable strategy that addresses the essential educational goals of promoting youth development and wellbeing and school success and achievement. The formation of the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) organisation in the United States in 1994 advanced the explicit development of academic, social and emotional competence for all students. CASEL state their mission is to 'help make evidence-based SEL an integrate part of education from pre-school through high school and to collaborate to ensure all students become knowledgeable, responsible, caring and contributing members of society' (<http://www.casel.org>). The CASEL researchers and educators have been instrumental and continue to lead research, practice and policy in advancing the science of SEL. It is through the pioneering work of CASEL that schools have been provided with a practical framework for integrating emotional, social and academic dimensions of learning.

WHAT IS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

CASEL defined SEL as the process, through which individuals acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills that culminate in defined competencies in the areas of self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making and relationship skills (Elias et al., 1997). Five interrelated sets of cognitive, behavioural and affective competencies form the basis for a model of SEL (see figure 3.2).



Figure 3.2. Social and Emotional Core Competencies (CASEL, 2002)

The core SEL competencies are depicted and defined as:

1. **Self-awareness:** Recognise one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour, including accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a sense of self-confidence and optimism;
2. **Self-management:** Regulate one's thoughts, emotions and behaviours effectively in different situations including reactions to stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals;
3. **Social-awareness:** Take the perspective of and empathise with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures; understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognise essential family, school, and community resources and supports;
4. **Relationship skills:** Establish and maintain healthy and satisfying relationships with diverse individuals and groups; communicating clearly, listening actively, co-operating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively,

and seeking and offering help when needed; and

5. **Responsible decision-making:** Make constructive and respectful choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the wellbeing of self and others. (www.CASEL.org)

There is a natural link between SEL skills and appropriate social and emotional needs of young people. Adolescence is a unique time in the life span for significant developmental change and challenge. It is a time where their self-concept, image, identity and peer relationships are powerful motivators of both positive and negative behaviours. However, skills to take on new roles and responsibilities, renegotiate relationships and entry into the adult world are essential skills to navigate these normal developmental milestones. Other development concerns facing adolescents are the need for them to establish emotional and psychological independence from parents, develop a sense of values and morals that make sense to them in their world and develop impulse control and behaviour maturity, all of which can be challenging. Research suggests that risky behaviours that compromise a person's social, emotional or physical health may be related to psychological conditions such as stress and depression (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2007; AIHW, 2008, 2010; ARACY, 2008; Carr-Gregg, 2000; Mindmatters, 2000; Resnick et al., 1997). Adolescence is also the period for the onset of many mental health disorders with 75% having an onset prior to the age of 25 years (Bernard et al., 2007).

Erikson (1968) argues that there are two essential and interconnecting factors that influence both students' successes and problematic behaviours during the adolescent period. The first one is the degree to which a young person is able to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes (capacities) to navigate social relationships and environments, as they are critical factors in determining whether they remain engaged and achieve at school, develop peer relationships and feel positive about themselves and their future beyond school. The second is to provide the young person with multiple opportunities to learn, apply and commit to their social-emotional (identify, meaning, purpose) and academic goals (Eccles & Midley, 1989; Masten &

Coatsworth, 1998). The context of the whole school environment in influencing student behaviours should not be underestimated. Social contexts matter and schools are the central context affecting their social and emotional development.

The construct of SEL is based on an interdisciplinary and interactive approach linking theories and research from child development, social pedagogy and emotional intelligence with the latter informed by studies in neuroscience. This literature review draws on international and national research, as well as initiatives and programs that focus on the evolution, application and challenges of incorporating the process of SEL into the broad curriculum and the wider school setting.

Learning and intelligence are inextricably linked and in educational settings aligned to a learner's potential academic success. However, just what the traditional concept of intelligence determines in terms of success in school and life has been challenged and consequently our understanding of what intelligence could be has broadened to one that is multi-dimensional rather than a fixed general mental ability related to manipulating cognitive information.

The concept of social and emotional skills as applied to general learning is not new, and was identified over the past century by researchers as an essential component of intelligence. Thorndike (1920) identified 'social or practical' intelligence along with Weschler (1940) who acknowledged in addition to a person's 'intellective' elements of processing cognitive information there were also 'non-intellective' elements such as social, emotional and personal factors that also had an influence on a person's intellectual capacity.

The nature of intelligence and the SEL construct was further advanced by Gardner (1983) who theorised that intelligence was multi-dimensional and identified interpersonal (understanding, interacting with others) and intrapersonal intelligence (understanding, interacting with others) as two of a possible seven intelligences which challenged the way students' learning was viewed by educators. Gardner's work was the SEL forerunner of what Salovey and Mayer (1990), then termed 'emotional intelligence.' Goleman (1995) with his book *Emotional Intelligence* synthesised the research on social and emotional competencies thereby bringing the concept into focus through the public domain. Controversially, Goleman (1995) reported that where all things are equal between two people then IQ was a minor predictor of success in life. However, if

IQ scores were equal it would be an individual's social and emotional competencies (EQ) that were far better predictors of success and wellbeing. In his work, Gardner argued that emotional intelligence skills could be taught and learned but it is in the context of social relationships and settings that the skills make meaning to individuals (Goleman, 2006). He advocates that teaching and cultivating social and emotional skills will amass both short-term and long-term advantages regarding wellbeing, achievement and success in life. He outlines five crucial emotional competencies basic to SEL that when mastered result in emotional intelligence: self and other awareness; mood management; self-motivation; empathy; and, management of relationships.

THE ROLE OF EMOTION AND SOCIAL CONTEXT IN LEARNING AND RELATIONSHIPS

Emotions are core to human development and particularly affect our relationships, how and what we learn and how we use what we learn in all the context and settings in which we live. Neuroscience, in studying the mechanics of the brain, has found that emotions are powerful feelings that depending on a person's perspective or understanding of an event can either help or hinder the way we related to others, work and play (LeDoux, 1996). For example, positive and stimulating emotions promote engagement and active learning whereas negative emotions such as poorly managed stress or impulsive behaviours impede attention and memory process thereby inhibiting learning. Additionally, by nature, we are social beings and learning in schools is inherently a social process where interactions and personal relationships between peers and staff are foundational to building school community and climate. For this reason, developing skills of recognising and managing emotions and maintaining quality relationships support the aim of schools to promote supportive and respectful learning environments. Elias et al. (1997) point out that it is these types of environments that support students' success in school and in life generally. There is a vested interest, then, for all educators to allocate sufficient time to develop students' social and emotional competencies such as they demonstrate when developing knowledge and skills for all curriculum Key Learning Areas such as Mathematics and English.

Learning social and emotional skills in this context is better understood as the everyday application of emotional intelligence in the context of the school environment. Although in its relative infancy, empirical research is accumulating rapidly, demonstrating the links and benefits to the whole school community when learning and teaching is focused not only on academics but also on the personal aspects of self and others.

SCHOOLS: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

By using evidence-based research to name the essential components of a positive school climate, a new school can plan organisational structures and process to achieve these aims. It is an opportunity for students and staff to experience the theory in practice. In secondary school there is more emphasis placed on teaching a particular Key Learning Area (KLA) and less on staff serving as a coach and mentor. Moreover, with large numbers of students in secondary schools it is easy not to notice someone, so building and maintaining relationships is a critical aspect to forming a positive school culture based on respect for one another. The lack of opportunity to develop personal relationships and the multitude of teachers and student personalities can create student alienation and detachment from school. Unsurprisingly, students, like adults, want to be respected, listened to and supported (Bernard, 2004; Bernard et al., 2007; Fuller, 2001; Nobel et al., 2008) and without a sense of security and connect can develop symptoms of stress, anxiety and separation that become life-long.

Planning a new school can provide timetabled opportunities for small group work as this transforms classes into supportive learning teams. The structure of small group work also helps students practise essential SEL skills such as social, problem solving and communication skills needed for success in the workplace. In addition, groups serve as forums where students can personalise their learning experiences and identify and correct misconceptions and gaps in understanding. Planning and organisation are necessary for groups to be productive learning mechanisms.

Educational research has consistently demonstrated that a positive school climate is associated with psychological and physical safety (Carr-Gregg, 2000; Rigby, 2004; Wang, Berry & Swearer, 2013), positive relationships (Noble & McGrath, 2008, Noble et al., 2008), student engagement and academic achievement (Osterman, 2000), school attachment and effective risk prevention endeavours (Bond, Butler, Thomas,

Carlin, Glover, Bowes, & Patton, 2007; Carr-Gregg, 2000), and the general development of student wellbeing (Bernard, 2004, 2006; Bernard et al., 2007; Carr-Gregg, 2000; Fuller, 2001) all of which are viable aims of the school's mission and vision statements.

In their school-based longitudinal study of 2678 Australian secondary Year 8 (13-14 year old) and Year 10 (16 years old) students, Bond et al. (2007) found students having both good school and social connectedness in Year 8 was associated with the best outcomes post school. In contrast, participants with low school connectedness but good social connectedness were at elevated risk of anxiety/depressive symptoms, regular smoking, drinking alcohol and using marijuana in later years. The likelihood of completing school was reduced for those students with poor social connectedness (relationships), low school connectedness or both. The authors concluded the importance of educators finding ways to promote both school and social connectedness, as these are strong indicators of health and learning outcomes. The SEL skills associated with the key areas of self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making all support school attachment and effective risk prevention endeavours.

The quality and character of school life is reflected by the goals, values, interpersonal relationships, learning and teaching practices and organisational structures that the school actions and supports (Centre for Social and Emotional Education [CSEE], 2007). Students naming their school as being supportive also report feeling more connected to the school community. They demonstrate more prosocial behaviours, resolve conflicts justly, are more inclusive than exclusive and show more care and empathy for others (Bond et. al., 1999; Schaps, 2003). School climate, however, takes time to build and as a new school with effort and commitment from all staff, it will still take three to five years to become embedded in culture.

Student wellbeing and thus SEL cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader school context (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps 1997; Elias et al., 1997; Leary, 2000 cited in Fraillon, 2000; Rickwood, Boyle, Spears & Scott, 2002 cited in Schaps, 2003)). Schools provide the daily context and also act as key agents finding opportunities to teach SEL to build wellbeing competence.

STUDENTS: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

It is now well established that developing students' social and emotional competencies and providing multiple opportunities to apply their skills in the school setting had benefits for the school community. SEL has been linked to strengthening students' readiness for learning and promoting positive attitudes, feelings and behaviours that contribute to school performance and success (Elias, 2003; Salovey & Sluyter, 1997; Zins et al., 2004).

Researchers found implementing SEL in the school environment led not only to enhanced personal skills but to unexpected improved learning outcomes as was measured by a variety of techniques among which was standardised achievement test scores and grades (Capara, Barbanelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Coie & Krebhiel, 1984; Schonert-Reichl & Hymel, 2007; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Durlak et al., 2011; Zins et al., 2004). The common theme amongst these researchers was in the positive link between SEL and academic outcomes. Coie and Krebhiel (1984) found when measuring the effects of academic tutoring on the social status of low achieving socially rejected children that school interventions targeting social and emotional competencies improved their academic scores, however, the reverse was not true in that achieving academically did not increase social and emotional competence.

The power and potential of SEL impacting on academic achievement was also evident when Wentzel (1993) confirmed from her research that children demonstrating and applying prosocial behaviours in the classroom predicted academic achievement more reliably than their standardised test scores. Adding support to Wentzel's (1993) research, Capara et al. (2000) demonstrated that a better predictor of academic success from Grade 3 to Grade 8 was a teacher knowing a student's social competence in Grade 3 rather than their grade 3 academic achievement. A significant meta-analysis by Durlak and Weissberg (2007) of over 300 research studies on SEL programs demonstrated that the average student participating in the SEL intervention group ranked at least 11 percentile points higher on achievement scores and gained higher grades than those average students in the control group who did not access the SEL intervention. An additional advantage for students in the SEL intervention group continued to demonstrate improved general classroom behaviour post intervention.

Multiple research studies have demonstrated that students with poor relationships with peers and/or teachers are more likely to misuse drugs and alcohol, engage in more social disruptive behaviours, more likely to be bullied and harassed, report anxiety and depressive symptoms and more likely fail to attend or complete compulsory schooling (Bond et al., 2007; Resnick Harris & Blum, 1993; Tadich, Deed, Campbell & Prain, 2007). The development of social and emotional competencies provides students demonstrating at-risk behaviours the skills to navigate the common language to express their feelings recognise their anxiety and have available resolution for conflict.

STAFF: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

A vital component of any successful new school lies with the capacity of those (principal and staff) who are responsible for the students in their care (Bernard et al., 2007). It is not enough to acknowledge the increasing empirical research demonstrating that SEL produces beneficial personal and academic outcomes for staff and students alike. Schools have a moral imperative to embed SEL into their school practices.

The quality of the leadership team within a school cannot be underestimated. The leader's ability to engage staff and gain their active support has been identified through a decade of research as a predictor of the success in implementing new initiatives. Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) in reviewing multiple studies on leadership found that the quality of leaders in schools accounted for 25% of the variance on student learning followed by the quality of the curriculum and the quality of the teacher instruction. Leaders play a central role in the implementation and sustainability of SEL. Leaders who are able to create a shared SEL vision, implicitly and explicitly promote and support SEL instructional practices, shape the school's organisational and support structures, assign adequate resources, time and funding and provide staff with SEL professional learning opportunities, will be more successful in the implementation of SEL within the school environment (Amabile & Kramer, 2011).

The direction and public support from the principal and the leadership team of any school-based SEL initiative is essential if it is to become embedded in school ethos and culture. If there is a commitment from schools to integrate a SEL framework to the learning program, it is essential that the school's leadership

team, publically and systematically support the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and sustainability of the SEL innovation.

The role and attitudes of teachers in school is equally as important as the leadership team when it comes to making a difference to student learning (Hattie, 2009). A recent survey of 605 American teachers (pre-kindergarten to year 12) was canvassed in the *National Teacher Survey on How SEL Can Empower Children and Transform Schools* with opinions collated on the role and perceived value of SEL in schools (Civic Enterprises, Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013). The study not only sought a comprehensive view of the perspectives of teachers and students but also investigated case studies of successful schools implementing SEL. Recommendations were then provided to education systems and schools on approaches to promote, strengthen and sustain SEL (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

The results of this survey added important data to the mass of accumulated research supporting the implementation of SEL in school. In summary, the findings indicated that 93% of teachers surveyed valued SEL; 97% endorsed the benefit to all students; 95% believed SEL was teachable; 88% agreed that SEL was taught in their school, however, only 44% acknowledged that SEL was taught as a school-wide process. In terms of student benefit, 87% of teachers surveyed felt it boosted employment readiness, 80% with school attendance and graduation, 87% life success, 78% post school tertiary entrance, 75% academic success and 87% supported SEL as developing citizenship. Of the sample teachers surveyed, 77% believed that SEL would increase standardised test scores and overall academic standing reinforcing earlier researchers (see Durlak et al., 2011; Elias, 2009; Elias et al., 1997; Zins et al., 2004) reported students' improved attitudes, such as motivation to learn and general behaviours improved peer relationships and a stronger attachment to school when explicitly taught SEL.

The findings of the American *National Survey on How SEL Can Empower Children and Transform Schools (2013)* also revealed that when it came to SEL preventing and reducing bullying in school, 42% of teachers suggested it was somewhat of a problem and 75% believed SEL very important as a possible solution. Moreover, there was a correlation between higher rates of bullying reported and school with limited access to SEL (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Of the sample surveyed, 87% of teachers perceived SEL as a

solution to a negative school climate; 43% of teachers where SEL was not taught compared to 28% of teachers where SEL was taught on a systematic basis reported school climate as a problem. Eighty-five percent of teachers reporting improvement in core subject knowledge if SEL was implemented on a school-wide basis, compared to schools where SEL was incidental (72%) or non-existent (62%). In the context of student behaviour 57% percent of teachers surveyed believed that negative student behaviour was somewhat a problem with 58% acknowledging SEL as very important and 79% believed SEL would improve poor behaviour. Earlier studies also found that SEL programs addressed student conduct problems and decreased emotional distress compared to students not attending SEL programs (Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett, & Weissberg, 2000; Payton et al., 2008).

The role and influence of staff in schools cannot be underestimated as they have a vital role in promoting SEL instruction for students, which in turn creates positive experiences for students and teachers alike. It is now well established that teacher quality is the single strongest in-school influence on student engagement and learning outcomes which, in turn, is dependent on the quality of the teacher-student relationship (Hattie, 2009; Klem & O'Connell, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Rowe, 2003, 2004). Research studies found a positive correlation between the relationship and support of the teacher and students following school and classroom rules and behaviour expectations and their positive interactions with their peers (Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004; Wentzel, 1998). In addition, teachers who provided students with multiple opportunities to practise and apply cooperative and collaborative learning skills scored significantly higher on measures of cognitive problem solving. Working collaboratively in different situations promoted the development of empathy and conflict resolution strategies, which in turn provided the building block for self-efficacy and peer relationships (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Solomon, Watson, Delucchi, Schaps, & Battistich, 1998).

There is a symbiotic relationship between teachers promoting respectful and psychologically safe classroom environments (Brooks & Goldstein, 2008; Norris, 2003) and the level of students' social and emotional competency. Students who are open to developing their social and emotional competencies in a psychological safe classroom will in turn take similar risks with learning, peer interaction and continued SEL instruction thereby reinforcing and building vibrant learning and social environments. This reciprocal relationship extends to the manner in which the staff member organises and manages their classroom. When

rules and behaviour are managed well, students choose to behave accordingly so the staff reports more satisfaction in teaching, lessons are instructional and academic learning of all students is fostered (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, & Sugai, 2008).

For a new school, there is not a past history with either the student or the staff member so it presents an opportunity to organise the classroom, collaborate with students about behaviour expectations and begin with a common understanding of what kinds of classroom climate are desired. Although a mandatory compliance requirement of school registration in New South Wales (Board of Studies, 2010), schools readily acknowledge that safe and supportive school environments underpin good learning and relational outcomes in schools and actively promote a positive school climate. It is now incumbent upon teachers to give pedagogical attention to social and emotional instruction within the academic curriculum, classroom structures and other activities (Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008; Tadich et al., 2007).

PROGRAMS: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

There are many decisions to be made and acted upon with the establishment of a new school and having the benefit of research outcomes can greatly help staff in planning and implementing SEL with fidelity from the beginning. A review of school-based SEL programs on students, undertaken by Payton et al. (2008), concluded that evidence-based programs are correlated with improved academic performance. This comprehensive review included 317 studies involving 324,303 school children aged 5-13 years. The study compared students in the control groups with children participating in SEL programs with improvements notably in the areas of social and emotional skills, attitudes towards self, school and others, pro-social behaviours, reduced inappropriate behaviours and emotional distress and improved academic outcomes. Students involved in SEL programs demonstrated an average gain on achievement test scores of 11 to 17 percentile points. These results suggest that SEL programs implemented with fidelity have the potential to raise a student performing at the 50th percentile in terms of their school achievement to the 61st percentile which is a significant 11 percentile rise. In relation to the impact for students and schools, Payton notes:

Although some educators argue against implementing this type of holistic programming because it takes valuable time away from core academic material, our findings suggest that SEL programming not only does not detract from academic performance but actually increases students' performance on standardised tests and grades.

(Payton et al., 2008, p. 2)

A review of the literature on the effectiveness of SEL programs indicated that there were significantly better results when the SEL program was delivered school-wide rather than delivered to nominated students and/or classes (Johnson & Johnson, cited in Zins et al., 2004). Additionally, the same results were demonstrated when SEL programs were integrated into the school curriculum and in general school activities rather than seen as a separate or add-on approach (Galloway & Roland, 2004; Scheckner, Rollins, Kaiser-Ulrey, & Wagner, 2002). A review of school-based mental health programs determined that whole-school programs worked best, when implemented for longer than a year and focused on the promotion of mental health rather than the prevention of mental illness (Wells, Barlow, & Stewart-Brown, 2003).

Universal school-based programs that are delivered to all students are more effective than programs delivered only to selected 'at-risk' students. Reviews of research suggest that it is more effective to develop strengths and protective factors than to target 'at-risk' factors. However, there needs to be some attention paid to risk factors as well (Greenberg, Weissberg, Utne-O'Brien, Zins, Resnik, & Elias, 2001; Hawkins et al., 1999; Hawkins et al., 1992).

The scoping study into approaches to student wellbeing (Noble et al., 2008) revealed that school-based prevention programs or instruction such as SEL were more effective when they were embedded in the curriculum, practices and daily life of the school rather than being added on. Programs for promoting student wellbeing are less effective if they are perceived by teachers as add-on extras rather than as an integral part of their work and the curriculum. Sellman (2002) argued that if a program or practices are viewed as an add-on feature, it is easy for staff to discard as not a core component of the curriculum and then less likely to be sustained over time. When a program is embedded, the skills, concepts and understandings

from the program are located in other KLAs and programs and applied in a variety of classroom and school yard contexts such as assemblies, camps, retreats, or social justice activities. The values, skills and concepts are also supported by teaching practices, interactions and other school activities and experiences. Programs are adapted to fit with existing programs and practices within the school. Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg (2003) also highlighted the danger of using narrow programs that do not take into account the context of a specific school and the needs of its staff and students. De-contextualized goals and materials of the new initiative are therefore unlikely to be sustainable over time (CASEL, 2005).

Staff in the *National Teacher Survey on How SEL Can Empower Children to Transform Schools* (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013) also identified school-wide programs and embedding SEL into the national learning standards as strong support leading to SEL sustainability. With teachers commenting on the lack of time as an implementation challenge, integrating SEL into the mainstream curriculum, giving SEL the same instructional focus as core subjects actually saves professional time and energy. Sixty-two percent of teachers advocated explicit social and emotional competencies should be stated as mandatory elements in their education state standards, which would ensure students would receive evidence-based SEL instructions. Programs that are implemented on a reactionary basis for a student or group of students identified as ‘at-risk’ as short- term prevention interventions produce time-limited benefits. Multi-year programs are more likely to foster enduring benefits (CASEL, 2002, 2005; Greenberg, Weissberg, O’Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnick & Elias, 2003; Greenberg et al., 2003; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998), particularly if sequenced so students are continually building onto and mastering SEL skills.

A multi-strategic approach using a collection of coordinated ‘active ingredients’ works better than a single approach and is an essential feature of any successful prevention program (Blum 1998; Greenberg et al., 2003; Hawkins et al., 1992; Kellerman, Fuqua-Whitlley, Rivara, & Mervy, 1998; Resnick et al., 1997). Wilson, Gottfredson and Najaka (2001) argued that the most important question should be concerned about what combinations and sequences of strategies of strategies are most successful rather than the single program that works best. A meta-analysis by Zins et al. (2004) of the various types of SEL programs or interventions found to improve children’s success in both learning and relationship aspects of school included the following characteristics:

- based on theory and research;
- mastery and application of skills in multiple settings;
- build connections to school through meaningful and caring relationships;
- instructions are developmentally and culturally sensitive;
- coordinated and unified whole-school approach;
- accommodated the affective and social dimensions of learning;
- engaged all stakeholders in the wider school community;
- created organisational school structures and policies to support SEL and foster success;
- provide essential professional learning opportunities for staff and ongoing support; and,
- continually monitor and evaluate the impact of SEL and school success.

(cited in Zins et al., 2004, pp. 10-11)

There are few available studies evaluating the impact on teachers when delivering SEL programs or instruction. However, an Australian study by Huxley (2004) drew on his parallel experience as teacher and facilitator implementing a social and emotional program ‘The Best of Coping: Developing Skills for Adolescents’ (Frydenberg & Brandon, 2002a, 2002b) in a health lesson to 26 year 9 mixed gender students. The Adolescent Coping Scale (ACS) and the Coping Scale for Adults (CSA) questionnaires, structured and unstructured reflection journals and a 6-months post evaluation were the basis for analysis. The teacher reported through personal reflections on her own necessity to change, the flow-on effect of skills and knowledge that added to the teacher’s own repertoire of social and emotional competencies, experiencing vulnerability and respecting students more and an understanding of her responsibility to model appropriate coping strategies to her students. Hargreaves (2004), Jennings and Greenberg (20008) and Weare (2000, 2004) proposed that the role of teaching relies strongly on the teacher’s ability to employ each of the components of the SEL framework to engage and work effectively with students, parents and colleagues, regulate their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours and be fulfilled in their chosen profession.

Prevention programs are more effective when teachers align their behaviours with the students they are

teaching. Students respond most positively to program components when they perceive that their teachers behave in ways that are consistent with what is being taught (Ling, Burman & Cooper, 1998; Prosser & Deakin, 1997; Williams, 1993). Adolescents who perceive their teachers and peers as respectful and caring participate more in class and complete more homework (Murdock, 1999).

Another important dimension of new schools and the willingness of staff to be positive about school innovation is the development of the school climate and level of satisfaction experienced by the new staff.. Murray (2005) demonstrated that teachers who use innovative strategies and programming in their classrooms or who are members of a school community who as a group embrace the innovative practices are generally happier and more likely to stay in the teaching profession. The level of support from the leadership team and colleagues has been empirically linked to the motivation of teachers and to the building of a positive school culture (Fullan, 2001; Hopkins, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2000; West, Jackson, Harris & Hopkins, 2000). However, the reverse has also been found when Ewing and Smith (2003) in their work with Australian early career teachers found that when they perceived a lack of collegial or leadership support some reported it was the main catalyst that prompted their departure from the teaching profession.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Many researchers have identified professional development as an important element in preparing teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement any innovation in school (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Mulford, 2008; Spillane, 2006). However, issues of available and affordable courses and workshops, lack of time or staff interest in a non-mandatory assessment area of curriculum, have relegated SEL professional development to a lower personal or professional priority. Fleming and Bay (2004) and Zins et al. (2004) argue that general pre-service teacher training does not adequately prepare them to deliver social and emotional instruction. Moreover, there is a general lack of support for even experienced teachers to develop their own competencies in this area equipping them to teach the mandated curriculum (Elias et al., 2003).

The teachers' comments from the American national survey (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013) endorse the professional need for teachers delivering SEL in school to have the necessary training to be confident to

deliver the program as intended. Of the 82% sampled teachers in the survey accessing professional development opportunities only 55% reported having had SEL training. Of this group receiving social and emotional training 60% of the pre-school and elementary teachers received the most and 47% of secondary school teachers the least training. Moreover, professional development was identified (Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2012) as key in providing teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to feel confident in delivering SEL instruction.

Professional development in SEL should not end with initial training (Jennings & Greenberg, 2008). The authors suggest that at a systems and school level, staff must be provided with ongoing universal SEL professional development with multiple opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and apply their learning in the school setting. Beare (2006) stressed the importance of professional development for staff and challenged educators not only to make it mandatory for all staff but there should not be any gaps between theory and practice. By this he suggested that all professional development should not only be evidence-based but that the application of knowledge and skills must be relevant for staff and students alike. Teachers' efficacy and capacity to change is enhanced by meaningful and timely professional development with opportunities to work collaboratively in teams to find applications for new learnings (Bandura, 2001; Clarke, 2005; Richmond, 1997) and to develop along the competency continuum until in time, mastery is possible (Kotter, 2007).

SUSTAINABILITY: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

A critical element of any school reform is the ability of school staff to sustain the principles and integrity of the SEL innovation until it becomes naturally embedded in culture and practice. The context of any SEL implementation is unique to the population of each school and, as such, the recommended guidelines (CASEL, 2002) must be adapted to the needs and interests of those within the school community. Based on evaluations of flourishing research into SEL, CASEL (2002) suggest that the following SEL characteristics form the basis of effective SEL innovation (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Characteristics of a Quality SEL Program

Guideline Characteristics	Description
1. Grounded in theory and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child psychology • Cognitive psychology • Emotional Intelligence • Evidence-based on benefits on attitudes and behaviour
2. Teachers the application of SEL skills and ethical values in daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic instruction • Learning applied to everyday situations • Enhances social, emotional and ethical behaviour • <i>Skills</i>: recognise and manage emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish positive goals, make responsible decisions, handle interpersonal situations effectively, develop responsible and respectful attitudes and values about self, others, work, health and citizenship
3. Builds connections to school through caring, engaging classrooms and school practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse teaching methods and pedagogies • Responsible and supportive atmosphere committed to learning • Fosters emotional security and safety • Strengthens relationships between all in community
4. Provides developmentally and culturally appropriate SEL instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmentally appropriate instruction • Clearly specific objectives • Instruction culturally sensitive and respectful of diversity
5. Helps coordinate and unify through cross-curriculum or SEL program instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a unifying framework for SEL and academic growth in all students • Coordinates and integrates other SEL initiatives (mental health and wellbeing, health, values education, service- learning, social skills, restorative practices, peer support, social justice, Habits of Mind)
6. Enhances school performance by attending to the emotional and social dimensions of academic learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage competencies for classroom and school participation, positive action with teachers and good study habits • Learning and teaching methods based on problem-solving and cooperative learning • Motivate students to learn and succeed academically
7. Actively involves families and communities as partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying and modeling SEL related skills and attitudes at school, home and community
8. Confirms school organisational supports and structures that fosters success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address quality issues of leadership, collaboration and participation in SEL planning, adequate time and resources, alignment with school district, state and national policies
9. Provides relevant and engaging professional learning and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves all school staff • Develop theoretical knowledge, modeling, practice effective teaching methods, regular coaching/mentoring and constructive feedback from colleagues
10. Incorporates ongoing evaluation and school improvement reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of needs • Establish fit between school's concerns and appropriate SEL competencies • Gather data progress, ensure accountability and shape program improvement

(Adapted from Zins et al., 2004, pp. 10-11)

In summary, there is compelling and clear evidence that SEL explicitly taught, integrated across disciplines and experienced in multiple settings can have a positive impact on students' academic performance, social relationships and in their capacity to lead productive and meaningful lives. The role of emotions on learning and relationships remains largely untapped in schools, however, there is viable research that points to the

importance of caring relationships and safe and supportive learning environments that foster students' commitment to school and supports academic success (Blum & Libby, 2004; Hawkins et al., 2004; Jennings & Greenberg, 2008; Marzano, 2003). There are common obstacles to the implementation of SEL such as staff buy-in, staff capacity and expertise, professional learning opportunities and leadership support that should be addressed. However, CASEL (2007) has provided guidelines for SEL programming and implantation that support the successful integration and long-term sustainability.

The next chapter sets the context for the delivery of the SEL innovation in the planning, development and implementation of a new school. It outlines the education system's planning and goals to ensure that the experiences of students and staff would be immersed in twenty-first century learning and teaching. It also forms the foundation of conditions for teaching social and emotional competencies to all students.

CHAPTER 4 – LEARNING LANDSCAPE

*‘We cannot always build the future for our youth,
but we can build our youth for the future’*

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945)

EDUCATION SYSTEM’S PLANNING

Cathedral College, a new Catholic co-educational secondary school for years 7 - 12 students became a reality for the Diocese in 2006. However, the thinking, consultation, discussions and planning for this school began in earnest at the beginning of 2004.

The vision for the new school was far from the traditional educational philosophical expectations that were the foundations for all other existing secondary schools in the Diocese. Indeed, the Diocesan Director of Schools at the time, envisaged a concept of an ‘education revolution’ for this school that would break the traditional educational rules thereby establishing a new standard for the delivery of education for young people in the twenty first century. It was also an opportunity to create a contemporary Diocesan model of education based on the findings of current research on effective learning and teaching. At the foremost in the planning for the school should be the empirical links between quality learning and teaching in a relevant curriculum, personal and social competence, quality relationships, and academic success for young people in a rapidly changing world.

The then Director strongly advocated that a more relevant model of education was needed so that learning and teaching for young people reflected the significant shift in the types of knowledge and skills, both academic and personal that did not rely on traditional routine thinking and processing of the past, but embraced the challenge of ‘relevance’ to a world in the twenty first century. The purpose for this change was to equip young people with the necessary characteristics and attributes that would enable them to participate in meaningful work, contribute to emerging local and global communities, enjoy relational and social

success with others and foster personal emotional maturity in an unpredictable, evolving and complex technological world of the twenty first century.

Aligned with the Director of Schools' vision for a 'different' school was the release of *'The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium'* document in 1998. This was the Catholic Church's response to the increasing global challenges society faces and the fragmentation of the human spirit in society generally. The introductory statement in the document clearly identified the relevant context in which Catholic schools now needed to be situated, postulating that the new millennium challenges were the result of 'new socio-political and cultural contexts' (p.5) that could no longer be ignored. With reference to the world of education it states:

*The scope of educational functions has broadened, becoming more complex.
New requirements have given force to the demands from new contents, new capabilities, and new educational models besides those followed traditionally.
Such an outlook calls for courageous renewal on the part of the catholic school.
The precious heritage of the experience gained over the centuries reveals its vitality precisely in the capacity for prudent innovation.*

(The Catholic School on The Threshold of the Third Millennium, 1998, p. 6)

This thinking was not the sole domain or consensus of Pope John Paul II and the international community of Catholic Bishops but increasingly, educationalists globally have stressed the urgency for schools to reassess the value to young people of their experience of the current educational model of learning and teaching and the subsequent usefulness of their knowledge and skills to their world at large. Fullan (2001) proposed there remained an incessant imperative for new goals learning to be embraced in schools today. Ever more, the focus should be on education for understanding with young people being taught to use their minds well so that the habits and skills of inquiry are developed for this emerging society.

Beare (2001), a noted Australian Emeritus Professor of Education, extended Fullan's ideas and predicted that teachers of future schools would have different roles, 'facilitating rather than teaching, articulating and providing learning resources to guide and counsel their learners' (p. 60). A forward-thinking educator and researcher, Beare hypothesised that although change for school is ever-present it would be unlikely ever again in this millennium to be so moderate. Change in this millennium, he reasoned, must also be principally aligned to the economic necessity of Australia's or any country's capacity and power to compete on the global market, and so the productivity of its workforce, would ultimately be dependent on an education for this new economy.

From an educational and in particular, a curriculum perspective, Abbott (2001) suggested that whatever 'change' was agreed upon, should reflect the recent developments in learning theory and curriculum design whilst prioritising the student at its core. He surmised that the evidence of successful learners were the students demonstrating 'deep understanding' of the concept and the application of that understanding to real-world situations. Curriculum design in schools of the future cannot therefore ignore this nor Piaget's (1977) assertion that higher order thinking and learning occurs by teachers utilising a 'transactional curriculum' as was present in the constructivist classroom. By this type of interaction, the student alone and in collaboration with others was encouraged to be active in constructing and applying meaning to their learning.

The constructivist theory of learning processes underpins the New South Wales Board of Studies K-10 outcomes-based curricula framework and was drawn upon when discussing the new school's proposed learning framework and support structures. Added to the dialogue was the emerging interest on emotions, brain functioning, learning, and development in neuroscience research (Damasio, 1994 cited in Zins et al., 2004; Hall, 2005), and emotional intelligence (Elias et al., 1997; Goleman, 1995; LeDoux, 1996; Weissberg et al., 2003). What contributed to students successfully engaging in learning were the type of tasks and the social context. Positive engagement was evident through authentic, challenging multidisciplinary tasks, participation in groups, frequent interaction, and feedback with applications and connections to real world contexts.

It was against the background of documents such as the aforementioned *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998) and the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for School in the Twenty First Century* (1999) that emphasised the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual development enabled young people to engage effectively with an increasingly complex world. Despite these documents providing broad Catholic and national directions to guide educational authorities and schools in upholding these outcomes for students, researchers noted in their study of the Victorian Middle School Project that secondary students reported feeling 'bored and unchallenged in the classroom and found learning had little connection with their lives (Tadich et al., 2007). Adding weight to the tenet that schooling should provide a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development, the *North Central Regional Education Laboratory Report* (2003) identified the learning skills required in the twenty first century should focus on interpersonal skills, personal, social and civic responsibility and interactive communication thereby contributing to the development of students' sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.

Interested in transforming the experience in school for all in the school community and informed by empirical research on new models of education, the Director, in 2004, mandated the formation of a *Steering Committee* to investigate and prepare an *Education Brief* for the foundation staff at Cathedral College. To cater for the interests and needs of all school stakeholders the Steering Committee constituted a chairperson from Diocesan Education Office, the parish priest from the feeder parishes, principals from the local primary feeder schools and interested parents and parishioners.

Furthermore, to support and inform the Steering Committee on current educational positions, an additional committee, the *Task Force Committee* was convened with representation from the Diocesan District's Religious Education and Learning Services area. The Diocesan Education Office, Secondary Head of Schools Service, chaired the Task Force Committee with subject and curriculum matter input provided from relevant Diocesan Education Officers responsible for curriculum and pastoral care delivery to all Diocesan schools. Both committees provided multiple and varied opportunities to engage stakeholders, namely the parents and parishioners, in the process of the development of the Education Brief based on the values and interests shared by all parties.

The Task Force Committee met regularly and reported to the Steering Committee on evidence-based curriculum and pastoral matters that reflected current Catholic and educational principles. The focus of the Education Brief defined the framework for Cathedral College and included attention to Catholic ethos and values, key elements of its spiritual life, religious education, pastoral care, learning principles, curriculum structure and content including SEL, co-curricular activities, stages of student development, learning environment characteristics, school organisation and structure. Once the consultation process was completed the Diocesan Bishop, the Director of Schools, and the Diocesan Schools' Council were presented the Education Brief for consideration and endorsement.

Both the Task Force Committee and the Steering Committee were the consultative bodies for the Diocesan Education Office for the duration of 2004, and were referred to for guidance and continued support in 2005. To assist Cathedral College staff in the transition period of implementation, the Task Force Committee continued to meet during the first two years (2006-2007) of the school's operation and ceased once the principal felt the committees had served their purpose.

Representatives from the Task Force Committee travelled to observe other schools in Melbourne, Perth, and New Zealand who were implementing new models of schooling with the purpose of witnessing and discussing the strengths and challenges these schools experienced as they implemented innovative learning models. The school observations and meetings with relevant Education Officers were tabled for discussion and decision with the Steering Committee. The Education Brief for Cathedral College was therefore informed by extensive international and national research on effective models of education. Based on the multifaceted sources of data, research and educational visits, agreed principles of learning were recommended for the school.

The Education Brief acknowledged and incorporated the Diocesan Education Office's *Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework* (DLTF), which was launched throughout the Diocese in 2004. Primarily, the DLTF drew on the research from all Australian states that agreed that models of education for this millennium needed re-thinking and re-imaging. The findings strongly recommended that education today must teach young people to effectively manage the changing world in ways that increase their depth of

learning, increase their access to meaningful information, and address the problem of disengagement from learning and schools in general. The DLTF was informed by the educational principles laid down in the Quality Teaching Model (NSW, Department of Education and Training [DET], 2003), the New Basics Project (Queensland Education, 2003), Essential Learnings Framework (Tasmania, Department of Education 2002, 2003b), the Essential Learning Standards (Department Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria, 2006), South Australia Curriculum Standards and Accountabilities (SACSA) Framework (Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2000) and the EsSeNTial Learnings (Northern Territory DET, 2002).

Each of the Australian states' curriculum frameworks positioned the importance of ensuring the student was at the centre of learning and that he/she was able to access the necessary social and emotional skills that supported learning in responsive contexts such as schools. To this end, the DLTF identified the contribution of neuroscience research, which correlated academic outcomes with the essential teaching, experiencing, and subsequent application of social and emotional competencies of young people. Research by Elias et al. (2003) added that academics and SEL are becoming the 'new standard' for what is considered the 'basics' for each student to acquire before leaving school.

Although the skills of SEL skills were not specifically named in the DLTF, the mandatory PDHPE syllabus requirements from the NSW Board of Studies addressed elements of social and emotional competencies in the 'Self and Relationship' strand (NSW Board of Studies, 2003). In traditional secondary schools, this generally remained isolated in the domain of PDHPE teachers and competed with an overcrowded curriculum for attention and time. The integration of social and emotional competencies in interdisciplinary contexts in the Learning Framework was reviewed and actioned by the Committees for specific inclusion in the Education Brief. In terms of this study, the focus was on exploring the perceptions and impact on staff of teaching social and emotional competencies in a contemporary integrated curriculum. As learning and teaching was stressed as a 'relational' process it was critical in the planning to work on the development structures and processes that would support staff and students in this practice.

The SEL in the curriculum and the structures supporting the development of these competencies were tabled for discussion within the two committees. As the inclusion of explicitly teaching social and emotional skills in the daily curriculum emerged as a relative ‘new’ knowledge and its application to education not understood well, the researcher, who was also a Diocesan Education Officer provided the committee with current research on learning, emotional intelligence (CASEL, 2002, 2005; Goleman, 1995, 2006) and brain function that supported academic and personal outcomes for students (Beere, 2007; Costa, 2008; Erlauer, 2003).

An early challenge for the Education Officer leading the Curriculum and Pedagogy (CAP) team from the Diocesan Education Office in 2004 was to create the learning and teaching principles that re-conceptualised the nature and delivery of learning from the acquisition of defined bodies of information such as the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) of the curriculum to experiencing education as an authentic process of life-long, life-wide learning. Enquiries about the organisation of curriculum content and subsequent compliance from NSW Board of Studies revealed that the organisation teaching in KLA areas was a matter of efficiency and convenience. As long as the structure of the Learning Framework reflected the indicative hours of teaching, it could be organised and delivered in any format.

The final organisation of the learning and teaching principles was based on curriculum delivery characterised by a cross-curriculum approach that would provide students with learning and teaching experiences that use practices and skills across nominated disciplines. The integrity of each subject discipline’s methods and epistemology was to be actively retained by staff working in different professional teams to plan relevant units of work for students. Staff, under clusters of ‘essential learnings’ including that of SEL, would develop the proposed curriculum delivery. These clusters would be designed to provide students experiences to develop an understanding of their place in the real world including life pathways, social futures, multi-literacies, communications media, active citizenship, world environments, and technologies.

The Task Force Committee agreed that the integrated units of work would be constructed on the Wiggins and McTighe (2005) ‘backward design’ model of teaching, that is, one starts with the end or the desired results (goals or standards), then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning (performances) called

for by the standard and the teaching needed to equip students to perform. The CAP Team leader reported that educationally, backward design approach to curricular design is ‘logically forward’ but backward in terms of the traditional way of designing curriculum, whereby teachers might typically think of activities or how best to cover a topic. It also diverged from thinking about assessment as something teachers did once teaching was completed. The backward design process operationalised the learning goals in terms of assessment evidence as teachers planned the interdisciplinary tasks. By organising and planning this way it reminded teachers to begin with the question or the end in mind first. Research on backward design by Wiggins and McTighe (2005) found that there was greater consistency among results, key performances and learning and teaching experiences that had a positive impact on improving student performance, which is the ultimate aim of design.

There was robust discussion on the suggested change in the assessment process amongst members of the Task Force Committee. Traditionally in secondary schools, teachers were not used to reviewing the assessment process from a backward perspective. The focus of teachers generally is content first, then the development of an assessment task, which may or may not match the content taught. The procedure of backward design was the assessment task first then teachers working on the content last.

The Education Brief was completed by the Steering Committee in the latter half of 2004 and accepted by the Director of Schools, the Bishop, and the Diocesan Schools’ Council. The Steering Committee continued to meet during the year to formalise the selection criteria for the new principal who was subsequently appointed in the early in 2005. From this point, the principal would be responsible for the recruitment of staff for the opening of the Cathedral College in 2006 and the implementation of the Education Brief into a viable framework that would provide opportunities for all students to explore, achieve, and apply their learning in real world contexts.

SCHOOL PLANNING PROCESS

Once these decisions were agreed to and formalised by the principal, an *Information Session* for interested teachers was held in April, 2005 outlining the philosophy and context in which Cathedral College was founded, the delivery of quality learning and teaching through an integrated curriculum framework and the

expectations of teaching in an innovative educational environment. This provided an opportunity for potential teachers to engage in the discussion with the principal about the integrated Learning Framework.

The principal explained at the Information Session (2005) that the purpose of the school was to provide quality Catholic learning and teaching, which required re-thinking schooling in a technological age. Reframing the school would be through the lens of four quadrants, namely: *Learning, Leading, Supporting, and Growing* (see appendix 1). By explanation, *Learning* meant that staff was encouraged to be a community of learners that would require significant effort and time to work together helping each other understand the expertise and knowledge of each other's subject area. This was essential so that each person could build his or her understanding of the cross curriculum content areas that were outside his or her subject area. For students, learning was to be individualised and learning integrated on a daily basis, making explicit connections to self, local, and global communities. The second component of re-imagining education at Cathedral College was through staff building *leadership* teams. To foster professional innovation, these teams would meet regularly to plan and teach cross-curriculum units of work. This enabled staff to demonstrate for each other their knowledge and approaches to their own subject area to include in the learning and teaching for that topic. Working in teams also provided staff with opportunities to identify the specific SEL skills appropriate to the specific unit of work. *Support* emanated from investing in the appropriate tools for learning including, digital access to all, and a deliberate focus on making Cathedral College a more inclusive school for staff, students, and parents. The last component, *Growing* was evidenced in the school by deliberately investing in providing multiple opportunities for individual professional learning and growth for staff. This coupled with opening the school to the world and the world to the classroom was the platform for Cathedral College as an avant-garde school and one that would be a model for educational reform.

It was determined that in response to this context, the staff at Cathedral College would deliver quality learning and teaching in line with its mission to develop students academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually so that they could 'transform their world'. This holistic nature of the human person, essential to Catholic teaching, mandated that each of the said components were equally important.

To achieve this goal, teaching social and emotional competencies would be included in the Learning Framework with the core competencies synthesised seamlessly into the unit of work.

The principal clarified to the potential staff, her plan for those appointed to work as a team in developing a contemporary meaningful curriculum, which included attention to SEL skills. Staff would discuss as a team the methods of delivery, organisation of the content material and the formation of structures within the school both for staff and students that would support the learning and teaching of the cross-curricula model at school. What was paramount for both students and staff was to provide regular opportunities to build reciprocal relationships and to encourage student responsibility and accountability for their learning journey at Cathedral College.

Against this background and an understanding of Catholic educational philosophy, the principal proposed the following guiding learning and teaching principles that were expected of staff interested in teaching at Cathedral College with the notable inclusion of SEL:

1. A focus on the whole person whose dignity is respected and affirmed;
2. The relational nature of learning grounded in quality relationships amongst all members of the school, parish and broader community;
3. An active, discipline inquiry approach to learning where students are guided to acquire responsibility for their own learning and to develop the skills of independent, critical and reflective learners;
4. A collaborative approach to learning where students appreciate the social dimension of human work;
5. Learning environments which are challenging, futures orientated, supportive and flexible and which engage students in tasks of significance and relevance to produce learning which has value beyond the school;
6. Recognition and support of individual differences and diversity;
7. Curriculum integration as the organising paradigm *incorporating the social and emotional needs of students*;
8. Innovative pedagogical practices emerging from contemporary research which effectively integrate technology;
9. Open, flexible and adaptable work spaces that support an integrated approach to learning and teaching; and

10. Teacher professionalism modelled on Jesus, the teacher and characterised by continuous collaborative learning, reflection, passion, and personal growth.

(Learning and Teaching Guiding Principles: Information Session for Teachers, 2005. Emphasis in the original document)

It was pointed out by the principal that these guiding principles were formed with a deliberate focus on supporting students to achieve positive learning outcomes and to provide staff with enriching teaching environments. Vastly different from the current curriculum organisation of learning into KLAs, the organisation of the Cathedral College curriculum was based on engaging real-life issues whilst at the same time complying with the NSW Board of Studies syllabi and other educational system requirements, integrated across learning areas, incorporating SEL, learning technologies and a cultivation of students' positive attitudes to the learning process.

An overview of the essential components of the proposed Learning Framework was provided to participants at the Information Session (2005) as a flow chart (see figure 4.1), which demonstrated the expected teaching of cross-curricula content and accountabilities for all staff.

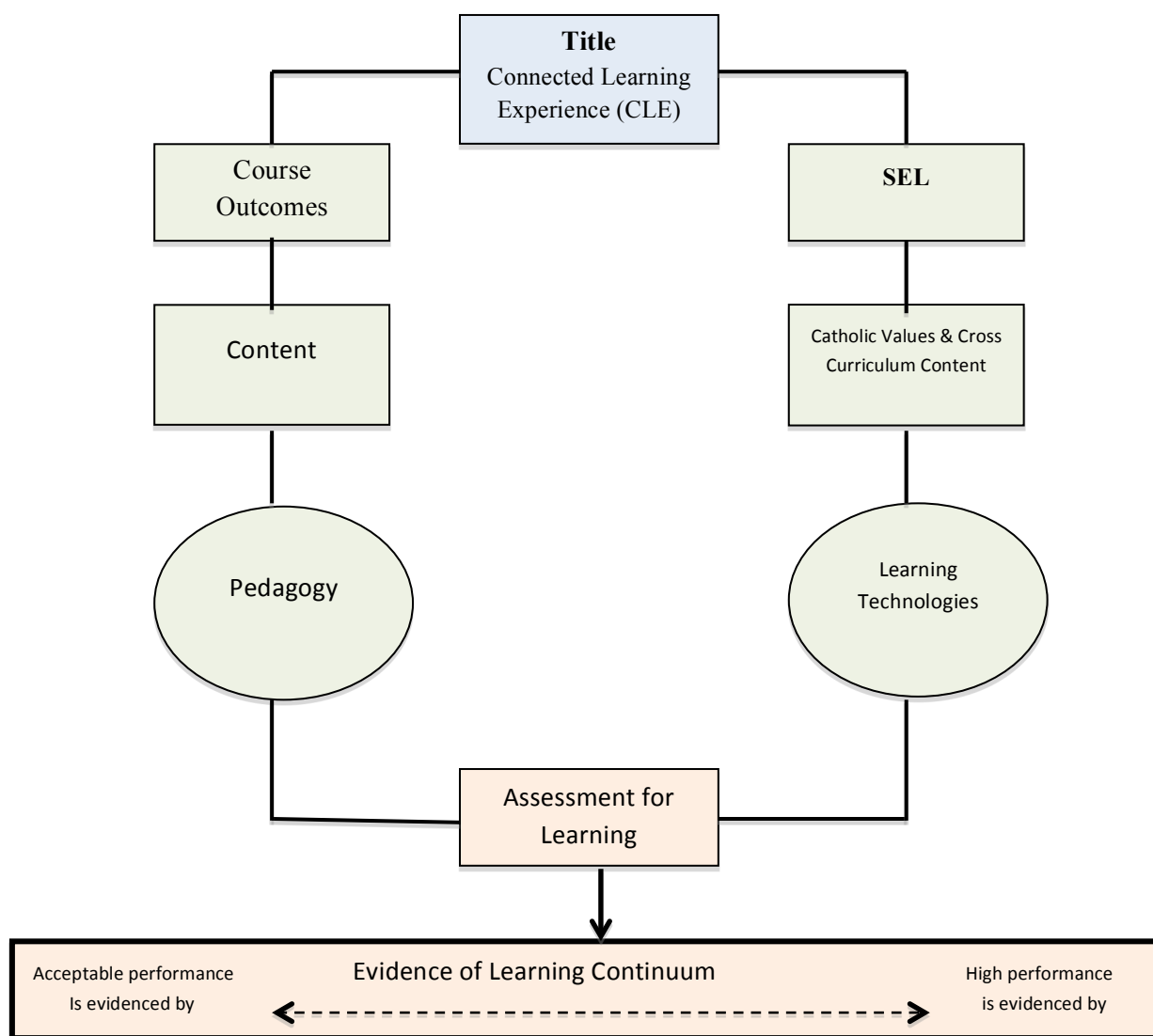


Figure 4.1 Essential Components of a Unit of Work (CLE)

A sample of the integrated learning unit of work, previously developed by Education Officers of the Curriculum and Pedagogy team was provided in the Information Package. The principal explained that the aim of this learning and teaching approach was to seamlessly create units of work with a pedagogy that would blend catholic values, relevant cross-curriculum content, SEL and learning technologies. Moreover, in each unit of work there were opportunities for all students to demonstrate, through application and assessment, levels of achievements of the desired educational outcomes. The learning and teaching principles therefore required that the prospective staff work as collaborative teams to plan and implement relevant content and strategies into daily learning and teaching at school.

Following the Information Session for prospective staff, teaching positions (see appendix 2) including those of leaders (see appendix 3) explaining role expectations were advertised. The selection process and acceptance by successful applicants was finalised during term 3, 2005. The appointed staff attended a professional development day mid-July 2005 and was then released from their teaching positions to take up full time employment for the last term of 2005 to prepare for the first intake of students in 2006.

The leadership structure at Cathedral College was specifically organised to support and enact the learning and teaching principles. The structures were designed to provide a learning environment where priority was given to building quality relationships among staff, students, parents, and community partnerships. Subsequently, the organisational structure consisted of five leadership roles that focused on sharing the responsibility of the leadership in guiding and supporting all staff. These leadership roles included the principal who in turn was supported by Leaders in the designated areas of Student Growth and Learning, Missions, Learning and Teacher and Administration. A team of three staff, now referred to as *Learning Advisors*, supported each Leader in all aspects of the school (see figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Overview of the Staff's Organisational Structures

Each Learning Advisor and Team Leader was responsible for a small pastoral care unit of up to seventeen Year 7 students of both genders and met morning and afternoon in their 'Learning Circle'. This structure was designed to encourage the development of 'positive reciprocity' between students and Learning Advisors as they develop ways to live, learn and work together. In this way, students and Learning Advisors were provided with multiple opportunities to meaningfully connect with others. It was proposed that the constructivist approach of the Learning Circle promoted mutual exchanges between students and Learning Advisors, which enabled them to develop, practise and apply the essential social skills that were taught in the Learning Framework.

The role of the Learning Advisor and Team Leader was to know each student in their Learning Circle well, build positive rapport and to mentor and support each one during their journey at Cathedral College. Moreover, Learning Advisors and Team Leaders assisted students within their Learning Circle to develop values of trust and respect within their group thereby building peer relationships and fostering a safe and supportive environment where students could take educated risks and develop their personal and social attributes.

An overview of the SEL opportunities through the school's cross-curricula learning and teaching structures and the Learning Advisory Program is detailed on the following page (see figure 4.3).

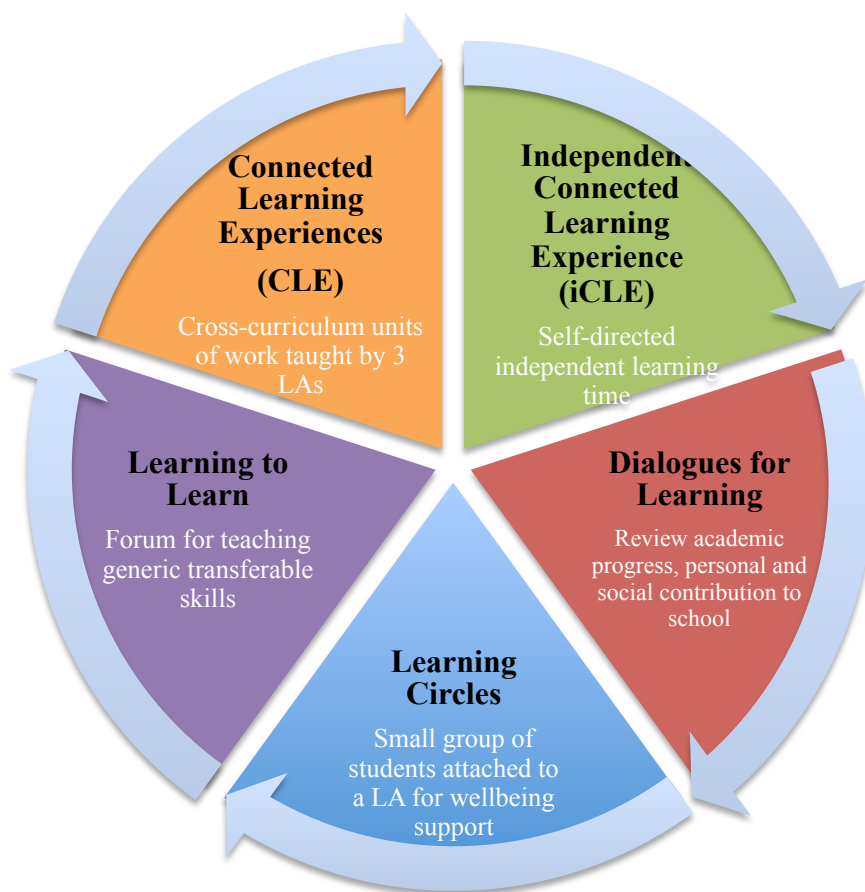


Figure 4.3: Overview the School's SEL Curriculum and Organisational Structures

The *Learning Advisory Program* at Cathedral College was central to the overall Pastoral Care organisational structure of the school and provided students with opportunities to experience a sense of belonging, resolve issues, celebrate, lead, be socially and personally responsible both at school and the wider community, and to monitor, assess and set their academic goals. This was a significant time where Learning Advisors could assess, identify, and remediate the social and emotional competencies of each student that contributed to their personal wellbeing and academic success.

The focus for teaching of SEL skills occurred naturally through the Learning Advisory Program (see figure 4.4) and more explicitly throughout the integrated curriculum learning experience. The responsibility to oversee its development and inclusion into the curriculum and throughout the pastoral care structures was primarily with the Leader of Student Growth and Learning and the Leader of Learning and Teaching.

However, in the planning of the integrated units of work, all Learning Advisors were to contribute to developing the social and emotional literacy curriculum.

NEW ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

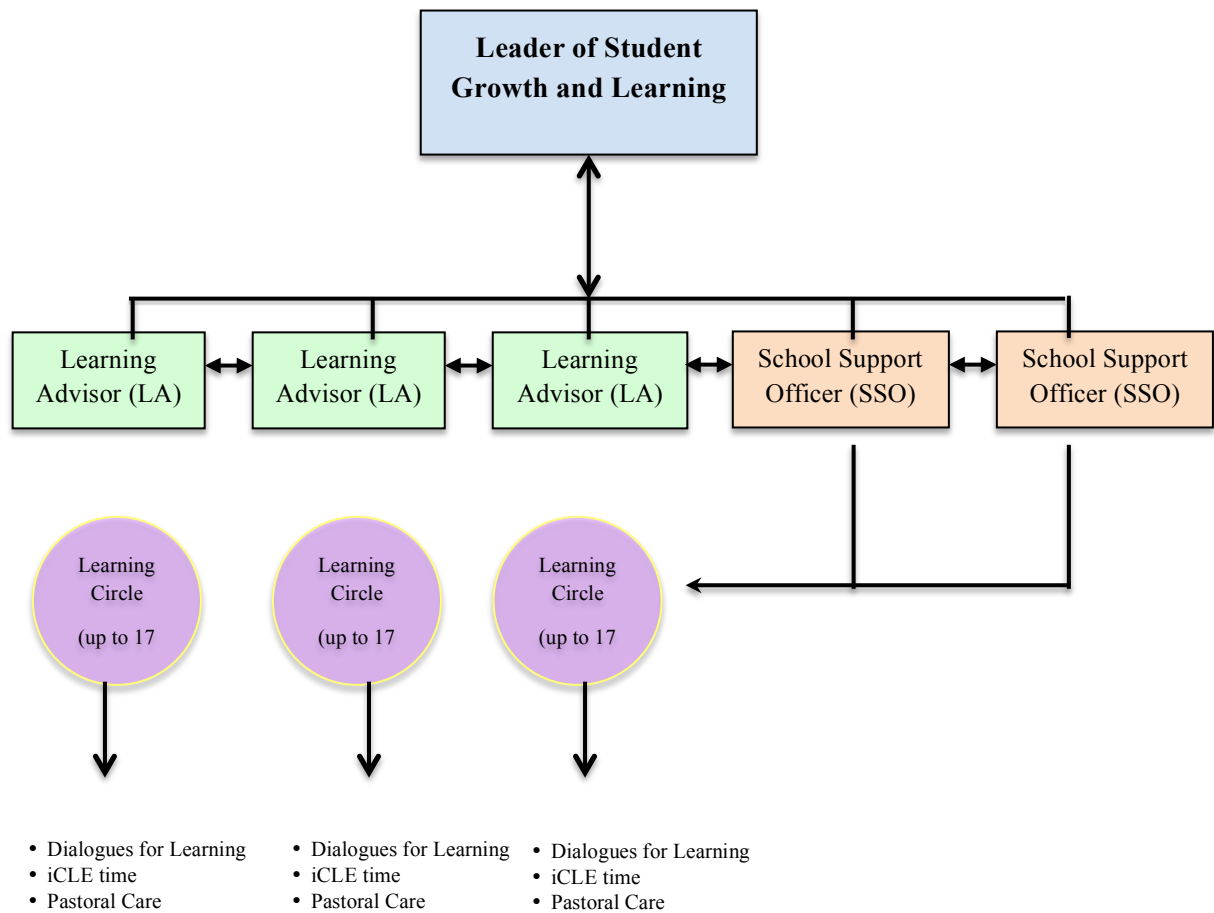


Figure 4.4. Overview of the Staff's Organisational Structures

A key dimension of the Learning Advisory Program included the structure of the *Dialogues for Learning* (see figure 4.3) designated time for each student during the school year. The focus for the 'Dialogues' was for the Learning Advisor to meet with each student for the purpose of discussing collaboratively and monitoring closely, each student's learning, personal development and social and civic responsibility across all aspects of school life. Prior to each 'Dialogue' session, the student was empowered to reflect on his/her learning progress by journaling purposefully, once a week. Specific questions were provided to each

student to assist in their journal reflection and to prepare and guide the conversation with the Learning Advisor.

The Dialogues for Learning structure was designed to encourage each student to take responsibility for their academic, social, and emotional growth. It was an avenue for students to identify and discuss with Learning Advisors any concerns about their academic progress, themselves, and their relationships with others. It provided students with a 'voice' to express their responses to their learning progress identify their areas of strength and weakness and make decisions about their learning and their contribution to the school and wider community. If any of these areas were a challenge or concern for the student, this structure provided an ideal opportunity for the Learning Advisors to individually reinforce or introduce the relevant social and emotional skills that would assist the student to regulate and manage emotions and to effectively make decisions and problem-solve to personal resolution.

The Learning Advisor's role was to support and mentor each student in their assigned Learning Circle and their Dialogue time, twice a term. Each Dialogue was scheduled for 15 minutes and Learning Advisors were allocated dialogue time each week as part of their teaching load. If further time was necessary to discuss issues other than academic learning, personal and social responsibility then time was taken from allotted independent learning time in the afternoon session. A *Dialogue for Learning* guide (see appendix 4) was given to each student to help guide their preparation for their learning conversation with their Learning Advisor.

This structured daily session was referred to as *Independent Connected Learning Experience* (iCLE) time (see figure 4.3) for each Learning Advisor and their group of students in their Learning Circle to meet regularly. iCLE time each day was forty-five minutes in duration where students were supported to achieve their learning goals. To process this independent learning time, students at the beginning of iCLE recalled and reflected on each learning session from the day and set goals for what they hoped to achieve by the end of iCLE time and for home learning that night. Students worked independently on tasks assigned or incomplete from the integrated curriculum time earlier in the day. In this way, the Learning Advisor during iCLE time was able to support an individual student or small groups of students who required more intensive or specialised academic support.

A significant aspect of the students' Dialogues for Learning was the ongoing communication that was actively encouraged between the student, the Learning Advisor and the parent/carer. This was considered a natural and supportive mechanism in which all aspects of their young person's learning and life at school was shared and celebrated. Communication was encouraged by parents/carer(s) by accessing an online database called *Planning, Assessment, and Reporting Online Tool* (PAROT).

Learning Advisors documented each student's school journey on PAROT, which included all components of the Learning Framework, and all aspects of the Learning Advisory Program. This meant that documentation was provided by all Learning Advisors on the assessment and reporting of each student's integrated curriculum, goals and plans to achieve outcomes collaboratively set by students and Learning Advisors under the areas of academic, social and personal responsibility and any other information relevant to the student. With these sections of the database accessible to parents at any time, PAROT was the technical means of supporting the relational nature of their child's learning. It was also a convenient method to engage with Learning Advisors, learning programs and monitor every dimension of their child's school life.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURES: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The Diocesan Education Officer from the Curriculum and Pedagogy named the cross-curriculum units of learning as *Connected Learning Experiences* (CLEs) to reflect the connection and relevance to life learning experiences. The CLE concept was further extended by the foundation staff to form The CLE Creation Framework (see appendix 5) A CLE was defined as an integrated unit of work, collaboratively designed, programmed, and assessed by Learning Advisors and Leaders that incorporated two or three related subjects with explicit links to the topic under study. In preparing all components of the integrated learning experience, Learning Advisors and Leaders ensured there were links between courses and presented learning experiences for students in that context. The CLE Creation Framework guaranteed there would be consistency of epistemology and pedagogical approaches for staff involved in the CLE planning. All CLEs would be formally assessed with tasks reflecting the nature of integration and assessment guidelines associated with each syllabus document. A standard Assessment Task Notification sheet and Assessment Marking Guidelines Feedback sheet was developed to assist staff and students to recognise the obvious

elements of the tasks. Assessment for learning was to be an integral part of the learning cycle and informed ongoing development of subsequent CLEs.

In order for CLE preparation, small teams of Learning Advisors and Leaders who designed CLEs were allocated scheduled time to meet, prepare the content and delivery preparation of the relevant units of work. This was to ensure that the fidelity and epistemology of individual Key Learning Areas were taught in line with the requirements of the NSW Board of Studies. Once the CLE was completed, Learning Advisors broke off into CLE teams and decided which Learning Advisor was responsible for the delivery and content of each part of the CLE. This would be dependent on the expertise and interest of each of the Learning Advisors (see appendix 6). A CLE would be taught to the whole year group, comprised of 130 students in a large open, interactive learning space. During the first year of inception, Learning Advisors decided that students in Year 7 would study three CLEs simultaneously with each CLE taught for five weeks duration.

It was the responsibility of the Leader of Learning and Teaching to check that Learning Advisors had embedded learning and teaching strategies that specifically developed skill for students to become expert learners with a focus on continuous improvement and life-long learning. This meant implementing effective pedagogy in each of the CLEs that was based on students working towards developing a deep knowledge and understanding of the learning process including the SEL component of the curriculum. The natural diversity of students' learning needs suggested that the acquisition of SEL skills would fall on the continuum of 'least to well' skilled as with all skills and knowledge. With this in mind, it was incumbent on the Learning Advisor to know each student, identify, assess, teach, and monitor each student's level of social and emotional competency demonstrated during CLE, iCLE and The Advisory Program times.

There were thirteen Learning Advisors, including the four Leaders appointed in 2006 with a year 7 cohort of 130 students, which grew to twenty-two Learning Advisors in 2007 and a combined cohort of year 7 and year 8 students of 280. The 2006 Learning Advisors and Leaders were all released from their existing teaching positions and formed the foundation team at Cathedral College. The group came together for planning and collegial purposes for the last six weeks of term four, 2005. During this time, Learning Advisors began the arduous task of working on the process of creating a number of CLEs for the beginning

of the new school year in 2006. Diocesan Education Officers were invited to speak with staff on issues of the integrated curriculum, technology, SEL, Special Education and Religious Education that would be taken under consideration when incorporating these elements into the Learning Framework.

The responsibility of introducing and explaining the reasons for including the SEL component of the Learning Framework was assigned to the Diocesan Education Officer in the Pastoral Care and Personal Growth team who was also the author of this study. The presentation explored the recommendations from current neuroscience and learning research, that teaching these skills had a positive impact on mental health, wellbeing and academic success. Learning Advisors agreed in principle and engaged in a discussion as to the components of SEL, methods of teaching and relevance to the integrated curriculum.

In summary, the organisation and delivery of the Learning Framework during the first two years of schooling at Cathedral College reflected contemporary pedagogical practices to student learning that explicitly integrated social and emotional competencies within the curriculum. To support the Learning Framework, school structures were constructed to be open and inclusive. Learning Advisors worked in professional learning teams, delivered cross-curriculum content and embraced professional development training. Pastoral Care structures and practices such as the Learning Advisors Program provided opportunities to apply social and emotional skills taught and promoted a sense of belonging and wellbeing for students and staff, and partnerships were formed with parents and the wider community.

CHAPTER 5 - METHOD

'Perplexity is the beginning of knowledge'

Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the purpose of the research study is restated and the methodological blueprint is delineated. The chapter is an account of the research process, selection of the case study, the data collection process including the tools and method used and finally, data analysis.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this phenomenological case study was to describe the foundation staff's perceptions and experiences as they worked towards establishing and developing a new secondary Catholic school and at the same time delivering an unfamiliar innovative curriculum.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The building of this new secondary school was unlike any other school in the Diocese both in design and curriculum delivery. This presented a unique opportunity to study the planning, implementation and development not only of a twenty-first century school but also the proposed innovative curriculum. The research strategy therefore most appropriate to the context of this school was as a single case study.

Noted researchers suggested that case study methodology was established if the focus of the study was on a particular case or object and an understanding was reached within this complex context (Merriam, 1997; Mertens, 1998; Stake 1995, 2005; Yin, 2003(a), 2003(b)). In this single case study, the bounded system was the new foundation staff compelled to a particular time, purpose and educational setting. The foundation staff's perceptions of their experiences were specifically identified with the dynamics of a developing new school. The requirement for staff to deliver an unfamiliar integrated curriculum with the additional component of SEL was also specific to this school only.

A lengthy immersion into the major literature areas on new schools and the emerging influence of SEL on student wellbeing led to the following questions that served to guide the research strategy:

Major Question

How does the foundation staff of a new Catholic coeducational secondary school experience teaching social and emotional learning within school structures and as a regular component of an integrated curriculum?

Minor Questions

- How does the staff's vision and philosophy align with that of the new school?
- How do new organisational structures and processes support the implementation of SEL?
- How does the capacity and confidence of staff influence the implementation of SEL?
- How does the leadership team support the implementation of SEL?
- What are the concerns and sustainability issues for staff implementing SEL?

Qualitative research is holistic requiring the observation of the whole picture and observing relationships and processes within that setting rather than predicting the outcomes. Janesick (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) referred to the qualitative research design as having an 'elastic quality' where the 'design is adapted, changed, and redesigned as the study proceeds' (p. 53). The unpredictable nature of qualitative research meant that analyses of data were ongoing throughout the research process and that the description of the process occurred after the study was completed. The decisions for the design of this study therefore needed to reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of schools.

The early part of the research design process demanded that the study be guided by a research question. The framing of the research questions was therefore linked to the purpose of the study and consequently were open-ended. The central purpose of the research question was to gather a diversity of reflections from selected foundation staff as they participated in the complex process of developing, implementing and sustaining curriculum initiatives in the context of a new school setting. As the new school, its systems,

processes, curriculum delivery and staff interactions were unknown at the time of the study, the research questions had to be broad to account for all possibilities.

Another important consideration of the research design was to identify the type of case study that would support the research question. Punch (2000) and Yin (2003b) noted three types of case studies namely: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Although the area of new school development and sustainability globally was under-researched and seminal studies on SEL in their infancy, this case study was deemed descriptive. The purpose was to describe the social reality of the staff's experiences by the in-depth exploration and descriptions of the complexities they encountered in the first two years of the school's life. This process was secured by the application of qualitative research tools such as school archival documents, interviews and observation methods. The importance of the study and design therefore was not only to access but to give due emphasis to the meanings and views of the participants' experiences in this evolving setting. Accordingly, the objective of this research study was to investigate, without hypotheses or judgment, the participants' understandings of their subjective realities during this particular period of the school's development.

Chaffee and Tierney (1988) reasoned a case study approach 'cannot be done through armchair research but only through intimate contact with daily institutional life hence the choice to immerse oneself in the school environment through a methodology that encourages personal contact and interactions' (p.2). The single case study method afforded the researcher the opportunity to get as close as possible to the focus of the study and understand participants' experiences, by having face-to-face contact that encouraged honest and sometimes challenging reflections. The thoughts and reflections of the participants did not exist in a vacuum of responses but were related to the context in which they occurred. As the school developed and the research period lengthened the participants' responses reflected their thinking and behaviours as they adapted to their evolving circumstances.

The research questions stated earlier reflected the initial researcher's professional background as a psychologist and subsequent desire to explore whether a curriculum initiative such as SEL was possible in a secondary school setting. However, the building of a new school with a new Learning and teaching model

designed to engage students with twenty-first learning provided a unique opportunity to document the experiences of staff. SEL was one of the essential components in each of the units of work planned and staff did not have the benefit of prior SEL curriculum knowledge or accompanying resources to support the curriculum delivery. The major research question posed was for the researcher to ‘walk in the shoes’ of the foundation staff as they navigated the complexities of new school development as well as delivering and sustaining the SEL component of the learning and teaching paradigm. The staff did not have the support of a prescribed SEL curriculum as was common with other subject disciplines and so were reliant on previous knowledge and skills to interpret, integrate with other KLA disciplines and teach SEL on a daily basis. The capacity of the staff to do this will be more fully explored in the Discussion Chapter.

It was apparent early in the study that other important new school issues reflected in previous research (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008) was also common with this study. New school issues such as the developing school culture underpinning staff relationships and ‘ownership’ challenge; the school’s evolving systems, structures and processes; the confidence of staff to deliver the SEL component within each CLE; the role of leadership; and, staff issues challenging the development and sustainability of SEL. The minor questions previously stated were more specific and aligned with these issues and designed to extract as much as possible from the participants about these concerns.

The stages of the data collection, adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994), reflected the process of close discernment of the research design (see figure 5.1).

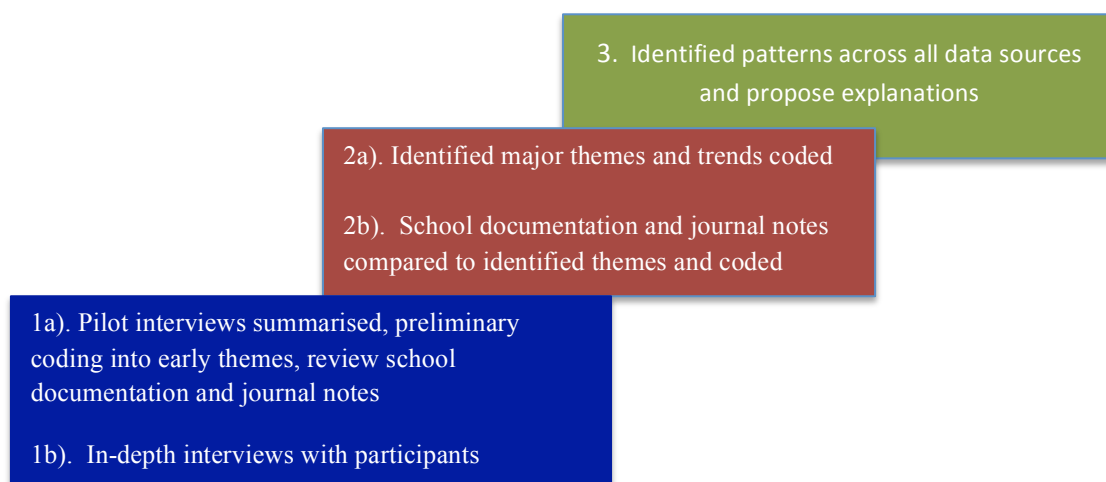


Figure 5.1: Stages of Data Collection
(adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Stage one of the design process was the data collection process, which spanned four years. Two and a half years were aligned with the development of the new school and the remainder was assembled from multiple data sources from interviews, school documentation and journal field notes which are detailed in the Data Analysis section. The general themes for exploration were trialed using coding categories that represented the minor questions and were formed from the earlier sample questions trialed with the two Diocesan teachers prior to the study in the school. In stages three and four, the identified themes were coded and trends were noted. During stages three the collated data, coded and themed were tested against the research questions aimed at providing recommendations for schools to develop and sustain SEL within a new school context.

SITE

In 2005 a new systemic Catholic, coeducational comprehensive secondary school for years 7-12 students was constructed in regional New South Wales. The school was purposefully built by the Diocesan Education Office to reflect twenty-first century learning and teaching paradigms. In 2006 it commenced operations with an initial staff of thirteen LAs, which included four Leaders and the first cohort of 130, year 7 students. In 2007, the teaching staff numbered twenty-two LAs including Leaders and was accompanied by a combined cohort of year 7 and year 8 students numbering 280. As the school was close to the rail station student enrolments were from a thirty-five kilometer radius. Students came from both Catholic and non-Catholic backgrounds, were socio-economically diverse but all with the common goal of learning in a school primed to reflect contemporary research in learning and teaching in the twenty-first century.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants came from the group of foundation staff employed for the first year of operation (2006). The sample size of this case study was deliberately small so as to obtain information-rich data, however, as a result of the small sample size, no attempt was made to control for ethnicity, gender or age distribution. From the school's first year staff intake of thirteen, five volunteered as participants who agreed to be interviewed once each year for two years. This added to the three Diocesan Education Office personnel who were interviewed once prior to the school opening and two general teachers who participated in trialing the

sample questions, totaling ten participants. The withdrawal of one participant is discussed in further detail later in this chapter. Although the sample size is relatively small it is supported in the research literature that recommended up to ten research subjects as ample to research saturation (Boyd, 2001), appropriate for a phenomenological study (Cresswell, 2003) and therefore sufficient to achieve the outcomes of the proposed research study.

The participants were a homogeneous sample based on their shared experiences and characteristics of the special position they held as foundation teachers of the new school; none had the experience of explicitly teaching social and emotional learning as defined in this study, all were equally responsible for the planning and implementation of an integrated curriculum; all were required to work in small learning teams and all were responsible for creating school structures and processes that promoted student wellbeing and learning outcomes. Of the participants who nominated to be part of the research, two were working in non-systemic Catholic schools including the principal who came with prior experience of starting a new school and the remainder was all working either at another Diocesan school or at the Diocesan Education Office.

The goal of the original research proposal (see appendix 7) was to interview the participants four to six times in one year comprised of one individual interview per term and two focus group interviews. However, the reality for participants once the school began was very different. There were unexpected internal and external pressures on the staff that significantly impacted on their available time and disposition to be interviewed so frequently. It was important for the researcher to respect there were many unexpected systems and processes that demanded the staff's focus and energies. As a developing school the ongoing responsibility of teaching the new intake of students ran concurrently to all other pressing agendas. Some of the pressures that took precedence over the research study were regular collaborative decision-making; policies and procedures needed to be written to guide staff practices to uphold the intention of the school's philosophy; the unfamiliar nature of the integrated curriculum including SEL meant planning and teaching in unaccustomed trans-disciplinary teams; accountabilities from both the state and local education authorities and the general time required to develop professional relationship with staff and students thereby building the desired school culture. This naturally took precedence over the researcher's desire to conduct the study and so the number of interviews was negotiated and reduced to one per year. The difficulty of finding time

to interview each participant meant that it was virtually impossible to get the participants to gather as a focus group, which was then abandoned in favour of extending the research period to two and half years. Although the researcher requested the interviews by email as previously agreed to and to minimise the interruption to participants during the school day, the delays and/or postponements with agreed interview times prevailed. It was not for the want of commitment by the participants as they each expressed their concern but there were higher priorities to attend to. It was therefore incumbent upon the researcher to be patient and work with the participants on their availability and readiness to participate in the interview process. Cresswell (2003) noted that difficulties such as these should be anticipated and accounted for in qualitative research whilst it is an example of Janesick's (1994) notion that quality design research is fluid, adaptable and able to be redesigned to accommodate the changing nature of the research study (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

However, all participants entered the research process willingly, committed to spending in excess of two hours of personal time being interviewed twice over two years and were not rewarded for their participation with gifts or remuneration.

The process and defined phases for the participants in the study is outlined on the following page (see figure 5.2) noting the withdrawal and inclusion of past and new Learning Advisors.

Learning Advisors' Interview Timeline 2005-2008

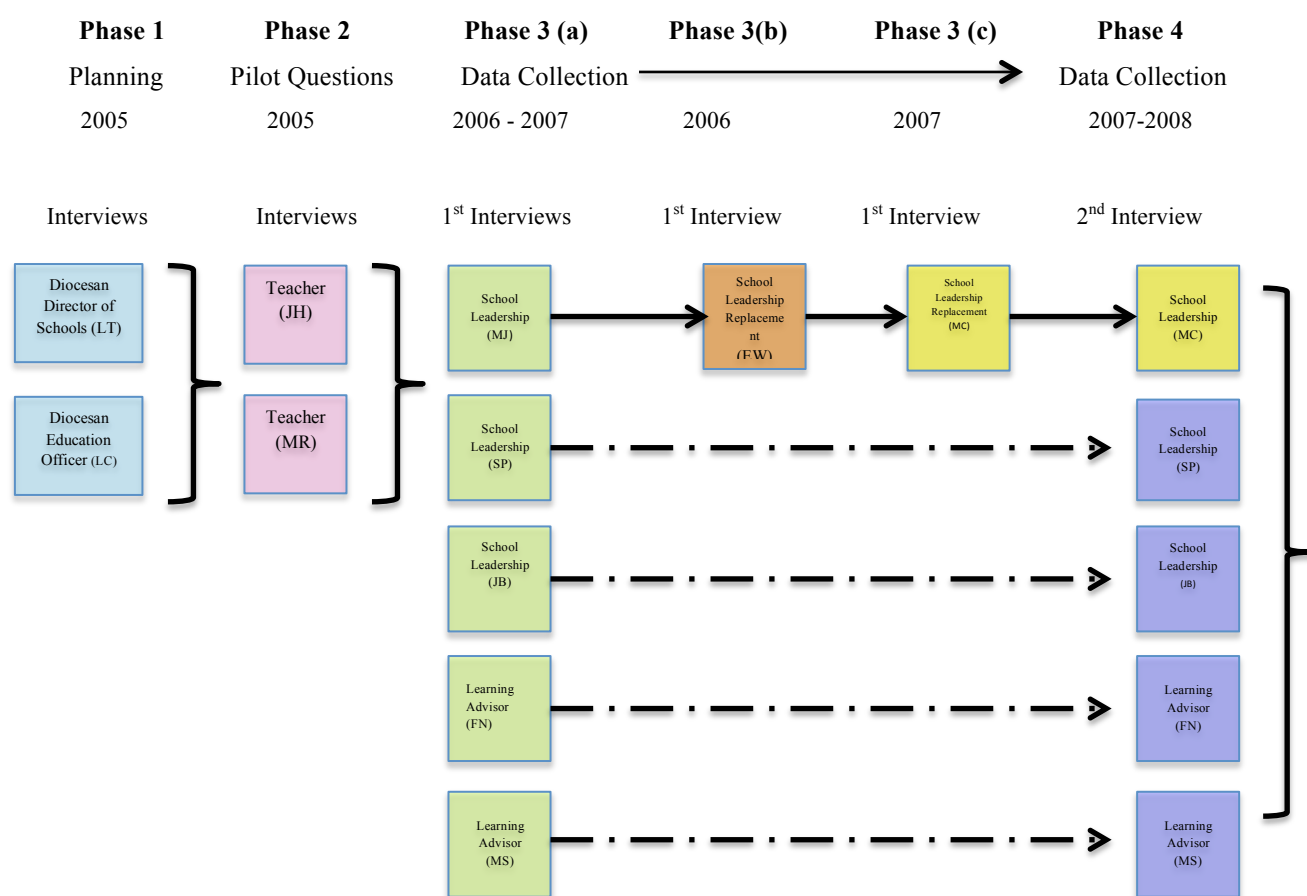


Figure 5.2: Learning Advisors' Interview Timeline 2005-2008

Phase 1: Planning, 2005

During the latter half of 2005, and before the new school opened in 2006, the then Director of Schools, a senior Professional Officer of the Diocesan Education Office's Learning Services and a Team Leader of Curriculum and Pedagogy agreed to be interviewed about the development of the new school in the Diocese. Each was interviewed for between one and one and half hours at the Diocesan Education Office by the researcher to gain their perspective of the creation of the new school's cross-curricula model that was uniquely different to any other school in the Diocese.

Phase 2: Pilot Sample Questions, 2005

Two teachers, one male and the other female were identified through a conversation at a Diocesan in-service workshop, as being familiar with teaching an integrated curriculum and both had been foundation members of two different new schools prior to their current school appointment. A confidential letter was written to each teacher outlining the nature of the study and sample questions. Both teachers agreed and signed a consent form returning it to the researcher. The teachers were asked to 'assume' they were the participants in the study and to respond to the sample questions presented. As a result, a small number of questions were reformed into the minor questions to encourage open and information rich conversation.

Phase 3 (a): Data Collection, 2006 - 2007

Five of the thirteen appointed LAs (three Leadership positions and two non-leadership positions, however, all staff were considered LAs) agreed to be participants in the research study and returned their signed consent form. All LAs were new to the school, each with an extensive teaching background exceeding twenty-five years of service and all with prior teaching experiences in a number of secondary school settings. All LAs had held positions of responsibility in their previous schools covering a variety of leadership roles including principal, assistant principal, Pastoral Care and Key Learning Area (Curriculum) Coordinators, Year and House Coordinators and Leader of Social Justice and all shared a common understanding of District Office learning and teaching expectations. Throughout all phases of the study there were five Anglo-Saxon males and six Anglo-Saxon females who participated, and all proficient at articulating their opinions.

A list of participants and an interview schedule was drawn up to begin the research process during term one, 2006. However, there were significant challenges and stressors for the staff adjusting to the new school dynamics, which resulted in the need to alter the interview schedule and re-negotiate with participants an appropriate time that would accommodate their needs and available times. Consequently, the first round of interviews did not begin until mid-way through term two, 2006.

During the remaining three terms in 2006 and term one 2007, five LAs including three from the leadership team were interviewed between one and a half hours and two hours in duration either in a private room at the

school site or at Diocesan Office depending on their preference, availability and access to the researcher at the time.

Phase 3 (b): Data Collection, 2006

For personal and professional reasons, at the end of term 2, 2006 one LA, on the Leadership team, decided to leave the school and take up a teaching position elsewhere in the Diocese. A replacement staff member from the Diocesan Education Office Task Force Committee, who had initially been part of the planning team for the new school, took the leadership position for the remainder of the school year. This new leadership member agreed to be part of the research study as a school participant and was subsequently interviewed using the same procedure as for other participants.

Phase 3 (c): Data Collection, 2007

At the beginning of term 1, 2007 this leadership position was advertised and a new staff member who was in another leadership position in another Diocesan school was appointed. To continue gathering baseline qualitative data, this staff member also agreed to be part of the research study and was interviewed and included with the other LAs' first round of interviews.

Phase 4: Data Collection, 2008

To compare LAs' responses and any changing perceptions and experiences from the first round of interviews, the initial four LAs and the single replacement Learning Advisor participated in the second round of interviews which were completed by the end of term one, 2008.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Reflecting the ideology of phenomenology, this qualitative single case study utilised multiple data collection strategies. Researchers suggested that data collection be considered as both primary and secondary sources (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mertens, 1998; Yin, 2003). In this study the former included the LAs' semi-structured interviews, the researcher's observations and journal notes, informal conversations with staff at the school site and school documentation such as staff blogs and school newsletters. Secondary data sources

included prior research studies were utilised to contrast the finding of this research study. The triangulation of data sources (figure 5.3) represented the multiple sources of data collected and utilised in the study.

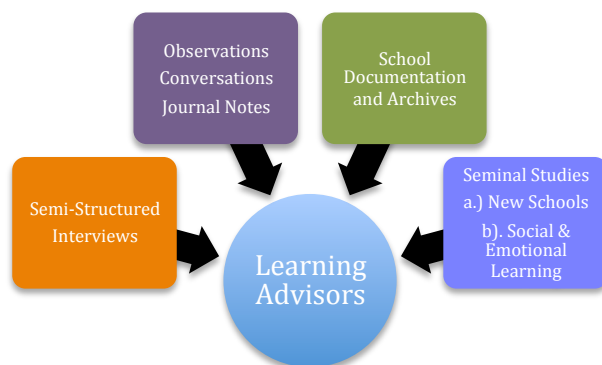


Figure 5.3: Triangulation of Data Sources

INTERVIEWS

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to gain rich, detailed information from participants of their experiences as staff in a new school working with the added responsibility of delivering cross-curriculum units of work with one of the prescribed components as social and emotional learning. As a qualitative strategy, the interview process allowed the researcher to ask both planned and unplanned questions, creating the opportunity for the unexpected directions from the participants' responses and to also gain personal information not directly observed. This strategy not only provided insight on the investigation and themes for the researcher, it gave a platform for the Learning Advisors' voices to be heard (Cresswell, 2003; Mertens, 1998; Merriam, 1997).

A list of open-ended questions that evolved from the sample trialed questions fell loosely under the themes of the minor questions and were presented to the LAs through the process of two interviews conducted over a two-year period (see appendix 7). These questions directed the analysis of the major question presented earlier. The semi-structured interview format was explained to each LA. The duration of first and second round interviews was between one and half and two hours, which allowed a significant period of time for the researcher to check, clarify and discuss the meanings assigned to the LAs' articulations and experiences. Adler and Adler (1994, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) suggested that through the flow of conversation in semi-structured interviews between the researcher and participant, opportunities were presented for the

researcher to explore and probe rich descriptions, tensions, complexities, and insights into their learning journey thus far. The evolving thoughts from participants during their first interviews formed the basis then for discussion and clarification during their second interviews.

An advantage of the interview process was the researcher's personal and professional relationship with each participant. This established conditions where the participants felt comfortable in expressing their experiences and concerns about the evolving school and the curriculum delivery. Equally important and a possible disadvantage from the participants' perspective, however, may have been the researcher's dual position as a Diocesan Education Officer with a vested interest in the successful implementation of social and emotional learning in the curriculum and the developing school. The researcher was deliberately sensitive to this and acknowledged to the participants that they may be guarded in their responses not wanting to challenge Diocesan Education Offices' new curriculum directives and/or tempered by not wanting to disappoint the researcher with less than successful outcomes. To counteract this potential dilemma, the researcher spoke candidly with each participant, reiterating their responses would remain strictly confidential and that the researcher's interest was simply in understanding their experience whether positive or negative as they adapted to the new school and the new requirements to teach the social and emotional learning construct in the daily curriculum.

After each interview was completed, and as soon as possible, the researcher listened to the digital recording. This allowed the researcher to listen again to the participants' ideas and opinions, discovering insights and reflecting on possible explanations missed during the face-to-face interview. The interviewer transcribed each participant's interview personally which allowed for deeper immersion into each participant's world-view experience. The transcribed interviews also provided a verbatim recording and a hard copy of the interview data. Although transcribing the taped interviews was time-consuming it also provided an invaluable advantage. The process enabled the researcher to have the interview data in a usable format that could be retrieved on demand providing continual access to analyse the rich information provided by the participants.

Transcribing each interview initially appeared to be a straightforward and rudimentary task, however, the

researcher quickly discovered that it also required making value judgments of the participants' opinions, particularly in the absence of observing non-verbal behaviours available to interpret during the semi-structured interviews. Although the task produced an overwhelming amount of information, the process gave the researcher an opportunity and a lens to gain further understanding and insights of the LAs' world-views, as they navigated ways of working in a new school with new staff and with the social and emotional learning construct. A copy of each transcribed interview was provided to the LAs after both interviews, which they checked for veracity and any corrections or clarifications were attended to. Any changes to the participants' transcripts were completed within a week and returned to the participant for final approval.

The semi-structured interview approach had the advantage in this research design of providing much more detail than what is possible through other available data collection methods such as surveys. In this situation, the researcher was flexible and reacted spontaneously to the direction of the conversation with the participant. The informal conversations in these semi-structured interviews encouraged a relaxed and non-threatening exchange where the interview felt more like a casual conversation. Once the transcripts were completed, re-read and notes taken, the LAs' responses were then coded in light of the emergent themes already identified through school documents and field journal notes.

SCHOOL DOCUMENTATION

School documents, both private and public are considered valuable sources of data and were utilised to support or challenge issues emerging from the identified themes in this study. Permission was given to the researcher to access school documentation from the school and the Diocesan Education Office that occurred in the early planning phase (2005), the formation of school structures and processes between 2006 and 2008 and staff communications both internally and externally were collected and recorded. These documents included:

- Vision and Learning and Teaching Principles (see appendix 8)
- Extracts from school newsletters accessed from the school's website (see appendix 9)
- Staff professional blog (see example p. 146)

- Researcher's journal notes (see example p. 120).

These data were recorded chronologically. Reflections about the school documents were initially noted as descriptions but after the first year and with other data sources analyses became evaluative, interpreting the new school's journey of development in integrating the social and emotional learning construct within the curriculum. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stressed that gathering school documentation provided an invaluable opportunity to convey implicit and explicit school matters such as, 'the official chain of command and internal rules and regulations. They provided clues about the school's leadership team and style and potential insights about what organisational members value' (p. 136).

The analyses of the school documents and themes were compared for validation in relation to the other data sources.

There was no documentation or data kept on students.

JOURNAL NOTES

Miles and Huberman (1994) endorsed the strategy called 'memoing' (p. 69) as an appropriate data source in qualitative research. The researcher began memoing through personal journal notes at the beginning of the study, recording observations, impressions, questions, tensions and ideas. Journal entries were noted after each interview, during the literature review search, through informal conversations with LAs and during academic reflection time. The journal entries during the information gathering stage were descriptive and were reviewed and coded using the same coding process as with participants' transcribed interviews. However, as the research study developed, these journal notes became evaluative, either supporting or negating the emergent themes. Furthermore, these entries were dated so that the researcher was able to quickly cross-reference with other data sources.

Lofland and Lofland (1999) recommended that journal notes should be written up no later than the day after the interview, as there was a danger of the researcher forgetting. Whilst this was the researcher's initial goal, the feasibility of listening and taking journal notes from a lengthy interview and conducting the research on a

part-time basis remained a constant challenge. However, to address the potential loss of insight and understanding, the researcher listened to each taped interview within a week of the interview and discussed thoughts and ideas for clarity around emerging themes with supervisors.

With the LAs' consent, their interviews were taped on a digital recorder. Prior to the interview the digital recorder was checked for function, clarity and sound. Each interview was recorded on a separate new tape and the LA identified with alias initials to ensure each LA's privacy and confidentiality of the interview. The number of the interview (first or second) and the date and time of the interview were clearly labeled on each tape. Once each interview was transcribed in full and coded for anonymity it was assigned to a computer file on a computer disc and held all relevant information pertaining to each LA. This included the informed consent agreement, the transcribed interview, the researcher's journal notes, including reflections aligned to the theoretical perspective, methods, themes for analysis and clarifying questions to follow up on with the LAs. An additional electronic copy of each file was held on the researcher's computer hard drive, which maintained confidentiality of data and was automatically backed up each evening. A hard copy of the contents of each file was contained in a locked cabinet and the key kept in a locked safe on the researcher's premises. Fundamentally, the researcher's role in conducting this research was to describe as accurately as possible, the LAs' experiences and insights working in school with the social and emotional learning construct.

There was a responsibility from the researcher to listen and engage with participants without judgment, to focus on the depth of the dialogue, to be aware and sensitive to personal prejudices and biases and purposefully avoid guiding the direction of the questions and discussion to satisfy a vested interest and possible conclusions. The researcher was conscious of the power to control the interview situation. This was evident as the researcher was the driver and decision-maker about which questions were relevant to ask, which to press for further exploration, which to abandon and in what order they would appear. The researcher was continually reminded that the authority of the study rested with the participants and understanding *their* views and subsequent motivations and actions.

Prior to the research study, the researcher was both friend and colleague with each of the participants in the study. The interview process therefore was casual and informally based reflecting more a social conversation that was appropriate to the established relationship. Rapport in each relationship was already established which can have both positive and negative effects on the research study. An advantage is experiencing the established trust between the Learning Advisors and the researcher which Glesne and Peshkin (1992) noted as crucial for the motivation of others to 'tell you what otherwise they may not' (p.39). Already comfortable in discussing professional and relationship subjects, participants were free to express unimpeded thoughts and feelings about their experiences with the social and emotional learning construct under study. The researcher's professional background as a psychologist and teacher meant a proficient level of knowledge and understanding of the social and emotional construct, its application to life situations as it was practiced in the therapeutic setting. One advantage of the researcher as a counselling practitioner was the ability to move participants fluidly through the interview process, explore participants' insights and understandings of their experiences, and respond to opportunities and unexpected outcomes as the interview progressed. Miles and Huberman (1994) endorsed this and suggested that the researcher who acted as participant observer in the study naturally had prior or background knowledge that facilitated the researcher making sense of the situations and issues the staff experienced.

The researcher in this study was also conscious of moderating personal expectations of the participants and so was primed not to lead the questions and conversations towards any desired outcome. The interest from the researcher was focused on the participants' experiences of the social and emotional learning construct so was careful not to make preconceived judgments of the participants' abilities to induct the social and emotional concepts into an integrated curriculum.

PROCEDURE

The sequential procedure and timeline for this research study is outlined in Figure 5.4.

Overview of the Research Design Schedule and Process

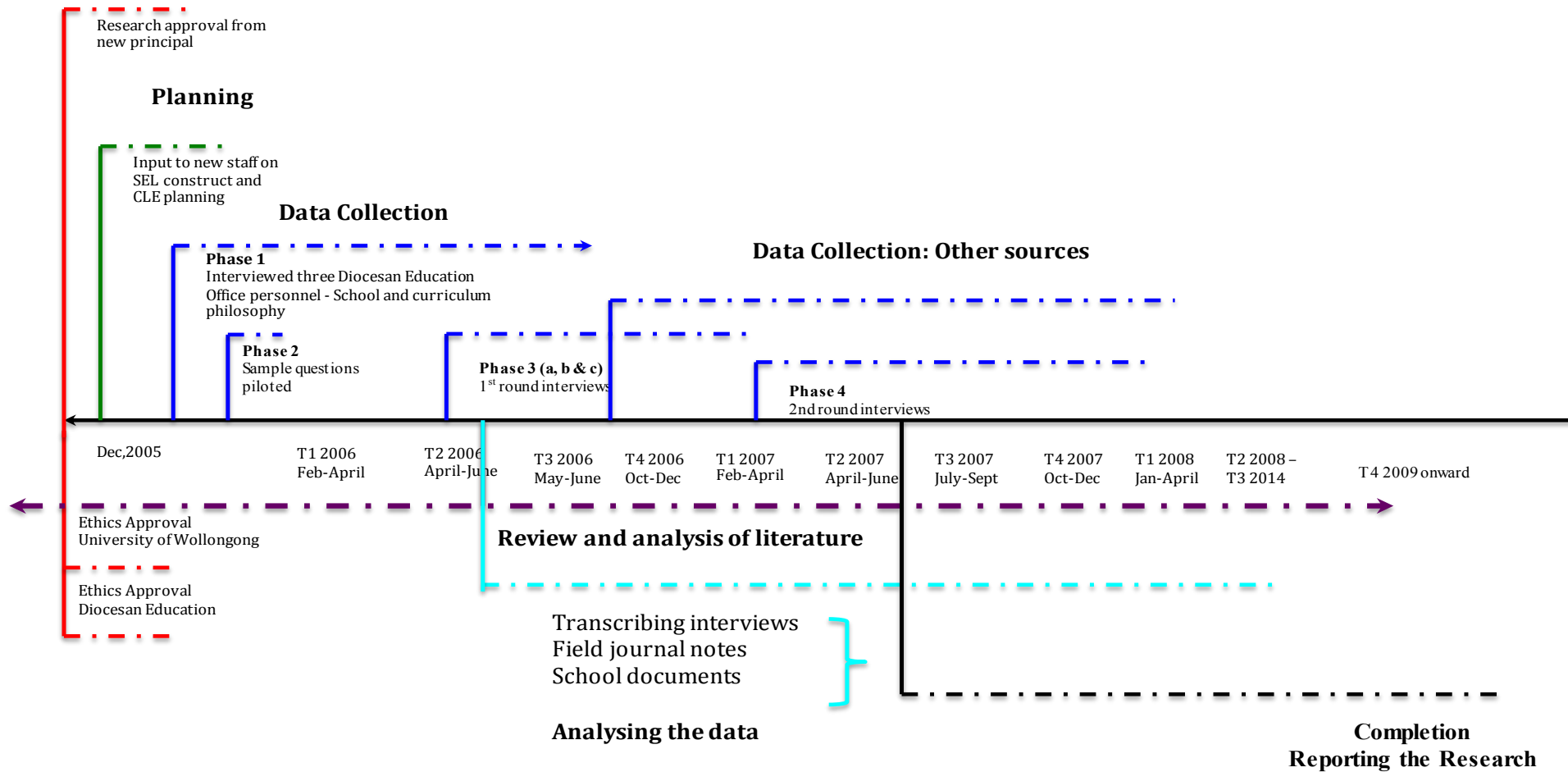


Figure 5.4. Overview of the Research Design Schedule and Process

Term 4, 2005 – Term 1, 2006

Ethics approval (HEO05/290) to conduct this research was initially provided by the University of Wollongong's Ethics Committee, (2005) followed by ethics approval from the Diocesan Education Office (2005), (see appendix 10). At the beginning of term four, 2005 and before the school opened in 2006, an hour-long discussion with the newly appointed school principal about the purpose and research design of the study was conducted to ascertain her interest and possible support for the study. The principal endorsed the research proposal (see appendix 11), and viewed it as an opportunity to document the staff's experience of establishing a school from scratch and as well as developing the social and emotional learning component of the multi-disciplinary curriculum. Once the principal's approval was granted, the three senior Diocesan Education Office personnel responsible for the Education Brief for the new school agreed to be interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to gain an understanding of the system's educational philosophies underpinning the formation of the Education Brief for the new school. The interviews were conducted between December 2005 and the end of term 3, 2006 and formed the baseline for comparing the Diocesan Education Office's intentions for the new school and the incoming staff's realities.

Following this a list of sample questions relating to the study was compiled at the end of 2005 and trialed with two voluntary teachers from another Catholic secondary school within the Diocese. These teachers were identified through a conversation at a Diocesan in-service as being familiar with teaching an integrated curriculum and previously experienced being foundation staff members of two different new schools prior to their current school appointment. A letter was written to each teacher enquiring as to their interest in participating in the study and outlined the nature of the study with the inclusion of sample questions, ethics approval from both the university and the Diocesan Education Office. Both of the teachers, one male and one female agreed to their participation and signed a consent form returning it to the researcher. The teachers were asked to 'assume' they were the participants in the study and to respond to the sample questions presented. As a result, a number of questions were simplified or adjusted to encourage a more open and detailed conversation. From these interviews it was apparent that there were five themes common in the teachers' responses. These themes were then formed into five minor questions that would enable the

major research question to be answered. These minor research questions provide the framework for the ensuing interviews with the selected participants from the new school (see appendix 7).

Planning for School Opening: 2005-2006

During the last six weeks of term four 2005, Cathedral College's foundation staff were released from their previous schools to meet and work together to become familiar with all components of the integrated curriculum and plan the Connected Learning Experiences (CLEs) units of work in readiness for the opening of the new school in 2006. During this period, a number of Diocesan Educational Officers were allotted time by the incoming principal to speak with the new school staff to build an understanding of the decisions and the content contained in within the learning and teaching principles in the Education Brief. It was the end of the term four 2005 that the researcher, who was also a Diocesan Education Officer and responsible for the inclusion of the proposed social and emotional curriculum was asked to present to staff the philosophy and content of the SEL construct. The allocated hour to speak was also shared with the Diocesan Education Office's Curriculum and Pedagogy Team Leader, however, an outline of the content of social and emotional competencies was given and a discussion with the new staff followed on the flexibility of adapting these skills to the CLE being prepared to teach the following year. An information resource sheet was left with the staff for later referral and discussion. An open invitation to the principal and staff was extended for further professional learning and curriculum support to develop a scaffold for explicitly teaching social and emotional learning skills during the new school year.

Early School Years: 2006-2008

At a staff meeting early term one of the new school opening in 2006, the principal spoke with the foundation staff, known as LAs and presented the research proposal. There were thirteen foundation staff at the school and the principal stressed that participation in the research was not mandatory but was certainly encouraged. Any questions or concerns from staff were to be discussed privately with the researcher. An individual letter addressed to each staff member was handed out outlining the purpose of the study and the research design including addressing any issues of confidentiality. Three attachments were enclosed in each letter including

sample questions under the four minor themes determined from the sample questions that were trialed earlier in semi-structured interviews, a Staff Information Sheet and Staff Consent Form (see appendices 7). There were five teachers including the principal who agreed to be participants, signed consent forms and returned them in a sealed envelope to the researcher over a period of four weeks. The data collection through the semi-structured interviews began at the end of term two, 2006. The first rounds of interviews were negotiated with the participants and conducted both at the school site and at the Diocesan Education Office during between term three, 2006 and term one, 2007.

After the school had been operating for twelve months, it became apparent that a number of decisions needed to be made to improve the functionality of the school. During term 1, 2007 important school systems were implemented to support the goals of the cross-curricula model. As a Diocesan Education Officer knowledgeable about the social and emotional learning component of the curriculum, the researcher was asked to speak with the general staff for forty minutes about extending the social and emotional learning construct to the newly designed Learning Circles which were held before class time. The role of the participants during Learning Circle time was to develop a relationship with each student and for connections to be built between students. A handout (see appendix 12) was given to staff with suggestions to guide the interview process during this time.

The second round of participants' interviews began at the beginning of term 2, 2007 and was completed by the end of the term 1, 2008. The location of interviews varied between the school site and the Diocesan Education Office and was dependent on the availability and request from the staff member. School documentation was collected and journal notes recorded and reviewed for the purposes of data triangulation and analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section was to make sense, however subjective, of the data collated from the three different primary sources and to compare it with the secondary data source from the Literature Review. Van Manen (1990) and Mertens (1998) referred to the task of analysing qualitative data as examining the meaningful and symbolic content of what was discovered with the phenomenon under study. The resultant

analysis of the triangulated data endorsed and/or refuted what was considered authentic and valid experiences of the LAs. The researcher in this study attempted to identify and understand, as best as possible within the confines of subjective assumptions and experiences, the realities of the LAs' situation.

Miles and Huberman (1994) stressed that for the researcher, the initial decision and ultimate process of organising data was the beginning of reducing the raw data into meaningful units of text. Interpretations of themes followed in the second phase of the study then eventually patterns of possible explanations were offered. For the researcher, systematically working through these phases as outlined (see figure 5.4) was a process of transformation for understanding the issues for LAs during the early years of the school's development.

Formal documentation of the researcher's data sources not only provided a method of managing the large amount of raw information and text but also prompted the researcher to reflect early in the research process about possible speculations of the data whilst retaining a sense of the original accounts and observations. The fundamental task in data analysis was to categorise, map, explore, explain and theorise the process for staff of a new school to integrate social and emotional learning into daily school life. The process of data analysis occurs through systematic stages as depicted in the figure x by Miles and Huberman (1994).

In this study, semi-structured interviews, school archival documents such as staff handbook, newsletters and a staff blog and field journal notes provided the first formal step of data analysis. The researcher utilised Attride-Stirling's (2001) model of *thematic networks* as an analytical tool for qualitative research that assisted in producing meaningful and helpful results from the data collated. The purpose of thematic network analysis organised under the research questions was to explore the themes at various levels of the text gathered aimed to simplify for understanding and to organise and visually represent the themes. The author suggested a schema of thematic networks that systematically drew out for the researcher the themes beginning with identifying basic themes, condensing these into organising themes and finally culminating the groupings into global themes.

However, as Attride-Stirling (2001) and Boyatzis, (1998) stressed the objective of using thematic networks as a procedure for data analysis was not to discover the distinct beginning and end of an argument or the possible explanation of the case under study. It was however, a qualitative strategy for data analysis for the researcher for organising and breaking up the text into units of meaning, finding within each category, the explicit rationalisations and the inferred significance to the study.

Initially, to reduce the data into manageable and meaningful pieces of text, a coding framework was developed based on participants' recurrent issues arising in both of their interviews, the researcher's observations and school documentation. The transcribed interviews several times noting thoughts in the margins, highlighting phrases, single words and quotations that were repeated across multiple participants and noting changes of perception between the first and second interviews. A code was assigned to each that was clearly defined and could not be confused or interchanged with another. The code was also applied to the researcher's journal notes and school documentation. This process reflected the principle text descriptions from the data sources as a whole, which meant cycling back and forth between data collection and analysis developing more insight with each consideration.

Nineteen codes emerged from the initial coding process, which were subsequently defined. A list of the coding categories and their definitions (see table 5.1) were tabled below.

Table 5.1: Definitions and Coding Categories

Coding Categories	Definitions
Initial Planning (PLA)	Initial planning from District Office
Staff Induction (IND)	Preparation of staff to teach the SEL
Staff Ownership (OWN)	Staff responsibility and commitment towards SEL
Vision (VIS)	Staff educational vision and philosophy
SEL School Structures (SST)	School structures and SEL
Structures for Learning (STL)	School learning structures and SEL
Database (DAT)	Use of the database to report on SEL outcomes
Reporting to Parents (PAR)	Process of reporting on SEL to parents
Roles (ROL)	The function and impact of staff roles in SEL development
SEL Resources (RES)	Availability and application of SEL resources

Design Curriculum (DCU)	Staff working in teams creating cross-curriculum units of work
Beliefs and Attitudes (BEL)	Staff beliefs and attitudes towards SEL
Staff Expertise (EXP)	Staff knowledge of SEL
Staff SEL Competencies (STC)	Staff skills and abilities with SEL
Professional Learning (PRL)	Professional learning in SEL
Staff Workload (WOR)	Impact of workload on staff
Staff Stress (STS)	Staff stress and SEL
Change Management (CHA)	Staff adapting to educational change
SEL Evaluation (EVA)	Staff evaluating the impact and sustainability of SEL

Additionally, reflections recorded in the journal were also coded under the same code categories emergent in the participants' interviews. The example below in table 2 and 3 depicted the researcher's process of identifying and defining key words and phrases and assigning code categories to a journal extract following an informal conversation after an interview with a LA.

Table 5.2: Researcher's Journal Note and Coding Example

Journal Note: 10 th May, 2006	Code
<i>One Learning Advisor declared feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by the process of getting the school up and running. Adjusting and having to make decisions about structures and processes every day, designing CLEs with integrity to each KLA syllabus and but grappling with understanding the concept of social and emotional learning were common ruminations. It appears that although there is a philosophy and verbal commitment to the concept, but Learning Advisors are unsure of how to integrate it into the curriculum.</i>	STS
	DCU
	STC
	VIS
	DCU

Table 5.3: Key Words and Phrases of Coding Categories

Key Words and Phrases	Coding Categories
Overwhelmed and exhausted	Staff stress (STS)
Designing CLEs	Designing Curriculum (DCU)
Understanding concept of social and emotional learning	Staff competencies (STC)
Philosophy	Vision (VIS)
Integrate into curriculum	Designing Curriculum (DCU)

Once the text had been coded, the nineteen codes were grouped into a manageable set of themes identified under the minor questions posed in the research study. The themes were further developed from multiple texts taken from the two interviews for each LA and was continued until the researcher determined that data from the second interviews was not providing any new information or insights to add to the existing themes. Once saturation occurred the basic themes were then rearranged into nine organising themes. These larger thematic groupings reflected the focus areas or five global themes for presentation and analysis and are represented in the table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Theme Structures and Coding Categories

Global Themes	Organising Themes	Basic Themes	Coding Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to an educational vision and philosophy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Office influence • Educational vision and philosophy • Preparation for teaching in new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial planning from District Office • Staff educational philosophy and vision informing practices • Staff induction to the integrated curriculum • Staff ownership of the integrated curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INITIAL PLANNING (PLA) • VISION (VIS) • STAFF INDUCTION (IND) • STAFF OWNERSHIP (OWN)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures and processes supporting SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School organisational structures • Curriculum Integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures promoting relationships between staff and students (Dialogues for Learning) • Structures and processes to promote quality learning and teaching (CLE's, iCLE time and L2L) • Utilising the assessment and reporting database (PAROT) • Process for reporting to parents • Designing CLEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRUCTURES SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS (SSR) • STRUCTURES FOR LEARNING and TEACHING (SLT) • DATABASE (DAT) • REPORTING TO PARENTS (PAR) • DESIGNING CURRICULUM (DCU)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence in teaching SEL skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of staff to teach social and emotional learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff beliefs and attitudes in SEL • Staff expertise in SEL and curriculum integration • Staff competencies in SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES (BAA) • STAFF EXPERTISE (EXP) • STAFF COMPETENCIES (STC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of leadership supporting SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/ leaderships roles and expectations • SEL resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROLES (ROL) • RESOURCES (RES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues and future of SEL in the school context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff as change agents • Work related stress • SEL sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development • Extensive workload • Competing agendas • Staff adapting to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (POD) • WORKLOAD (WOR) • STAFF STRESS (STS) • CHANGE ISSUES (CHA)

CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

A number of potential ethical issues in this study were reviewed. The general staff were challenged to have the new school functioning smoothly for the first intake of students and were required to be professionally competent in the planning and delivery of all the components of the learning and teaching model, which was unfamiliar to many. In this light and acknowledging the many stressors the LAs were experiencing it was important to respect their rights to decide when they would be available for their interviews. This had to fit in with the pressures of planning the curriculum and the extra duties LAs are expected to do when a new school begins. This prolonged the study longer than was anticipated, however, an accidental benefit to the study was that it gave significant time between interviews so that the LAs' experiences were extended, they were able to articulate the success or challenge with systems and processes and compared the changes in their thoughts, feelings and experiences which added weight to the findings.

The consequences of the research were also considered as an area of ethical concern especially regarding any public reports. In respect to this, the name and location of the school, the participants remained anonymous and the data confidential.

The informal and formal influence of the researcher added a potential bias to the outcomes of the study. The researcher's was conscious of the dual role as friend and colleague representing the Diocesan Education Office and so was sensitive to this issue of confidentiality. This meant the researcher was deliberately alerted to and mentally prepared to remain neutral during each interview and in any conversation with any staff member throughout the duration of the study.

VALIDITY

Triangulation of evidence across different data sources was helpful for checking the convergence of different perspectives (Yeasmin & Rahman, 2012), validating the LAs' descriptive references with respect to the research question. Erzberger and Kelle (2003) suggested that different viewpoints or data sources 'might not be useful to validate each other but might yield a fuller and more complete picture of the phenomenon concerned if brought together' (p. 27). Hammersley (2008) advanced the point and noted that interpretations of triangulated data helped to determine possible interpretations of the phenomena under study that are more, and less likely, to be valid *and* provide complementary information that illuminated different aspects of what the participants experiences. It was the latter that informed this study where triangulation of evidence was considered an analytical strategy that assisted forming judgments about the experiences of staff in the new school setting rather than an assured truth or wholeness of the experience.

In this research study, triangulation of data evidence was explored through different data sources which captured the perspectives of multiple participants, the researcher's observations and journal notes taken throughout the study and the collation of school documents reflected the early formation of the new school's journey and the challenges of planning an integrated curriculum.

DEPENDABILITY

Dependability referred to the ability of the reader to track the enquiry process through an audit trail where each step of collecting and analysing data in the research process was clearly articulated. From the researcher's constructivist perspective there were natural changes to the research process in this case study, which reflected the subjectivity and fluid nature of the enquiry. Confirmability referred to minimising potential influence of the researcher's analysis and opinion of the study's findings. Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested that confirmability was ensured for the reader if the 'data, interpretations, and outcomes of inquires are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and not simply figments of the evaluator's imaging' (p.243).

In this study, issues of emerging themes, triangulation of data sources, sampling, participant withdrawal, the role as researcher and other limitations are documented in detail so the reader can clearly understand and follow the research process as well as any background factors that may have influenced any decisions impacting the research process.

Like ensuring dependability, confirmability in this study was enhanced with an audit trail that was systematically formed, where original sources of the research method are traceable and there is a synthesis of data analysis and results to clearly outline for the reader to determine its veracity. The documentation of research process gives added weight to the reader's ability to confirm this study's results.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the theoretical perspective of constructivism informed the methodological foundations and essential qualitative method selection that supported the thesis' phenomenological single case study approach in exploring the research question. Data was collated from multiple sources, namely semi-structured interviews, school documentation and journal notes that included personal observations and incidental conversations with staff members generally. The procedures for data analysis were drawn and the strengths and weaknesses of the study discussed and accounted for with integrity. Finally, the results and findings are combined and presented reflecting the LAs' experiences working with the social and emotional learning construct in a new and developing school setting.

Chapter Six presents the findings of the data collection as it pertained to the case study.

CHAPTER 6 – FINDINGS

Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises

(Demosthenes 384-322 B.C)-

This chapter is organised under the following structure. To answer the major research question, a number of themes emerged from the review of the literature on new schools and SEL and from the responses of teachers piloting the interview questions (see table 6.1), which subsequently formed the minor questions of the research study.

EMERGENT THEMES

Table 6.1. Identified themes drawn from the literature review and pilot questions

Focus Areas	Basic Themes	Coding Categories
Vision and philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diocesan Education Office • Staff vision and philosophy • Staff introduction to new initiative • Staff ownership the new initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INITIAL PLANNING (PLA) • VISION (VIS) • STAFF INDUCTION (IND) • STAFF OWNERSHIP (OWN)
Organisational structures and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures and processes to support relationships • Structures and processes to the new initiative • Structures and processes to record academic learning • Partnerships with parents • Designing the curriculum for the new initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRUCTURES SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS (SSR) • STRUCTURES FOR LEARNING and TEACHING (SLT) • DATABASE (DAT) • REPORTING TO PARENTS (PAR) • DESIGNING CURRICULUM (DCU)
Staff capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff beliefs and attitudes towards the new initiative • Staff expertise planning the integration new initiative in an curriculum integration • Staff competencies in delivering the new initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES (BAA) • STAFF EXPERTISE (EXP) • STAFF COMPETENCIES (STC)
Role of leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and expectation • New initiative resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROLES (ROL) • RESOURCES (RES)
Staff issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development • Staff stressors including workload, competing agendas • Staff adapting to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (POD) • WORKLOAD (WOR) • STAFF STRESS (STS) • CHANGE ISSUES (CHA)

These emerging themes were expanded with the findings from the foundation staff's interviews and support was provided with the triangulation with other sources of data, specifically the researcher's journal entries and school documentation and archives (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. Themes developed from interviews, journal notes and school documentation

Focus Areas	Basic Themes	Coding Categories
Educational Vision and Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision and planning from District Office • Staff educational philosophy and vision informing practices • Staff induction to the integrated curriculum • Staff ownership of the integrated curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INITIAL PLANNING (PLA) • VISION (VIS) • STAFF INDUCTION (IND) • STAFF OWNERSHIP (OWN)
New school organisational structures and processes supporting SEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures promoting relationships between staff and students (Dialogues for Learning) • Structures and processes to promote quality learning and teaching (CLE's, iCLE time and L2L) • Utilising the assessment and reporting database (PAROT) • Process for reporting to parents • Designing CLEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRUCTURES SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS (SSR) • STRUCTURES FOR LEARNING and TEACHING (SLT) • DATABASE (DAT) • REPORTING TO PARENTS (PAR) • DESIGNING CURRICIULUM (DCU)
Staff confidence and abilities to plan and teach SEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff beliefs and attitudes in SEL • Staff expertise in SEL and curriculum integration • Staff competencies in SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES (BAA) • STAFF EXPERTISE (EXP) • STAFF COMPETENCIES (STC)
Role of leadership supporting SEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/ leaderships roles and expectations • SEL resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROLES (ROL) • RESOURCES (RES)
Staff issues and sustainability of SEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development • Extensive workload • Competing agendas • Staff adapting to change • Sustainability of SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (POD) • WORKLOAD (WOR) • STAFF STRESS (STS) • CHANGE ISSUES (CHA) • SUSTAINABILITY (SUS)

The findings from all data sources are presented under the general focus areas and articulated in the following Chapter.

There are several critical but common features in the new school literature for educational systems and leaders to attend to, namely staff agreement of the new school's vision and philosophy; supportive organisational structures and processes; the role of the leadership team to guide the development and

sustainability of the new school, and the complexity of managing staff issues and stressors so that the school maintains its original purpose (Eastabrook & Fink, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). New schools begin with fervor and excitement to be different, however, over time slowly revert to the traditional ways of operating. The following foundation staff's responses to these themes are articulated below.

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY:

To develop an understanding of the educational vision and philosophy underpinning the new school, the staff from the Diocesan Education Office, initially responsible for the planning was asked during their interviews specific questions to explain this position. The following responses indicated significant planning by the Diocesan Education Office, which was then expanded in partnership with the newly appointed principal before the school opened. Ultimately, once the school was operational, there was continual collaboration with the foundation staff to use the vision and philosophy to guide the sustainability of the new school's learning agendas.

DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE: VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

The interview with the Diocesan Director of Schools prior to the school starting revealed his vision for this new school was premised on schools embracing the accelerated pace of societal change that challenged the delivery of a relevant curriculum to students today. Cathedral College was to be the model in the Diocese where the school climate, all were leaders, organisation structures and processes along with a contemporary curriculum better equipped students to value and become not only independent but lifelong learners. He found incongruent the fundamental mismatch of schooling in the twenty-first century, as it remained primarily focused on the old 'factory' means of the production, learning model. 'learning and teaching' now, he acknowledged, must be purposeful, engaging, flexible and connected so that learning experiences and links for students to the wider world were supported. What was no longer relevant or meaningful for schools today, he reasoned, was to 'slice the world into separate boxes whether that's by subject (English), by time (learning at 9.00 am and finishing at 3.00 pm) or by space (learning at a desk in a classroom)'. The world at large, he reasoned, was more synergistic than compartmentalised with continuous access to learning through a myriad of learning sources including digital technologies. In consultation with students across existing

secondary schools in the Diocese, he reported that many complained they felt ‘bored and uninterested’ with old ways of learning and teaching and subsequently disengaged from the learning process. The Director stressed that the time was right for educational systems to embrace a more relevant model that would equip students to live and work in this world. He maintained ‘as in life, students must have daily opportunities to learn about the world from many perspectives.’ Through an integrated learning process, the student would develop an understanding and appreciation that learning was continuous over their life span, intricately connected and not ‘chopped into bits’ as was currently presented in schools (Luke T. Phase 1 interview).

The vision and philosophy of learning was further directed when the Director stipulated that the appointed architect should design a secondary school that would ‘enhance learning,’ with agile ‘learning spaces’ rather than classrooms as these would encourage social connections, group learning, shared understanding and flexible working arrangements. To the Task Force Committee he mandated ‘develop a learning and teaching paradigm where students and their learning are at the centre and one that guides staff to shape learning and teaching experiences that make meaning and connections for the world of today and tomorrow’ (Luke T. Phase 1 interview). The Director did not, however, espouse a commitment to any particular learning theory or philosophy but only the fundamental belief that staff and students integrate and be immersed into the learning process of building knowledge, skills and experiences that were reflective and applicable to twenty-first century living and working.

The Director relegated the responsibility for developing the learning and teaching principles to the Senior Education Officer in Curriculum and Pedagogy team at the Diocesan Education Office. This officer was largely responsible for the development of the learning and teaching vision for a contemporary curriculum based on current educational research. The Senior Diocesan Education Officer (Phase 1) supported the Director’s vision but reported there were challenges not only in constructing a learning and teaching paradigm that was both innovative and relevant for today’s students but also complied with the educational requirements of the Diocesan Education Office and the NSW Board of Studies systems. As team leader of the Curriculum and Pedagogy team, she acknowledged her previous involvement and leadership in reviewing existing Diocesan schools’ compliance for school registration. She had accumulated over a significant period of time an intimate knowledge of these mandatory requirements but was unsure from the

NSW Board of Studies the degree of flexibility encouraged in teaching the various Key Learning Areas (KLAs) in secondary schools.

I worked on an example of possible integrated learning and teaching components to integrate in a unit of work, which we called Connected Learning Experiences (CLEs) but also sought the advice from the NSW Board of Studies as to the validity of mandatory hours of learning. My questions focused on why have the Board grouped KLAs in this way and why have mandatory hours with each KLA. The current model really forces teachers to think that teaching in distinct subject areas is the way it should be done. The Board was interested in reviewing how we went about it once it was established and to see if it were possible to have an integrated curriculum and maintain syllabus integrity. (Louise C.)

Armed with permission from the Board to organise each syllabus according to learning need, she reported to the Director that it was possible to develop a paradigm of learning and teaching that was ‘different and innovative’ based on cross-curricula units of work. The Director emphatically endorsed this opportunity and with a resounding ‘go for it!’ planning was underway.

The Senior Diocesan Education Officer acknowledged her vision for the CLE was based on her experiences, expertise and educational research and more particularly the backward design model of learning. In addition, her involvement, observations, and discussions with research partners about models of learning and her active participation and leadership on state and national education committees provided her with a comprehensive understanding of learning models. As a leader in the Diocesan Education Office, she also felt it important that other Education Officers whose daily work was immersed in curriculum development, learning and teaching, SEL and Pastoral Care contributed to the learning and teaching principles. This was a unique opportunity to create learning and teaching principles inclusive of the research, expertise and knowledge from the Diocesan Education Officer of what was understood to be ‘successful practice’ in their respective areas of work.

The initial plan from the Diocesan Office was for Education Officers, notably from the Curriculum and Pedagogy and Pastoral Care and Personal Growth Teams to introduce the concept of the cross-curriculum CLE, including the integration of the social and emotional component of learning. However the principles of the learning and teaching paradigm was defined by the new principal, endorsed by the Diocesan Education Officer (2005) and restated below.

CATHEDRAL COLLEGE LEARNING AND TEACHING PRINCIPLES

Against a background of Catholic educational philosophy, the following guiding principles underpin learning and teaching at Cathedral College

1. A focus on the whole person whose dignity is respected and affirmed
2. The relational and transformational nature of learning grounded in quality relationships amongst all members of the school, parish and wider community and a reverence towards creation
3. An active, inquiry approach to learning fostering enjoyment, engagement and responsibility as students develop the skills of independent, creative, critical and reflective learners
4. A collaborative approach to learning where students appreciate the social dimension of human activity
5. Learning environments which are challenging, supportive, hope-filled, futures centred and flexible and which engage students in tasks of significance and relevance to produce learning which has value beyond the school
6. Value and support of individual differences and diversity
7. Curriculum integration as the organising paradigm, based on syllabus outcomes, **incorporating SEL**
8. Innovative pedagogical practices emerging from school-based action research and from the wider educational community, which effectively integrate technology
9. Open, flexible and adaptable work spaces and resources that support an integrated approach to learning and teaching
10. Staff professionalism modeled on Jesus, the teacher and characterised by continuous collaborative learning, reflection, passion and personal growth

(Learning and Teaching Principles, 2006)

A sample CLE from the Task Force Committee based on the synthesis of the essential components articulated through the learning and teaching principles was discussed amongst the staff with the view of planning new relevant CLEs for the beginning of the school year in 2006.

As the researcher of this study and the Diocesan Education Officer responsible for inclusion of the social and learning component of the CLEs, it was important to ensure that it was well understood by the Task Force Committee and the newly appointed LAs of Cathedral College. However, the invitation to present staff with the essential components of SEL was delayed until the third week of their appointments, which meant there were only three weeks left for planning before the end of term.

Although the LAs from Cathedral College were inducted (term four, 2005) to the concept of integrating SEL into the relevant CLEs there was not enough time or opportunities to develop for a strong understanding of SEL similar to that of their own KLA expertise. This was the only opportunity to educate the staff on the SEL component before the beginning of school the following year.

The staff appeared to be interested and agreed in principle to the concept and skill development of SEL in the learning and teaching paradigm. I shared the presentation time of two hours with the Curriculum Education Officer and made links to cross curriculum content as evidenced in the sample CLE. However, as with new schools there were many competing demands for the staff time and there little opportunity for discussion or to provide support in developing a subsequent CLE that would address the SEL component. (Journal Note, 15th December 2005).

The Senior Education Officer also commented during her Phase 1 interview on the limited opportunities to present to the staff the educational vision and philosophy and the proposed components of each CLEs.

There wasn't much time allocated for us to explain and discuss the new concept of the CLE. Although six weeks seemed time enough to get ready for the opening of the school, much of the time was spent with LAs explaining to each other, their syllabus content so that each could develop an understanding of the other's KLA and before they could begin to work on the integration of subjects to formulate the CLE. The principal organised Julia Atkins (noted Australian educational and learning consultant) to come and speak about her model of Learning to Learn' so the six weeks of planning disappeared very quickly. We thought that the staff needed specific planning time but in reality only one CLE was planned during this time. (Louise C.)

For both this Education Officer and the researcher, it was the last opportunity in 2005 to speak with the whole staff about SEL or the new curriculum paradigm to be taught in 2006. Whilst there was agreement between the representatives from the Diocesan Education Office on the twenty-first vision and philosophy for learning for the new school it was important to also ask the LAs about their own educational ideology to check for commonalities or differences.

LEARNING ADVISORS': VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

Initial interviews with the five Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs and Leaders in 2006, revealed unanimous agreement, enthusiasm and commitment to the educational vision as it valued and addressed students' SEL as an essential component of the daily curriculum. Although the vision for Cathedral College was formed prior to the beginning of the school in 2006 by a committee of leaders from the Diocesan District Office but in collaboration with the newly appointed principal, each LA reiterated that their reason for applying for the new school positions, whether it was in a leadership role or as a LA, was based on a desire to be part of teaching a new model of learning. This was underpinned by a deliberate and unapologetic focus on re-imagining the delivery of a new educational model that was meaningful for students, connected them in the digital age and above all, fostered independent and life-long learners.

Four of the five Phase 3 (a and b) LAs and Leaders during their first round of interviews stressed that their interest was with the integrated curriculum as it was 'innovative, contemporary and relevant to twenty first century thinking' (Jennifer B.), 'germane to adolescents and one that if prepared and taught effectively would develop positive and contributing global citizens' (Susan P.), 'an open learning environment not bound by traditional structures and timetables' (Felicity N.), 'combining subjects and relating the content to real-life situations' (Mitchell S.) and 'the purposeful development of the whole person not only academically but socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually so that they leave school better equipped for life's experiences' (Jennifer B). However, one of the five LAs queried the necessity to include the SEL component in each CLE. His understanding of SEL equated to the traditional 'values education' which he proposed in a Catholic school was already implicitly addressed in all KLAs. If this were the case, he maintained, there was not a need to add to staff workload and explicitly teach these social and emotional

competencies. However, he acknowledged being open-minded to developing a broader understanding of the social and emotional components in CLEs and making links to other key learning areas (Matthew J.).

Notably, all five Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs interviewed were senior teachers with more than 20 years experience each in education, teaching a variety of subjects covering all KLAs and all previously held positions in leadership. Despite the vast teaching expertise of staff only two LAs in the sample had previously experienced teaching an integrated curriculum in the classroom, one in primary school setting when first beginning his teaching career between 1979-1981 (Matthew J.) and the other LA in a secondary setting for a brief period of time early in his teaching career (Mitchell S.).

Commonly, the five Phase 3(a) LAs acknowledged that despite agreeing in principle to the school's philosophy their induction to the proposed curricula in the planning phase (2005) was an unexpected challenge. Three of the five LAs had not experienced any planning or teaching of cross-curricula units of work and the other two had done so a distant period from this school setting. Therefore, the process of gaining various subject knowledge was a new experience and one that subsequently required significant time for LAs to gain a common understanding of the agreed CLE content and delivery. As a result, only one CLE, rather than several as was originally planned, was prepared in the last 6 weeks of term 4, 2005 to be available for teaching at the beginning of the school year, 2006.

We thought having 6 weeks planning time and get some CLEs organised to begin teaching next year would be a gift, however, we spent the whole time just getting our heads around trying to understand how we could account for mandatory hours in each Key Learning Area. SEL didn't hit the radar. (Matthew J.); and

During the planning time new staff did not have much experience and/or knowledge of the concept of the integrated curriculum, which was crucial for the development, and the effective delivery of the CLEs (Mitchell S.); and

This process took much longer than anticipated. For example: a teacher who has been a PDHPE teacher all his life didn't have knowledge of the syllabus documents for Creative Arts or English so we had to spend time reviewing all the syllabus documents with staff so they could then begin to look at the relevance of integrating two or three Key Learning Areas. (Felicity N.); and

All of our planning time was spent reviewing the cross-curricula content addressing the essentials such as 'assessment for and of learning'. The SEL component was noted but we didn't really know the content so deferred it until we had time to explore it further. (Jennifer B.)

One Phase 3 (a) LA acknowledged in his first interview that although there had been professional input from the Diocesan Education Officers on the NSW Board of Studies requirements when integrating a cross-curricula content and a brief exploration of the purpose and content of the SEL component, no-one on staff had enough knowledge and expertise to lead the process to ensure that staff moved through the process at a reasonable pace. Although a collaborative process with all staff, much time was spent endeavouring to make sure the first CLE titled 'My Sacred Story' had the essential Board of Studies mandatory elements and superficially included the SEL elements.

SEL was generally identified in the initial CLE but the learning outcome for students was to explore their sense of self that focused on developing that understanding in the context of their relationships in their new school. I suppose that was our connection for SEL – understanding self. (Mitchell S.)

In each of the first round interviews in Phase 3 (a, b & c) all LAs accepted and were committed to the process of designing a CLE in trans-disciplinary collaborative teams, which they would then teach in those teams to their students. Each LA was supportive of the team approach to planning and although a challenge, felt that the six weeks planning time in 2004 allowed them time to work through the process so they would be familiar planning subsequent CLEs in teams. In the following interview with a LA, he noted:

Staff conversations in 2005 were very much in the preliminary stage so just opening another syllabus document let alone coming to grips with the essential elements and understanding of the

Learning and teaching principles. Just the change in the learning language we were to use and communicate with, was a personal challenge. (Matthew J.)

One Phase 3 (a) LA reflected: *with 12 months of teaching integrated CLEs, the staff are better equipped to plan and teach CLEs as they have developed the curriculum language to converse with each other and effectively plan the essential CLEs. (Jennifer B.)*

Comments from each of the LAs in successive interviews in Phase 4 reflected their ongoing commitment to developing their competency towards working as collaborative trans-disciplinary teams when planning and teaching CLEs at Cathedral College.

SCHOOL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE PERSPECTIVE

When discussing the options for new school organisational structures and processes to support the social and emotional component within the Learning and teaching principles, both the Diocesan Director of Schools and the Senior Curriculum Education Officer responsible for the curriculum design, continually stressed that learning today was grounded in relational interactions and processes. What that was to look like in the new school, however, was deliberately left to the discretion of the new principal and the appointed staff rather than being mandated from the Diocesan Education Office. The purpose of these structures was to encourage staff and students to build quality relationships where academics and self-development was at the focus of the educational process.

It was important not diminish the capacity of the principal and staff by decreeing the supporting structures. We gave them the school, infrastructure, and the tools (learning and teaching principles), now it was up them to show us how they were going to use them. It was their school, so they would decide on what structures were appropriate. (Luke T.)

The Director of Schools did not comment on the type of student support structures that would ideally address the holistic development of each student. Rather, the Director emphasised that the ‘Central Learning Space’ at the school was to be the centre-piece of the school building where there would be a ‘free flowing’ social interaction and learning opportunities building a sense of a connected learning community. He likened the learning space to a ‘shopping mall in Berlin’ where people gather, discuss, and exchange ideas – ‘a living community.’ The Learning Space would also provide LAs the capacity of a collaborative approach to learning where students were encouraged to appreciate the social dimension of human activity. The learning and teaching of social and emotional competencies for both students and staff alike would help facilitate positive social interactions and build a collaborative community crucial to the vision of the school.

The Diocesan Senior Curriculum Education Officer during her Phase 1 interview agreed that the principal and staff of the school, in line with the ‘backward design’ philosophy of learning, were responsible for creating their own school support structures. So beginning with the end in mind, school structures, founded on the school’s Learning and Teaching Principles (see appendix x) were designed and timetabled. For students and LAs the desired outcomes from these structures were aimed at building relational and transformational learning where staff would act as mentors to students promoting student responsibility for their decisions and actions. The moral purpose of schooling it was suggested was to encourage and prepare students as independent, reflective, and life-long learners able to actively participate and contribute within their global society.

LEARNING ADVISORS’ PERSPECTIVES

As the new school drew their first student intake from a wide area of primary schools including Catholic, Independent and public schools, it was critical that staff created multiple opportunities to get to know them well. However, with the challenges of school still heavily involved in the next phase of building construction, a new integrated curriculum, and staff, student support structures were not finalised until the beginning of term 2, 2006.

Three of the five LAs at their first interviews commented on the unexpected ‘busyness’ of the school year and the multitude of decisions needed to be made so that the school was functioning both in the learning and relational domains.

These comments reflected the LAs' perspectives:

There was a lot of organised chaos first term. We were all enthusiastic about the new model of learning but as soon as the students arrived, there was little time to do anything else other than get our heads around the planning of CLEs. We didn't get the Dialogues for Learning operational until term 2 but once that happened it became such a key vehicle for getting to know our students and for guiding them through their choices (Mitchell S.); and

It is early days yet to see how effective the Dialogues for Learning structure is in developing quality relationships but having the structure timetabled gives us designated time to work with students (Matthew J.), followed by:

Term 2 was really about building relationships with students in our Learning Circles and through the Dialogues for Learning structures. Once relationships were established with individual students, and it was easier with some students than others, the platform for more intimate or challenging conversations was possible. After all, the student needs to be able to connect with me before I can expect a response from them. (Jennifer B.)

Initial interviews with all five Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs agreed that although SEL did not have a strong focus in the curriculum as initially planned, it occurred more naturally through the student support structures thereby enabling staff and students the opportunity to build authentic relationships. The Dialogues for Learning structure was created to empower students to take responsibility for their academic, social, and emotional growth. Staff through selected questions and guided reflections encouraged students to develop their problem-solving and decision-making skills. It was through exploring their feelings and attitudes towards their learning during their integrated Connected Learning Experiences (CLEs), learning about themselves and their relationship with others and their school journey that the opportunity to discuss SEL was discussed.

All schools design student support structures but here we have created different and varied opportunities to really build quality relationships with our students. Once you know the student better and how they approach their learning, friends and life generally it is much easier to

support and guide them in this process. As an LA we meet in our Learning Circle for an individual student's Dialogue for Learning twice a term. With only 12 students in each Learning Circle this year, it is a unique time for LAs to direct students through their academic, social and emotional competencies. (Mitchell S.)

Of interest during the second round of interviews (2007-2008) were the LAs' abilities to discuss in detail the benefits gained from the Dialogue for Learning structure for themselves, students and parents. All respondents were enthusiastic about the student support structures noting that having time with students on a one-to-one basis in multiple structures really fostered reciprocal positive relationships for many students and staff. The principal directed that students should be taught to come to their Dialogues for Learning sessions prepared to discuss with their LA, their academic progress along with their personal and social responsibility. She explained:

I let my students know that this is their time, their dialogue and their opportunity to discuss your choices and actions, so they need to come prepared. Many students and LAs are beginning to use the language of the three areas of responsibility discussed during the Dialogues so we know it is becoming part of our school culture. (Susan P.)

Four of the five LAs during their Phase 4 interviewed reported positive experiences:

The Dialogues for Learning are so important because just when you think the student has got it together, you realise through their current dialogues that they are filled with insecurities particularly around issues of self-esteem and friendships. I'm careful not to tell them what to do but ask questions about how they might discuss and problem-solve, setting goals, persisting and evaluating. I don't label these skills as SEL for students but our conversations are focused on them (Estelle W.); and,

Although there is only fifteen minutes for individual interviews with students in their Dialogue for Learning session, there is enough time to work with the student to set one or two simple goals that were achievable in the areas of academic, social and emotional competencies. It is possible, if agreed to by the student that achieved goals are then showcased to celebrate success. I find

this gratifying; as I know some of the struggles the student went through to get there (Mark C.);
and

One example of using the Dialogues for Learning session to discuss personal and social responsibility came when a student was having friendship difficulties, but others reported her negative contribution to the group. We discussed her attitude and behaviours and the impact this had on others and on her learning during CLE time. We set two goals, the first to listen to her friend before butting in and the second to address her poor organisational skills by getting folders together to put her work into so she was ready for the lesson. After four days she came to me and said, 'It is as simple as this. I made a choice to change my behaviour and followed through with it and things are much better in class and with my friends.' For this particular student, helping her become more self-aware was critical as she was unaware of her attitude and behaviour towards others. This was another example of how SEL had an impact on our relationship and on how she decided to change her approach. (Mitchell S.)

An area of concern by two of LAs in Phase 4 interviews was in their professional discussion about SEL with other LAs not part of the study. These LAS expressed their lack of confidence in sustaining a conversation with a student and, in particular, identifying and developing social and emotional skills. Consequently, in discussion with the school's Leadership team, the researcher was invited to give input on SEL at a staff meeting. A suggested outline of conversation points (see Appendix X) covering the students' academic, social and personal responsibility was discussed and given to all staff to assist them in their discussions with students.

One respondent remarked during her second interview:

The prompt questions were not only helpful in guiding the conversations with students but it also helped me and other LAs in their understanding and development of their SEL competencies.'
However, she also noted, *'in reality I think the process has a long way to go before students are able to initiate using the questions themselves as discussion points. It is evident at times, that some students either do not have the social and emotional language or simply do not want to*

discuss their personal or social development so it falls back to the LA to read the situation take it at the student's pace. (Jennifer B.)

Another LA during his second interview in Phase 4 reflected on the positive change for staff and students created by the support structures over the first two years:

Students are now quite comfortable and accept the structure and process of the Dialogues concept. I suspect that is because now we are in our second year. I, like others, are better able to articulate and guide students and parents around the three nominated areas for development, namely developing positive social, emotional and academic outcomes. If we didn't have the allocated time with students, I don't think there would be much SEL happening. At least like this it makes you think about the conversation with the student and helps keep us on track. (Mitchell S.); and

The structures such as the Learning Circle and the Dialogues for Learning seemed to narrow the relational gap between student and LA as we both seem to be listening to each other. I'm starting to see that we are developing a sense of our community where we have responsibility for each other. This means understanding and respecting each other, which is part of SEL. Students are commenting on seeing and understanding what 'community' here means to them so all the work in the structures now appears to be coming to fruition. (Estelle W.)

During the first year of the school's development, every staff member was responsible for a group of students in a Learning Circle and in their Dialogues for Learning. Knowledge of students was accorded to all staff with fruitful discussion on the supporting their wellbeing at school. However by the second year of operation, a new year's intake of year 7 students, increase in staff, policies to write, compliances to fulfil and continued interruption of building construction, it was apparent that the principal was not able to maintain her time commitment to sharing with staff her responsibility of a Learning Circle. The principal was relieved of these duties and students were divided between the remaining Leaders and LAs.

One of the LAs who was also responsible for a team of LAs, during her second interview, lamented the time lost with her students in her Learning Circle and Dialogues for Learning that often incurred with her position of responsibility as she was often called away to manage other matters and missed timetabled interviews with her students. If this happened regularly, she did not connect enough with her students to work through the academic, social, and emotional aspects of their learning.

It is difficult in a new school as everyone has loads of responsibilities and each has to pull their weight. However, whilst I see the value in being there for students, I am often called away to address other issues. Interestingly, the principal did not want to relinquish her role as a LA with her students, however, it became apparent that having everyone involved was the ideal. In reality, the principal had to be released from this responsibility so she could attend the myriad of issues that arose every day. In hindsight, an advantage of this was the principal was now freed and available to support the LAs with the management of emerging issues from the Dialogues for Learning discussions. (Jennifer B.)

Four of the five LAs in their Phase 4 interviews, however, perceived the other LAs who were not foundation staff appeared cynical about Dialogue process. Some expressed feeling uncomfortable speaking about social and emotional components of their learning journey and did not see or understand the links to life-long learning.

It is obvious now that we have been so involved in getting the school and the integrated curriculum working that we haven't been talking much about SEL. Although our knowledge is also limited, they have even less. (Felicity N.)

Nonetheless, all LAs agreed that the opportunity for teaching and learning social and emotional competencies was more available to them through the student support structures of the Learning Circles and the Dialogue for Learning sessions. Having a small group of students in each Learning Circle and the one-to-one discussion in the Dialogue sessions and a structured framework exploring academic, personal, and social responsibility enabled them to focus on the students' holistic development.

The integration of social and emotional learning into the curriculum

Research linked the development and application of students' social and emotional competencies with improved learning outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011; Zins et al., 2004), which became a targeted component of the school's curriculum paradigm. Subsequently, the principal paradigm for the delivery of the trans-disciplinary curriculum including SEL was through units of work called Connected Learning Experiences (CLEs).

The first round of interviews with all phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs gave unanimous endorsement for the delivery structure of the curriculum. In practice, this meant that staff, as part of their allocated workload hours, had to be timetabled off so they could work collaboratively in small groups to plan and deliver their CLEs during each five-week period. Reflective of respondents' comments from their first interviews were the following comments denoting their interest, commitment, and challenges working with the CLE structure:

I liked the CLE structure and think it worked well for staff and students generally. It certainly was a different but interesting way of thinking about learning and teaching and reminded me of teaching integrated units of work in primary schools. With only one CLE organised before the school opened I felt that most of the time during the first year we were only one CLE ahead of our students. Just trying to get our heads around thinking 'integration' and ensuring each of KLA was adequately represented, let alone thinking SEL skills, that the first year felt like constant pressure. (Estelle W.); and

It was great to have planning time to work in our teams to develop each CLE. Each Tuesday afternoon between 3.15 and 4.30 pm was CLE planning time and I appreciated our executive acknowledging that if we wanted the CLE structure to be successful we, as staff, needed dedicated time so that the content of the CLEs were not only meaningful to students and ourselves but also satisfied Board of Studies accountabilities (Mitchell S.)

By the end of term one 2006, staff generally recognised that additional structures to support students' learning other than through CLE structure was needed. Three or four staff (depending on the KLA content of the CLE) delivered each CLE to approximately forty-five students in a common, open-planned learning

space. It was apparent that in a large group, despite having three or four LAs to assist the students, it was easy for some to miss out on essential learning components. It was difficult to ensure that all students understood or developed the necessary skills to complete the cross-curriculum CLE requirements. As a result, the leadership team designed two new learning structures where students in smaller groups were able to work with their LA to further develop and have reinforced learning such as SEL micro-skills and/or continue to work on the content emanating from their earlier CLE unit.

The first learning structure was called ‘Independent Connected Learning Experience’ (iCLE) where additional learning time was allocated at the end of each day for students in their small Learning Circles to follow up on incomplete learning tasks or clarify concerns from their CLE session. This provided LAs with another opportunity to support students to achieve their designated learning goals stated at the beginning of each CLE for that day.

iCLE time provides a unique opportunity to review the student’s learning progress from CLE time that day. By having the student recall and reflect on what they saw as the challenges and achievements from their CLE work and set new goals for what they hoped to achieve by the end of the CLE, or to complete unfinished CLE work or any home learning they might have left helped me give them a focus direction on learning. (Mark C.)

The second learning structure was called ‘Learning to Learn’ (L2L) designed to give students additional learning time. L2L was a learning program that operated parallel to the integrated curriculum proper and was timetabled for forty minutes twice a week. The focus for staff was to continue the development of students’ understanding of their metacognition processes, social and emotional competencies, general learning habits and application of acquired skills and knowledge to other settings or situations.

It quickly became evident during the first term of 2006 that LAs were kept busy planning and implementing the familiar components stated in the learning and teaching principles. All staff were given the task of planning the L2L sessions based on their understanding of the current CLE being taught even if they were not involved in the CLE planning. The success of the L2L sessions ultimately depended on the interest, curriculum and SEL knowledge of each LA.

We have all been so busy trying to teach and get used to the dynamics of continual team planning, including L2L sessions and the integrated curriculum. We all seemed to be doing everything without anyone having the main responsibility to lead the L2L sessions. This is potentially a worthwhile learning structure and another opportunity where SEL could be addressed but sometimes it felt chaotic and not well planned. (Felicity N.); and

Generally, I think staff has done well working with these structures, as the integrated curriculum was relatively new to most staff but at times, it felt haphazard. We were planning as we were going along often saying 'oops' what's happening in L2L. Because no one person was the facilitator of these sessions and so it was often a problem.

(Mark C.)

Subsequently, the school leadership team, during the second year, acknowledged the need to review the L2L sessions so they worked more effectively for both staff and students. It was now the responsibility of the designated CLE manager to nominate three topics from the current CLE to be explored during the weekly L2L sessions. Additionally, having met with the appropriate CLE manager, LAs were timetabled on the L2L sessions and taking responsibility for leading two of these sessions. This process proved successful as now a designated staff member had responsibility to ensure that the L2L sessions were meaningful and connected to the CLE and that learning time was well utilised by both students and staff.

Four of the five participants in Phase 4 second round interviews agreed with assigning the organisation of the L2L session to those responsible for the current CLE:

There has been a shift amongst staff attitudes toward integrating SEL in the curriculum including the L2L session, which are much, more effective in 2007. We now have other staff that is responsible for the L2L sessions in years 7 and 8 so it is now coordinated and working well. L2L is part of CLE time so when we are working this session we are also covering syllabus outcomes as the reinforcing of micro skills and metacognitions is still KLA content related. (Susan P.); and

One of the challenges with these learning structures was that not all staff knew what other concurrent CLEs and L2L sessions were covering, as different LAs are responsible for different CLEs. However, L2L is the link that gives us the opportunity to reinforce a common learning language from the CLE unit. We also encouraged students to communicate their thoughts through a 'blog' about their L2L session, which was then shared with an accompanying school newsletter. This sharing really helped all staff being aware of what was happening with all CLEs and L2L sessions. (Jennifer B.)

Interestingly, two of the Phase 4 respondents commented that although SEL was more implied than explicitly taught during CLE and L2L sessions during in the first two years of the school's operation, there were occasions when staff intentionally included skill development in their planning:

During our second year part of extending students' self-awareness, which is part of SEL, was a focus on Covey's Habits of Mind. For example, in my L2L sessions I have been concentrating on exploring the habit of 'persistence' and 'accuracy' to promote completion of a CLE learning task. We took a completed assessment task, unpacked the marking criteria and discussed how to address areas of improvement then submitted the task again. (Estelle W.); and

I believe we have made good progress in becoming more knowledgeable at picking up when it is relevant to discuss the inclusion of SEL skills in the learning structures. However, we don't do it consistently and so it becomes more accidental than purposeful. We need to build a progression of SEL skills that are aligned with students' developmental stages, not necessarily aligned to learning structures and can occur in multiple facets and school settings. (Mitchell S.)

Yet, the perception of three other Phase 4 respondents noted in their second interviews that SEL was happening in L2L sessions and linked to some relevant CLEs.

SEL is pivotal to the CLE 'Sacred Stories' which focused on syllabus outcomes from the Personal Development and Health syllabus. We explored the components of emotional health in

the 'Self and Relationships' strand and used Gardner's work to student adolescents and how they build resilience and cope with personal challenges. Students develop core components of SEL, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and problem solving. (Susan P.)

An interesting Edublog (2006) from a LA, not part of the research study but communicating digitally with other Learning Advisors, reflected a positive attitude towards to SEL:

As far as integrating SEL I think that we are doing a lot in this area but it is not always transparently stated in our programs and is in danger of being lost when the programs are taught in the future as staff who initially developed CLEs disperse across the year groups. I don't think that ticking statements in PAROT (online database) is enough, because much of it comes through our pedagogy and the emphasis we put on particular ideas and concepts in our conversations with students and learning group discussions. I also believe there is much potential for explicit SEL skilling, which is beginning to come to fruition in L2L this year. (Anonymous, 2007)²

The strategic intent of the learning and teaching structures namely the aforementioned CLEs, iCLE time and L2L sessions were designed to provide multiple learning opportunities and maximise the time available for students to be active learners in their school journey.

ONLINE ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING TOOL

The diverse nature of the trans-disciplinary curriculum and NSW Board of Studies accountabilities meant that it was essential for staff to map and record syllabus outcomes and all components of the school's curriculum model. Initially a committee from the Diocesan Education Office, which later expanded to include the school's principal and the Leader of Learning and Teaching, discussed a dedicated database designed to facilitate the collaborative planning of integrated units of work (CLEs) which included the SEL component, assessment results and monitoring and recording students' Dialogues for Learning sessions, affirmations and behavioural incidents.

² Name withheld to maintain anonymity

The database, *Programming, Assessing, and Reporting Online Tool* (PAROT) specifically designed to meet the school's needs, proved a challenging aspect in mapping and recording students' learning and school journey. Technical difficulties persisted for a number of years with regular adjustments made so staff could report directly on the academic, social and emotional competency tags in PAROT.

It is difficult for LAs to document students' CLE progress on PAROT as different CLEs are taught every five weeks. As LAs do not record during the CLE it is incumbent upon them to do so at the end but this is a quick turn around so staff are struggling to keep up with recording student outcomes so often. (Mitchell S.)

The Leader of Student Growth and Learning, following input and SEL resources from the Diocesan Education Office staff, decided on the online reporting tags for SEL that were aligned to the cross-curriculum CLEs.

I would like to see that in PAROT where we now require three evidence of learning for SEL we could add more specific ones aligned to each of the CLEs. Once we have it working then we can rewrite the tags for social and emotional evidence for learning. (Jennifer B.)

Poignantly, only two respondents in their Phase 4 interviews acknowledged that they did record against these tags in PAROT but there was no evidence that any other staff were doing the same. Despite the requirement for staff to teach all the components set out in each CEL, the general absence of staff completing this for SEL suggested either lack of interest, confidence or knowledge in its application.

The SEL descriptors and tags are the first page on PAROT and although I have a go at recording this it is only guess work there hasn't been any attempt from others to do so but I guess we really don't know how to assess SEL so it is put on the back burner until someone takes responsibility for working with staff to understand what this would look like. (Mark C.); and

PAROT had SEL outcomes listed for us to fill out when we accounted for the other components of each CLE. Generally other staff looked at the mandatory curriculum components first then time has run out. The Leader of Missions encouraged her team to look at how Religious Education

outcomes could be integrated into the CLE. I believe in time this is what will happen with the SEL component outcomes. There are social and emotional outcomes in the content of Religious Education units of work so we continually need to look for ways of integrating these skills in any KLA combination within the CLE organisation. (Felicity N.)

PAROT, however, did allow for the documentation of students' Dialogues for Learning (Learning Advisory Program) which parents were able to access and thereby monitor their child's educational progress. The three areas for LA and students to explore were under the headings of academic progress, social relationships, and contribution to the school community.

Where we can record SEL on PAROT is within the Dialogues for Learning component but that didn't happen until well into the second year of school. During the students' Dialogue interview, I typed in their responses to their reflections on their learning successes, challenges and goals, the management of their personal and social responsibility to themselves, friends and their contribution to the school and wider community. PAROT has had so many technical difficulties and is so time consuming but hopefully in time, these problems will be resolved and the database will be able capture the richness of student's thinking and actions at school. (Mark C.)

It was evident from all interviews during Phases 3 and 4 that LAs believed that although not functioning well, in time, PAROT would provide the necessary tool for mapping and recording social and emotional competencies, in in the curriculum model and in the Learning Advisory Program. However, at this point, the LAs in the study generally were struggling to find ways of explicitly teaching, assessing, and recording social and emotional competencies. As LAs more familiar with opportunities to address these competencies, other options for recording may emerge.

I can see the non-cognitive reporting requirements from the NSW Board of Studies could well reflect the components of SEL. We need to look for multiple ways of addressing and recording these. (Susan P.)

LEARNING ADVISORS' READINESS FOR INNOVATION

DIOCESAN OFFICE PERSPECTIVE

Late in 2005, a draft CLE was prepared by the Diocesan Education Office Curriculum and Pedagogy team and presented to the foundation staff to use as a model for further CLE planning. The school staff then devoted six weeks to plan and organise learning material for the opening of the school in 2006. Having put the draft CLE together, the Senior Curriculum Team Leader from the Diocesan Education Office acknowledged the complexity and challenge staff would encounter when designing new CLEs. There followed considerable discussion amongst the Diocesan Education Office Curriculum Committee about the challenges of striving and maintaining the quality of the learning task whilst addressing the curriculum accountabilities from the NSW Board of Studies.

The team leader of the Curriculum and Pedagogy team stated:

We spent a significant time thinking, discussing, and deciding on the delivery of the curriculum but foremost we wanted this to reflect current educational research on student engagement with quality learning and teaching in the twenty-first century. The CLE proposed was not just a method of thematic teaching but rather a pedagogy of helping students make real and meaningful connections, between and within subjects with applications to their world. Whilst we prepared and presented staff with a sample CLE named 'Getaway' and a template that would provide the foundation for further CLEs we also reflected to staff that this process could be challenging.
(Louise C.)

The unique structure of CLEs meant that foundation staff was assigned to collaborative planning teams to manage the process of consultation and design. However, in order for staff to successfully discuss, plan and implement the CLE unit each member needed to be at least familiar with other colleagues' specific Key Learning Area (KLA) content. This was problematic, as the task demanded a considerable cognitive shift to develop in each staff member sufficient knowledge and understanding of other KLAs to be able to contribute to the final product.

Added to the pressure of staff developing knowledge of various KLAs was the inclusion of the other essential components of the CLE Framework. The explicit inclusion of teaching social emotional competencies in each CLE, however, was a directive from the Diocesan Education Office rather than an initiative of the school's foundation staff. The first opportunity for the Diocesan Education Officer (researcher) to induct the school's foundation staff on the current research, multiple components of SEL and the possible process of integration into the daily teaching of each CLE occurred during the planning phase in 2005. In fact, the opportunity for the Diocesan Education Officer (researcher) to assist LAs develop an understanding SEL skills was limited to one forty-minute presentation without limited time for discussion.

A reflection about the opportunity to give input to staff is below:

It became apparent during the last term of 2005 when the foundation staff were given time to plan the trans-disciplinary curriculum for the school that their understanding and interest in SEL was a low priority in planning. In brief discussions with various staff members, it was clear they thought teaching explicit social and emotional skills was relevant, their energies were consumed with getting to know each other, curriculum expertise, various KLA content necessary for CLE planning. There was an open invitation to provide more support for staff to develop the SEL concept but this was left to the discretion of the principal and staff. (Journal Note: 12th February 2006)

LEARNING ADVISORS' PERSPECTIVES

From the viewpoint of all LAs in this study, the responsibility of designing and maintaining the integrity from the Diocesan Education Office of each CLE was a continual challenge. All LAs in Phases 3 and 4 agree that their limited knowledge of other KLA Syllabus outcomes and knowledge of content, other than their own, meant that the focus of their time was spent during the planning phase in team discussions and explanations around the nature of all stated curriculum components in the CLE Framework rather than writing CLEs for the following year.

The relevance of SEL embedded into the curriculum was acknowledged by all LAs unequivocally, as an adaptable learning component to plan for in each CLE. However, despite the discussion and acknowledgement that SEL was an essential twenty-first century skill for students, its inclusion in the designing of the CLE was left in abeyance. Four of the Phase 3 LAs stressed the pressure encountered to cover the mandatory NSW Board of Studies Syllabus outcomes, which became the necessary priority for the first teaching year in 2006. Two LAs noted:

As a leader in the new school and with an extensive background and interest in the holistic nature of student learning and development, I really liked that the Diocesan Education Office recognised the relevance of including SEL into each CLE. However, those six weeks (2005) were chaotic and we all needed time to process and understand the CLE framework. SEL was not well understood by the foundation staff despite the presentation on it. My thoughts were more around processing what a cross-curriculum might look like first then I could turn my focus onto integrating the other components. (Matthew J.); and

Working new ways to integrate KLAs into meaningful units of work have consumed my time. The accountability from the NSW Board of Studies have taken the focus as we need to make sure students are getting their required hours of learning in each KLA. (Felicity N)

Yet another Phase 3(a) LA reflected the common voice of all LAs in the study as they were challenged in the designing of each CLE:

What was really confusing during the planning stage was having to build an understanding of the school's new learning structure, how to implement the backward design approach seamlessly, the change to team teaching large groups of students and ensuring syllabus outcomes and indicative hours were covered in each KLA. We had a battle designing a meaningful cross-curriculum CLE and in adapting to the change ourselves. We all knew about the CLE process before we applied for our teaching positions and liked the idea of a new model of learning. However, designing the CLE and maintaining the integrity of the CLE Framework was challenging. We discussed SEL but with limited understanding, no Scope and Sequence and few resources, it was left until 'later', which sometimes didn't happen. (Jennifer B.)

Early dissatisfaction from one LA emerged in Phase 3 (a), revealed there was a general lack of ownership for SEL from staff on two levels. First, SEL was directed from the Diocesan Education Office to be included in the Learning and teaching principles and each CLE, without consultation with the staff. Second, understandably, for most, this was their first introduction to explicitly teaching SEL and at best they possessed a superficial understanding of the CLE components and process.

Planning the first CLE was all theory and no practice. The ideas were from the Diocesan Office, not necessarily our own. I don't think we had much of an idea of what it would really look in the learning space and feel like to teach but we wanted to prepare a curriculum and instructional design that was related to real life experiences for both students and us and so were committed to the process. (Matthew J.)

The foundation staff prepared just one completed CLE ('The Journey Begins'), which was the students' first integrated learning experience but without explicitly naming SEL in the unit. Three to four LAs were then assigned to various 'Learning Teams', who were subsequently responsible for the development of additional CLEs throughout the school year. The Leadership Team decided that there would be three CLEs taught to students on a rotational basis each term.

Each LA was timetabled to work collaboratively in teams to build the integrated curriculum including sharing useful teaching strategies for whole groups and individual students, advice and direction from colleagues to develop KLA expertise, and to observe one another in large open classroom spaces. Addressing the social and emotional component in the CLE Framework, however, appeared dependent on the existing knowledge and skill of interested staff in each of the planning teams. This was reflected in the Phase 3 (a & b) interviews during the first year of operation with four LAs who variously commented:

I find designing a CLE is quite complex process and one that I continually need to reflect on to ensure the team was addressing all the requirements. My natural interest is in social justice

issues that I think provides an avenue for making SEL connections. One CLE, 'Think Global, Act Local' we focused on developing the concept of 'empathy' for others, which is a sub-skill of social and emotional competencies. (Mitchell S.)

Another LA noted:

My background is in the area of the spiritual, social, and emotional development of students. I brought my knowledge and experience of working with 'Habits of Mind', which I tried to impart to others. However, I think the problem is that there is a lot of talking about it but not much understanding. For example, staff would discuss Multiple Intelligences, Bloom's Taxonomy, De Bono's six hats and Habits of Mind, grasping at lots of concepts but with little understanding of what we needed to focus on. It's all well and good to focus on a habit such as 'persistence' as we all know what that means but what I don't see is that transferring to learning in the classroom – how do you teach 'persistence' and how do you assist students to get comfortable with the concept? This is all part of building the social and emotional competencies ... I feel comfortable teaching personal development as it was part of my training students but I'm not sure others understand that. (Matthew J.)

Each of Phase 3 (a & b) LAs in the first year commented on the whirlwind of adjustments not only to a new model of learning but to the major efforts of managing new school agendas. From their perspective it was important to ensure the Learning and teaching principles and, in particular, designing quality CLEs were a priority for them and their students. As the year progressed, the respondents articulated their thoughts more clearly as the continuous planning and teaching trans-disciplinary CLE was a reality.

One CLE, 'Understanding World Heritage' we focused on exploring seven generations about how we make choices for cultural, natural heritage sites and as a global community how these decisions have an impact on each generation. We related this to the American Indians who consider the impact of all decisions with seven generations in mind. We planned SEL in this unit because in the first two weeks we explicitly taught decision-making skills and reinforced building empathy. We did this through role-plays and simulation games where students had to make choices then revisited their choices and decisions in view of their learning. So we did explore elements of SEL but this probably would have happened incidentally with this type of content. (Mitchell S.)

A recurring issue in three of the five Phase 4 LAs interviews reflected a continued limited understanding of the construct that affected their ability to integrate SEL into each CLE. One respondent commented:

I think LAs are still coming to terms with SEL and how relevant this is to student learning. When designing CLEs LAs are at different stages and have different thinking about the integration process. For instance, some LAs have a naturally strong emotive focus from their KLA such as

Religious Education or Personal Development and Health Syllabus to the CLE and are adamant about its inclusion. However, this all depends on the nature and possible application to the content of the CLE. From my observations and involvement, most LAs see the relevance of SEL but that is as far as it goes. (Jennifer B.)

It became evident from the general staff during the first terms of 2006, of the importance in reinforcing students' learning from their CLE sessions. This meant creating other learning structures that would allow students to further explore learning concepts, deepen micro-skills, utilise additional time for earlier uncompleted CLE work and generally have an opportunity to discuss in a smaller group aspects of the CLE and their learning experiences. To achieve this the Leadership Team decided to provide supporting learning structures with time regularly allocated on the timetable. Subsequently, the structures of Independent Connected Learning Experience (iCLE) and Learning to Learn were formed to serve this need. Additional time was created and built on the required KLA indicative hours needed which in turn provided supplementary opportunities for students to work through their CLE completion. Having bonus time also promoted closer relationships between staff and students where the real-life application of social and emotional skills could be practised.

Each of the LAs acknowledged these additional structures facilitated the deepening of students' knowledge of the CLE content, particularly as it provided the LAs with time to determine the students' learning strengths and gaps for improvement.

Reflective of this notion was the following comments from one LA:

I can see multiple opportunities to develop students' social and emotional competencies through CLEs, iCLE time, L2L and even in Learning Circles. For instance, the inclusion of 'Covey's work habits' in a CLE could be further developed in the smaller group set up in iCLE time that students have each day. The micro-skills we teach in the unit such as understanding themselves and others and working in groups can be further reinforced in the L2L session, which is forty minutes twice a week. When we taught the 'Sacred Self, Sacred Story' the students focused on reflecting about themselves, their gaps and strengths in their work ethic and how they applied that to their learning experiences. On reflection, I think that this CLE was an organising structure for SEL although we did not label the CLE as such. (Mitchell S.)

The second round of interviews (Phase 4) of LAs reflected a mixed opinion about the success of LAs in designing CLEs and identifying and integrating SEL skills. The perception from three of the five LAs in Phases 3 (a) and 4 was that SEL was more implicitly than explicitly taught in CLEs. Moreover, the general staff did not understand the core elements of SEL and did not often make the relevant application in the integrated curriculum. For example, One LA on his second interview noted:

I definitely see a place for SEL in the curriculum. What I found was that it has always been embedded in the curriculum but not identified by that name. LAs tell me SEL is something new to understand but I explained to them that we already teach some of the skills such as resilience, goal setting, and decision-making but haven't articulated them as SEL skills. (Mark C

However, the remaining four LAs felt more positive about the confidence of LAs to embrace SEL in the CLE process. Multiple responses supported the developing competence of staff making connections with SEL and included reflections such as:

Now I understand what SEL means and we have a better learning structure I am able to identify what CLE would be relevant to include these skills. (Estelle W.); and

I think LAs' understanding of SEL is getting stronger. My team designed a CLE using the backward design model and noted the skills students need to have to complete the task. We realised that being able to work in groups, reflect on their performance honestly and work through areas for improvement without giving up so we knew we had to teach this as well as the content. (Felicity N.)

One Phase 3 (c) LA summed up the general reaction from staff when designing CLE:

I think LAs have been committed to the design of the integrated curriculum, as it was new for almost everyone in the secondary setting. Sometimes integrating SEL into the design process was appropriate and the links to the curriculum content more apparent but enacting this in the learning space was less strategic. Equally, there were as many times when this was haphazard or SEL was not referred to at all but hopefully we will work towards inclusion. (Mark C.)

Despite a variety of experiences and challenges with SEL, a report in the school newsletter (July 2007) to parents publicised the SEL innovation: 'our curriculum incorporates the integration of socio-emotional learning in our CLEs'. In a CLE named 'Order and Chaos' Year 8 students were asked to apply an evidence-based argument to show that the school community was underpinned by practical application rather than the theoretical learning and teaching principles. A student submitted a reflection for the school newsletter on how order and chaos was reflected in her own life as well as the community (appendix x).

Notwithstanding the challenges for all staff as they adapted to the planning and implementation of the CLE Framework, efforts (although inconsistently applied to SEL) were made to ensure students experienced a curriculum where they can learn and apply genuine use of knowledge and skills through real-world application.

Learning Advisors' beliefs and attitudes

Initially, the recommendation to include social and emotional competencies into the integrated curriculum was primarily from the researcher who was employed by the Diocesan Education Office to work in promoting and implementing processes and practices that would enhance student wellbeing. Additionally, as a practising psychologist, the researcher's beliefs and attitudes toward social and emotional skills were grounded in the client experience of developing skills of emotional self-awareness, regulating emotions, communication, problem-solving, connecting socially and developing and maintaining positive relationships. This journal note appeared as early ruminations about the researcher's initial reasons for undertaking this study:

Notwithstanding the variety of issues clients present at counselling, the essential skills of being able to resolve personal conflicts, adapt to change, develop buoyancy, resilience, and being able to maintain good relationships throughout life is foundational to mental health and wellbeing. This, along with my work in researching student wellbeing and implementing programs in schools was an ideal opportunity to suggest the inclusion of SEL skills in the daily curriculum. Through this process, all students would be able to develop such skills but only if these skills were explicitly programmed and understood by staff such as the learning skills in mandated Key Learning Areas. It is anticipated that developing these personal skills for students would better equip them to resolve personal challenges rather than need counselling support. (Journal Note: 17th November 2005)

Despite the expertise and knowledge of social and emotional competencies primarily residing with the researcher, the Senior Curriculum Education Officer in the Curriculum and Pedagogy team who led the Task Force Committee accepted and believed in its application and endorsed its inclusion and attention in the new proposed integrated curriculum. Likewise, the Director of Schools endorsed and supported the delivery of the curriculum and accepted the relevance of SEL but left the details to the Task Force Committee and the school to implement as a component of the cross-curricula model.

Universally, all Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs acknowledged that their values and beliefs about the concept of SEL were grounded in the teaching philosophy of 'whole' person and that teaching students these skills would be invaluable to their future life-long goals. This was reflective of personal values and broad teaching backgrounds that were sustained over a significant number of years.

One LA in Phase 3 (a) noted:

I have had a strong interest in eastern philosophies, particularly Buddhism and like the notion of training your mind to overcome difficulties. I think all students should have the same opportunities to learn these skills as we can't assume each has access to this teaching at home, so teaching SEL in the curriculum sits well. (Mitchell S.)

Another LA who was also a Leader acknowledged his past training and experiences as a counsellor and years working in the area of Pastoral Care in schools reinforced his approach to his relationship with students and the context of learning and teaching environment:

Through my extensive counselling background, I believe that SEL is the linchpin to the development of the 'whole' person. This is bread and butter stuff for me and having it incorporated into the daily curriculum can only be an advantage for students, as it will prepare them for their later life. (Matthew J.)

Pastoral Care, or the support of students' wellbeing was a common responsibility shared by all LAs prior to teaching at Cathedral College. Moreover, their leadership roles were representative of all areas of school including that of Principal, Pastoral Care Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care Year Coordinator, Key Learning Area Coordinator, Social Justice Coordinator, and/or Pastoral Care Home Room Teacher. Each of these roles was focused and sustained over significant teaching years, on explicitly developing and supporting the wellbeing of students in their care. Their attitude to strategically and explicitly teach social and emotional skills in a more coordinated way where application of these skills could be practised daily was evident by their statements such as:

Our school has a philosophy of being a 'reflective environment' where students spend regular time thinking about, and reflecting on, their learning experiences. I believe to do this they will need the skills of being able to manage their thinking, to be a self-critic, set goals and solve problems which are all aspects of 'self' that are critical to self-development. I think students these days require these skills so that they manage their social, emotional, and school worlds well. Working in the area of school Pastoral Care over the past twenty years gave me an intimate insight into students' vulnerabilities, which meant working closely with them finding effective strategies supporting them in the resolving their challenges. It also meant helping them develop knowledge and skills that they could use across situations. Those students who demonstrated resilience had some of the social and emotional skills and it was the difference between 'those who did' or 'those who didn't' that convinced me of the value of integrating the teaching of these skills more explicitly into the curriculum. (Matthew J.); and

I believe that I approach SEL in teaching like I do my life. I reflect daily on how I interact with others, how I manage my social settings and my thinking and reactions in my professional and personal relationship. As an adult, I think I have these skills but I can see it is important to introduce these to students much earlier in life so they are better equipped to deal the life as young adults. I am liberated by the thought of young people having these skills but agree it needs to be a focus rather than learned by chance. (Mitchell S.)

During the Phase 3 (a, b & c) interviews, all LAs gave their unanimous agreement and support for the seamless integration of SEL skills in each CLE. . They endorsed this as a teaching opportunity providing students with frequent and multiple opportunities to develop life-long skills as the particular social and emotional skill would be related to the CLE being taught. The attitudes of two LAs who were also Leaders commented:

It will be easy to choose the social or emotional learning skill and use that to develop the CLE (Jennifer B.) and *As emotional intelligence skills can be learned, we have an opportunity to synthesise these into the lesson at hand and then students can apply that knowledge to other activities or situations.* (Susan P.)

Yet another Phase 3 (a) LA interviewed reinforced this belief by stressing:

Understanding the BOS endorsement of curriculum integration through CLEs is very important because if we productively utilise the skills of SEL it will also ensure that the other component of the learning dimension are enhanced. It's about making sure the students are well equipped to embrace learning and make this application to the broader context of the world. (Matthew J.)

As the first interviews occurred during the first year (2006) of the school's formation, the LAs' views were an indication of the perceptions and responses to the first integrated CLE. Understandably with the first cohort of Year 7 students and a new school environment, there was a strong focus on developing a culture of community, getting to know one another, developing friendships and working together to celebrate their schooling journey together. There were natural links to SEL in this CLE titled 'Sacred Stories, Sacred Self,' such as knowing one's own personal characteristics and strengths, listening skills reflected in the practice of listening to others' stories with empathy, promoting positive relationships within their year group.

In addition, staff developed four common goals, which were framed by the school's religious paradigm. These goals underpinned Cathedral College's policies, structures, and practices where students would make sense of their learning experiences through developing reflective skills and promoting positive self-esteem and self-efficacy. Students gained further access to related SEL by being taught the value of attention to others and by demonstrating self-responsibility and resilience and celebration acknowledged optimism, accepting and celebrating diversity, student capacity for forgiveness and reconciliation through restorative processes and being an 'active' learner and participant in all aspects of school life. It was anticipated that students would respond to the philosophy and context of the school by developing a sense of social responsibility and developing the skills and disposition for life-long learning. So the concern for the total wellbeing of students and their full development was to be incorporated into all aspects of the school community. This would promote a school culture where students felt nurtured and cared for in a safe, secure environment and where the school structures connected students to adults and peers in a culture of affirmation, recognition and support.

As one Phase 3 (a) LA observed:

We all agreed that we wanted our school to reflect these principles and it all sounded great. This was a new school, a new start and a chance to do things differently so that student relationships and learning mattered. The natural progression then was to explicitly teaching social and emotional skills within the integrated curriculum as it would provide students with the necessary skills to be critical learners and generally have the 'toolset' to effectively work their way through school and life was particularly appealing. I think that SEL builds the foundation for students' learning. (Jennifer B.)

Although the Phase 3 (a, b & c) and all Phase 4 LAs reaffirmed their earlier commitment to the inclusion of SEL in an integrated curriculum, their attitudes and thus actions to planning and implementation of these skills had wavered. Eighteen months after the school doors opened, the LAs in this research study expressed concerns over the practicality and lack of time to plan and teach SEL on a daily basis. The general consensus from four of the five Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs revealed their frustrations rose from the internal dissonance they felt between the misalignment of valuing the inclusion of SEL, the limited opportunities through the CLE preparation time, the lack of leadership to drive the idea and no scope and sequence guidance to help direct the curriculum.

Two LAs reflected on these challenges, commenting:

I personally look for the relevant and applicable social and emotional skills to develop with students because it is my belief that it is a critical element of life-long learning. However, when I'm working with other LAs to collaborate on the content of a CLE, I find I am a lone voice and the other components of the curriculum become dominant and override the SEL component. (Mitchell S.); and

Because we are all learning about each other's KLAs it seems to still take a lot of time just discussing how we can integrate three KLAs into a cohesive theme, connecting ideas and concepts under a fertile question. Unless there is an obvious link with SEL or a strong voice advocating for its inclusion we focus on the BOS requirements. (Mark C.)

In view of these challenges, the LAs, who were also part of the Leadership team, during the Phase 4 interviews (2008), were asked about the legitimacy and readiness of the staff generally to include the skills of SEL. One Leader emphatically endorsed staff commitment adapting to the SEL construct both in the curriculum and within the school structures by stating:

There is certainly an acceptance of SEL and the nature of the integrated curriculum from all LAs. I believe it was a reflection on the type and nature of the staff that were attracted to work in this innovative school. However, what we have acknowledged is that having lived through the

challenges of the first twelve months we are in a much better position with our routines, planning and working together to look at how to integrate these skills better. It's even in the nuts and bolts of getting PAROT our database working that has the SEL tags to report against but we have been stymied by not having the electronic support. As is the case with new schools, the practicalities force school priorities and drive the immediate school's agenda. (Susan P.)

Despite the challenges working with the SEL concept, all agreed that these skills were better explored by the general staff during Learning Circles, Dialogues for Learning and Learning 2 Learn sessions where there was designated time for discussion and to build relationships with students. Through these structures the LAs were more able to align their beliefs, attitudes and actions towards teaching students the skills of self-development and self-reflection. An observation from a LA who was also a Leader noted this appreciation:

I like the time I spend in close contact with students during the Dialogues for Learning structure. It is really structured where the conversation has a focus on personal and social responsibility and academic learning. It becomes tough when the student doesn't want to connect but with willing students I can explore SEL with a purposeful goal that the student has identified. (Mitchell S.)

One LA during the Phase 4 interview remarked on the progress towards the integration of SEL in the curriculum. She noted:

I think that most of what we are doing this year, particularly around SEL began last year but it has been more evident in our structures that promote relationships with students. Now we have things going well I think we need to get together as a staff and develop a scope and sequence for SEL so we can approach it similarly to any other KLA. I don't think you can do it haphazardly like 'today we will teach empathy' but we need to build a progression of specific skills and knowledge that are linked to the content of the CLE. Sometimes however, it may be more relevant to build that skill in other environments such as the Year 7 camp. (Jennifer B.)

All LAs were committed in their belief that the purpose of teaching was to educate the 'whole' student by attending to the social, emotional, physical and academic aspects of the person. However, it was often translated for students either implicitly by staff example and involvement with others or explicitly when issues arose that needed guidance and redirection.

One LA noted:

I can impart knowledge from my subject area but I don't believe that is enough to equip students to manage uncertainty, change and the challenges of life. I also want to equip them with a sense of optimism, a sense of self and a level of skills that will serve their purpose no matter what the situation. The concept of SEL is important but I think we need to continually work on integrating

it both in the curriculum and in our support structures until we all become more familiar with and understand it well enough to be able to pick up on the appropriate links for both students and LAs alike. (Mitchell S.)

During all 4 interviews with the LAs each reiterated their belief that SEL had a place in the curriculum. However, interest and enthusiasm was not enough as the reality of teaching SEL on a daily basis proved much more challenging and their actions did not match their beliefs. As SEL was not a mandated component of the curriculum by the New South Wales Board of Studies, the pressure of developing knowledge of other KLAs and planning and teaching each CLE became the priority for staff.

Learning Advisors' confidence and capacities

By its very nature, the role and expertise of any educator was considered instrumental as they selected the content for guiding students' learning. However, the confidence and capacity of staff to adapt to the identified and agreed-to learning was unpredictable. The quality of the implementation of social and emotional curriculum in the CLE delivery appeared dependent on the level of confidence and ability of staff to identify the relevant social and emotional competencies, make connections and help students apply these skills to their learning and daily living experiences both at school and beyond.

Each of the LAs and Leaders in Phase 3 (a, b & c) assumed at the beginning of the study that their current level of knowledge of social and emotional competencies was sufficient to enable them to identify and incorporate social and emotional micro-skills foundational to the CLE outcomes presented in a unit of work. However, during their interviews two LAs commented that their confidence and ability to teach these skills in this format was more challenging than anticipated. One LA observed her own hesitancy in teaching SEL skills to students:

We still hold passionately to the original intention of the curriculum including SEL. However, I think our understanding of the concept is still at a superficial level so I don't feel confident or proficient in teaching it. The complexities of teaching an integrated curriculum became the necessary focus and SEL became less important. (Jennifer B.)

Three of the five Phase 3 (a) respondents felt reasonably skilled at identifying and teaching social and emotional skills and made regular attempts with limited success to integrate these competencies in the planning process of a CLE.

I know my own capabilities in teaching SEL as my background in psychology and counselling has equipped me with the relevant knowledge and skills. However, I feel that others speak the rhetoric but are unable to deliver with authenticity, the micro-skills of SEL because they really don't know what it entails. (Matthew J.)

Comments from Phase 3 (b) LAs mirrored the challenge of teaching social and emotional skills with inadequate knowledge:

I have done a lot of work in Pastoral Care that has given me a strong understanding and knowledge of the necessary social and emotional skills and I look for every opportunity to integrate these but not so much in the CLEs but in other areas of school life. I thought I knew what SEL was but it is entirely a different story when planning to teach it in an integrated curriculum and having to break down the skills. (Matthew J.); and

I personally try to identify social and emotional skills I think students need to develop in the CLE we are teaching but am really challenged with the 'how to' teach this to students so it is relevant to them. (Mitchell S.)

One of the school's leaders, whose role description charged her with the responsibility for guiding SEL within the school reflected in her Phase 3 (a) and 4 interviews that despite trying to build her knowledge she still lacked confidence to promote this dimension of learning;

Although it is every LA's responsibility and not just mine, to incorporate SEL into CLEs I have taken a lot of teaching resources home to build up my knowledge in the area. Time is critical and my responsibilities numerous so what I needed was syllabus to direct my teaching. However, what I found in the resources was that teaching social and emotional skills were universally presented within a 'program' framework and not an integrated curriculum. I need some help and guidance. (Jennifer B.)

During the interview process for Phase 3 (a, b & c) and 4 LAs, all but three recognised their capacity to teach social and emotional skills was really in its infancy, that is, firmly grounded in the awareness and acquisition phase on their competency continuum. At this level these LAs were aware there was a significant gap between their knowledge, skills and ability to teach the social and emotional curriculum. All LAs identified that their knowledge and capacity to teach SEL in the curriculum was limited. What further exacerbated this was that some of the general staff were not able to and/or interested in contributing to making SEL links in their CLEs.

One LA explained:

I find it a challenge to learn about SEL for myself let alone to work with others discussing the appropriate skills to develop in the CLE. Although, learning something relatively new like social and emotional competencies is uncomfortable I still believe we need to keep going with it. I think most of the staff see the relevance of teaching SEL for our students but we need a syllabus to help us become more confident and competent with its delivery. (Felicity N.)

Another Phase 4 LA clarified his thoughts by describing his assessment of the understanding and capacity of LAs generally:

LAs are required to teach SEL but I think there are lots of barriers to its successful implementation. I don't think some LAs understand their own sense of what their own social and emotional capacities are, so how can they teach it to students? If LAs are challenged by their own sense of self, unsure of how to regulate their own emotions and resolve conflicts effectively, what hope will they have of instructing and guiding students through the process? (Jennifer B.)

Despite the challenges and barriers generally experienced by the five Phase 4 respondents when integrating SEL through the curriculum process, all purported to persevering and finding ways to explore the concept with students and to work collaboratively in teams assisting others to identify SEL skills through CLEs. This sense of optimism was reflected through one LA's vision for student development during his Phase 4 interview:

My purpose in teaching students is to instil a sense of hope, a sense of self and a level of skill that services their purpose for life-long learning and their contribution as an active community member. SEL is so vital to achieving these as well as academic outcomes but we need to continually work on it until it becomes an accepted component of teaching. When we can see the natural links within other KLAS see have students apply their social and emotional competencies in real-world applications we will know we have been successful. (Mitchell S.)

Unsurprisingly, the staff were like all other learners when it came to learning content that was unfamiliar or superficially known, such as SEL, and needed timely professional development that supported their needs and developed their own competencies. As early as the first interviews in Phase 3 (a, b & c) LAs identified and requested professional development for SEL. This was reiterated in each of the Phase 4 interviews despite having access to SEL resources.

An opportunity for professional development occurred following the leadership team decision to develop the Dialogues for Learning structure where SEL was an integral part of the conversation. During this time, LAs discussed the students' goals in the pre-determined areas of academic learning and social and personal responsibility to self and the school community. The LAs in the study identified that the opportunity to work with students and include SEL was more naturally aligned to these opportunities. However, it also created a sense of urgency that the LAs were professionally underprepared to carry out this expectation.

Consequently, a request to the Diocesan Education Office for SEL professional development was initiated. A staff meeting was organised where an Education Officer (researcher) from Diocesan Education Office worked with staff, discussed SEL micro-skills and how they translated into practice for staff during Dialogues for Learning time. However, the limitation of a forty-minute delivery at a staff meeting meant that there was insufficient time for staff to explore SEL concepts through an inquiry-based approach. If time

had allowed, the Diocesan Education Officer would have led staff through practical application of SEL activities. This experience could provide the platform for whole staff discussion on the essential components of SEL as constructed for students' learning and application to real-life situations/events. However, the Diocesan Education Officer was restricted to input and a brief general staff discussion on the application of SEL in the Dialogues for Learning structure. To support staff with a resource, the Education Officer provided a handout (see Appendix x), which outlined options and suggestions for staff to develop student social and emotional competencies during these times. Once the staff meeting ended, however, there was no follow-up strategy recommended by the leadership team to ensure that the LAs understood the concepts suggested or whether further professional development scaffold to staff readiness would help develop a deeper understanding of SEL. Had this been possible, staff may have begun to feel more confident and capable of teaching social and emotional skills in the curriculum and when engaged in the relational structures of Learning Circles, Dialogues for Learning and L2L sessions.

Reflections from the researcher's journal noted the ongoing challenges perceived with staff's capacity to deliver the SEL curriculum:

After such a long time planning the inclusion of SEL in the curriculum, there have been limited opportunities to give staff professional development opportunities that would help develop their understanding and confidence to teach these skills. The first opportunity was with the foundation staff prior to the school opening and was superficially outlined in an hour. The second time the leadership team agreed that structure of the Dialogues for Learning was an appropriate time to work with students developing their skills in this area. The staff meeting was after school and I had forty minutes for brief input on how to develop SEL in the Dialogues structure. LAs were generally interested in discussing the concepts but it was apparent that many LAs struggled to articulate the language of SEL. Staff agreed that the handout would assist them in the process; however, some LAs acknowledged they did not know or felt uncomfortable about using the information to help a student manage their feelings or resolve conflicts. One LA commented: 'I can give advice but I don't know how to speak about their feelings or what you call 'self-talk' and 'I think that if my conversation with a student takes that much work I should refer the student to a counsellor'. (Journal Note: 16th March 2008)

One of the Phase 3 (a) and three of the five Phase 4 respondents commented on their efforts and successes with SEL as their personal competencies developed. However, there were challenges in assisting other LAs as they worked in collaborative teams planning CLEs. The lack of the LAs' knowledge of SEL, continual and elevated stressors on staff to work with the integrated curriculum meant that the respondents felt they were of a 'lone voice' within the staff which was often ignored with other more pressing agendas.

There was some measure of success with one Phase 4 LA enthusiastically described his own ‘successful’ journey in developing social and emotional skills and how this had positively impacted on his learning of self:

For this interview I can speak a lot more about SEL in terms of my own experience and also with students. I was involved in helping students who were fighting better understand their anger and frustration and the impact that brings to their personal relationships. I think I am also more aware of my own social and emotional development by working like this with students. I understand now that my social and emotional skills include how I make my decisions and choices, how I want to live, relate to others and handle my challenges. Through my own development and capacity I think I can better help students make connections about their own choices, relationships and their learning. (Mitchell S.)

Other comments from the four Phase 4 LAs described their thoughts and feelings about the challenges they faced:

The most difficult part about working in the CLE teams is that by the time we have all contributed the KLA content of the CLE there is no time left for much else. The LAs aren’t as skilled in SEL as they would like to be so it is understandable that they would not feel confident in teaching it. (Susan P.)

Despite the school being operational for two years with LAs working with the Learning and teaching principles, in the cross-curricula model, the SEL component remained an elusive part of the ‘whole.’ The analysis of all LAs in Phase 3 (a, b & c) and Phase 4 reflected the efforts and frustrations experienced by LAs addressing all the components of the Framework. An opinion from the Phase 3 (a) LA suggested that until there was explicit professional development on SEL, it would be ‘hit and miss’ affair with its implementation.

Some LAs are teaching what I call social and emotional skills, not strategically as they would develop other academic skills but they are not calling it SEL. I have heard some say though ‘Why should I make it so explicit when we actually integrate it implicitly when we teach?’ Professional development would help dispel this attitude and show staff how the theory could be put into practice and what that looks like in our school. (Felicity N.)

A consensus amongst all Phase 4 respondents acknowledged the significant time LAs spent compared to their past school situations, on planning the integrated CLEs. There was a pressing need to provide essential support such as professional development so that the SEL resources and assessment-based tools were readily accessible.

I think SEL is still in the abstract stage even at this point of our school's development. The social and emotional content that you are suggesting is concrete, definable and within the students' lived experience. SEL does not have the same support material as we have with the syllabus content of the cross-curriculum materials. Professional development would really help us work on this. (Estelle W.); and

I think for most LAs, teaching SEL is still very much in the early stages of understanding and implementation with incidental but limited integration in the cross-curriculum process. It is still at the familiarity stage and little more. (Mark C.)

Considered thought from all Phase 3 (a & c) and Phase 4 participants identified that SEL professional development should be strategic, scaffold to student and staff readiness and linked not only to the CLEs but also to school structures.

There was support for Geoff Masters' (2012) notion that effective teaching that promoted improved student learning outcomes ultimately relied on the educator having expertise in their subject area, having 'deep knowledge' about each student's learning process and an ability to be familiar with the conditions that supported successful learning. Therefore, if SEL was to have a place in the Learning and teaching principles at Cathedral College, then it was incumbent upon the leadership team to support the teaching staff to become more knowledgeable and skilled in being able to carry out this function effectively. Considered SEL professional development targeted to the needs of staff, scaffold, resourced and with multiple opportunities for application was vital for the staff to develop their confidence and expertise.

LEADERSHIP SUPPORTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

There was a philosophy of distributive leadership at the school where all staff was considered leaders of learning but under the guidance of five nominated leaders. The purpose of this type of leadership was to transform school culture by empowering all staff to take up the role of 'leader', to work collaboratively and to make decisions on the planning and implementation of the learning and teaching principles. However, as a new school with a new model of learning, the appointed staff looked to the Leadership team to delineate common teaching expectations, particularly around SEL, so as to maintain the fidelity of the prescribed learning and teaching principles. Keeping in mind that the Diocesan Education Office Task Force Committee designed the essential components of the proposed CLEs prior to the commencement of the school, the current staff did not have any professional input in constructing the inclusive elements of the model.

Without staff ownership of the social and emotional component of learning it was crucial for the Leadership team to lead and support staff that ensured the development of their understanding and subsequent skills when planning CLEs. It was important for LAs to have regular conversations about SEL so that in time they felt confident about, and proficient in, teaching the concept in the integrated curriculum. The principal endorsed the Learning and teaching principles and expressed full support and confidence in staff to ultimately develop their teaching expertise in the SEL construct.

The term 'SEL' was a relatively new learning concept not well understood by staff when they first gathered in November 2005. It was reasonable from the researcher's perspective, that at this point in time, staff would not be professionally equipped to teach these skills as competently as they would with the knowledge and skills of their teaching KLA. Indeed their learning and teaching capacity varied on a continuum of competency.

All were capable staff with prior specific KLA training and teaching experience in mainstream schools. It was only during the planning term prior to the school beginning in 2005 that staff was briefly exposed to the theory and practice of integrating social and emotional competencies into the regular curriculum. This one introductory session was their only preparation for planning and teaching the expected social and emotional competencies when designing the CLEs. Although all staff agreed to the inclusion of SEL as a viable and supportive component to enhance academic learning, this was the last opportunity to resolve any anticipated challenges.

Setting the scene for some of the leadership challenges came from the initial interviews with two of the three Phase 3 (a and b) Leaders who revealed an issue for them was their 'lack of readiness' and confidence to lead the Learning and teaching model required of them. At the time of appointment, both participants were appointed as Leaders of Student Growth and Learning and Learning and Teaching respectively but this was not their preferred leadership preferences. Originally, both Leaders applied for different leadership positions that reflected more appropriately their prior teaching training and experience. The appointed Leader of Student Growth and Learning was interested in the Leader of Learning and Teaching position as her background was grounded in a long Mathematics career with involvement in Pastoral Care. The appointed

Leader of Learning and Teaching had an extensive training in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral Care, and Counselling and had applied for the Leader of Missions commensurate with his interests and extensive experience. Despite this, both leaders accepted their appointments and prepared enthusiastically to embrace and lead the new model of learning.

I thought I was better suited to the curriculum role but I'd always been heavily involved in pastoral care in my past schools. However, I believed that learning is built on how students learn about themselves first. Despite teaching Mathematics across all learning stages, I've always had a strong focus on teaching the 'whole person'. This position is certainly a challenge but a welcome one. My own emotional intelligence will certainly be required as I develop this position.

(Jennifer B.)

The leadership responsibility for overseeing the inclusion of SEL in the curriculum fell to the portfolio of the Leader of Student Growth and Learning as the focus was on the personal and social development of young people. Although interested and committed to the concept of SEL, she did not have the understanding necessary to lead the planning of and teaching the integration of SEL in the curriculum. The Leader of Student Growth and Learning reflected in her first interview that although she was considered by staff as the 'leader' of monitoring and developing SEL in the curriculum and associated support structures, she certainly did not consider herself the 'guru' although other staff had that opinion. She was adamant that all staff needed to see that the learning and teaching of social and emotional competencies was a 'shared responsibility.' The second Leader noted early the emerging difficulties with addressing the integration of the social and emotional component within each CLE. On reflection, he maintained that:

Until someone on the leadership team can drive SEL and help make the links to other KLAs, I fear it will not be implemented with fidelity. So right from the outset, the leadership team I think wasn't going to be able to lead this part of the curriculum effectively. (Matthew J.)

This Leader intuitively and professionally understood the concept of SEL, as it was an integral part of his theological and counselling background. However, he maintained that this was 'not part' of his leadership role despite agreeing to the principles of 'distributive leadership' and the planning and teaching

accountabilities of all staff. He became professionally dissatisfied with his role and the overall school structure and subsequently resigned from his leadership and teaching position at the end of the second term, 2006 and sought employment in a more traditional school setting. The temporary replacement Leader of Learning and Teaching was a Diocesan Education Officer from the Curriculum and Pedagogy Team who had been on the Task Force planning team and had an intimate knowledge of the learning and teaching principles.

I took up the temporary position of Leader of Learning and Teaching for Term 3, 2006 and by that stage I felt that although the Leaders had different styles of leading each had the ability to bring the SEL qualities to their teaching. I do think though, that the school needed someone to lead, or at least have it come from the top down as well as from the roots up and be modeled. One of the leaders needed to direct staff to work on the inclusion of SEL in the CLEs. We also needed to be more accountable for that part of the each CLE. (Estelle W.)

Clearly, the vision and implementation for the social and emotional profile in the Learning and teaching curriculum was not explicitly articulated by the Leadership team to staff at the beginning of the school year. From the first round of interviews, four of the five Phase 3 (a, b and c) LAs assigned the responsibility of SEL to the Leader of Student Growth and Learning.

Comments such as:

I haven't got time to work it all out. It falls into the Leader of Student Growth and Learning's portfolio but I need her to show me or the planning team what SEL looks like in the current CLE and some learning strategies to incorporate into our teaching. (Felicity N.)

She also reflected the disquiet amongst them all at the lack of time for professional development in this area. Universally the LAs were struggling with planning and teaching the mandated integrated curriculum without the complication of integrating SEL.

Teaching an integrated curriculum let alone SLE is very new. We can't ring another school and ask them because our school is different and we are building a different learning culture so really we are on our own. (Estelle W.)

Adding to the challenges of staff accepting the teaching of SEL was its exclusion as a 'mandatory' requirement from the NSW Board of Studies except for the course content of the PDHPE syllabus in the Self and Relationships Strand. As such, its promotion and inclusion became increasingly a lower priority for staff when planning the content of the CLEs.

The Leader of Student Growth and Learning lamented her own limitations in her understanding of teaching students the skills of SEL particularly as she saw her role as supporting the LAs to develop this background knowledge:

There has been less focus on SEL than anything else in the curriculum. SEL is part of our school's curriculum philosophy but to me there is a particularly strong focus on curriculum. Even with the six weeks focus last year in preparation for the following school year there was an emphasis on the traditional curriculum and integration but we didn't do nearly enough on the other components of the curriculum model. If I had more knowledge of SEL then I would have been able to direct to where it would fit into the unit of work. (Jennifer B.)

The replacement Leader of Learning and Teaching was appointed at the beginning of Term 3, 2006, He reported that it was his understanding and expectation that the Leader of Student Growth and Learning was the provider of the all that is SEL including the outcomes that were tagged to the social and emotional descriptors on the online database. *'It was impossible,'* he declared, to see how he could teach SEL as he would with the support direction and materials of a traditional syllabus *'unless the Leader of Student Growth and Learning provided similar support material'* (Mark C.). He, like the three other Phase 4 LAs, commented on the relevance and ease of teaching SEL as a 'topic' on its own. However, the intentional design of SEL was not to teach it on its own but appropriately embed it in each CLE.

One LA during his last interview expressed his concern:

Unless there was strong leadership with SE, there would be no one keeping us (LAs) on track, helping us to trouble-shoot issues or guiding us through the components, particularly this one. It will be a 'hit-and-miss' approach, dependent on each person's commitment to it and with competing curriculum and school agendas; SEL begins to quickly fade off the radar. (Mark C.)

Despite these sentiments, three of the five LAs acknowledged that the Leader of Student Growth and Learning made significant efforts throughout the year for 'SEL to happen' (Mark C., Mitchell S., and Estelle W.) at school but they all recognised the enormity and diversity of her role description. One LA noted that although SEL was generally not explicitly taught he could see the implicit connections when the Leader of Student Growth and Learning organised professional development for staff to learn about integrating Stephen Covey's Habits of Mind sequential framework into the the CLE framework.

We were desperate to get an understanding of social and emotional competencies and how we could make this relevant for students in their CLEs. The Leader of Student Growth and Learning helped make some implicit connections to social and emotional particularly with the Habits of Mind such as 'empathy' and 'persistence' but it was still difficult to then apply it in a sequenced way. (Mitchell S.)

The Leader of Student Growth and Learning acknowledged that enlightening staff about SEL was exhausting on top of the myriad of other accountabilities in her role. It was important, she felt, that all staff were more self-directed and shared the responsibility of developing their understanding of the SEL concept:

I know that I am considered the Leader and making sure SEL into the curriculum but it is really a challenge. I am happy for others to take that role because there are people on staff who have more expertise than I in this area. It was a gruelling task to be responsible for creating the support structures and processes for the Pastoral Care, behaviour management, and curriculum for the school community. So, in consultation with the principal, leading SEL was shifted to the portfolio of the Leader of Learning and Teaching rather than mine. (Jennifer B.)

At the beginning of 2007, the new Leader of Learning and Teaching was then responsible for ensuring that the staff was confident in the delivery of the learning and teaching principles. Coming into the school late, his perception of SEL was that it was not specifically taught or directed by anyone during the school's first year of operation. He noted:

It (SEL) is there but LAs really don't know much about it. I admit we (Leaders) need to be more constructive about equipping staff with a level of knowledge and skills of SEL that they can take to their planning and teaching. Each of the foundation LAs like the concept but they don't have an understanding of the elements and how to develop these in students. I believe that SEL is embedded in what we do without actually explicitly acknowledging it. (Mark C.)

LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES

What was evident from each of the Phase 3 (a, b and c) and Phase 4 LAs' responses was an acknowledgement that there was a significant absence of relevant resources and curriculum support material for developing social and emotional skills available to the teams to plan their CLEs. One LA commented:

I believe that SEL is important but I need resources to help me teach. We focused on Habits of Mind in our group but it was difficult to know how to integrate this into a CLE even though we had resources. (Mitchell S.)

Another LA summed up the remaining LAs' opinions concerning the supply of resources and stated:

SEL is a new but challenging concept but we as teachers really don't know how to teach the skills to students, we don't have a social and emotional syllabus to follow like other KLAS. (Felicity N.)

All Phase 3 (a, b and c) were clear in their responses to the question regarding relevant resource support. Unequivocally, each stressed that they wanted extensive professional development opportunities to build up their skills and knowledge of SEL. A litany of responses from the Leaders and LAs reflected statements such as:

How can we be expected to teach SEL without a deep understanding of the content? (Matthew J.);
and

I need someone to demonstrate what this would look like, feel like, sound like in a classroom.
(Felicity B.)

Other comments from LAs included: *professional development would help me understand the depth of the concept of SEL and assist me to apply this learning in both the CLEs and in maintaining relationships with students in the yard* (Jennifer B.) whilst another supported with ‘*one of the barriers for me with SEL is the lack of professional development as teacher expertise is built up through essential learning.*’ (Mark C.)

The capacity of the leadership team to model and to organise professional support for staff to learn about SEL became a focal point of the Phase 4 interviews. LAs did not believe that they would be successful at embedding SEL in the curriculum and explicitly teaching the micro-skills unless the professional development needs of staff were met.

Critically, the Leader of Student Growth and Learning admitted that she needed professional development in the competencies of SEL. However, she was unsure where to access this support.

I have taken resources from Diocesan Education Office and read through them but I need to be guided by someone. I have a good ‘gut’ feeling about SEL but what I really need are things that help me articulate this ‘gut’ feeling to the staff and students – to take it from instinct to practice but firmly based on empirical research. (Jennifer B.)

To support staff, one Leader noted in her Phase 4 interview that she had identified the next step in the school’s curriculum evolution was for staff, through professional development, to develop a broader knowledge of SEL and its application in the classroom. She admitted: *the staff’s depth of understanding of their emotional and social competencies would influence their ability to teach these skills to their students.* (Susan P.)

As the researcher and the District Education Officer responsible for the introduction of SEL into the integrated curriculum, an offer was made to the principal and Leaders to provide staff with SEL professional development. However, this was not taken up by the Leadership team at the time as there were more pressing curriculum accountability issues. Instead, a request was made to provide a guideline for LAs to help them sustain a learning conversation when conducting the Dialogues for Learning with the students in their Learning Circle (see Appendix 4). The input to the general staff provided an ideal opportunity to explore social and emotional strategies to utilise during these times. Using the conversation guidelines assisted staff to help students identify and develop their social and emotional competencies. The conversation with students was related to reflecting on their school journey specifically under the themes of (a) social and (b) personal responsibility and (c) academic progress at school. As one of the Leaders commented:

Not all staff is comfortable or knows how to carry a conversation around the personal aspects of a student's life. We need to be able to assess the social and emotional competencies of each student then assist them to develop or remediate so that they become good at solving problems, communicating and being generally competent. (Mark C.)

The Leader of Student Growth and Learning, however, was committed to ensuring that SEL was practised in the school and was active in the creation of staff and student 'relational' structures such as the Learning Circles and the Dialogues for Learning. Each of the LAs and each of the Leaders affirmed that these structures have been most effective in developing SEL skills with students.

The responses from participants about their perception of leadership in promoting SEL links in the curriculum revealed challenges for the researcher. In the dual role of researcher and Diocesan Education Officer, it was incumbent not to use the collegial position to influence the staff in working with the construct. Nor should the researcher, through professional conversations, sway the Leadership team or the staff towards the type of school structures that promoted effective processes for both staff and students to develop social and emotional competencies. To this end, the researcher acted solely in the role of Diocesan Education Officer and offered a professional development workshop as requested that explored the theory, components

and teaching strategies on SEL. This was acknowledged by the Leadership team with tentative agreement to include this in the school's plan for professional development.

Over the school's two years of operation, it was evident that despite the leadership challenges of staff applying the context and content of social and emotional competencies in the school setting, Leaders and LAs maintained a desire to incorporate social and emotional competencies into the curriculum and within the school's structures and processes.

STAFF CHALLENGES

Throughout Phases 3 (a, b and c) and Phase 4 of the study LAs noted the pressures and challenges typical of developing new schools (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). Issues they raised included extensive workload, the lack of professional learning in the SEL construct, general adaptation to the unfamiliar curriculum model and development of new school structures and processes.

WORKLOAD

Prior to the new school implementation, the Director of Schools anticipated potential stressors for the new staff:

I anticipate that the challenges for the staff in the first twelve months will be that the tasks and workload will be extremely demanding. Grappling with new ideas and new ways of learning and teaching with syllabus integrity will mean some things will be done 'on the run'. The challenge for the staff is not to slip or fall back to the traditional ways of education. (Luke T.)

All LAs acknowledged the significant workload demands they experienced as they began the first year of implementation:

We didn't achieve all that we wanted to in our 2005 six weeks. We worked hard on the preparation of the first CLE and regrettably didn't prepare a number of CLEs ready to teach planning phase so starting the new school year without a solid prepared curriculum base, created some pressures for staff. (Susan P.)

The common themes from three of the Phase 3 (a) respondents and three of the Phase 4 respondents named the following as high pressure points:

- Limited knowledge of all KLAs;
- Working regularly in cross-curriculum teams;
- Planning and implementing an integrated curriculum every five weeks; and
- Maintaining a productive conversation with students in their Dialogues for Learning or Learning Circle time.

One Phase 3 (a) LA commented on her perception of pressure:

Staff has a limited understanding of SEL because of the immense pressure to get this new school going and to manage the organisation and the integrated curriculum. My experience is that this leaves little time and motivation to learn about and teach a relatively new concept, which all adds to an already pressing workload. (Estelle W.)

A Phase 3 (c) Leader identified his perception of the varying levels of staff confidence to plan and deliver SEL in the integrated curriculum:

Working together in teams to plan the cross-curriculum units of work is great but the pressure comes from trying to learn about other KLAs so that the integration is relevant for students and taught with syllabus integrity. New KLA learning for staff is happening all the time but with the ongoing pressures of the normal day it adds to the mental strain. Perhaps as time passes we will become more knowledgeable and therefore comfortable with the components of each CEL . (Mark C.)

There was inevitable pressure for all LAs as they are responsible for the functioning of the new school and the delivery of the curriculum including SEL. However, individual LAs reacted in different ways to the same situation as they brought with them their biological and social attributes and a variety of adaptive resources that helped them manage to these pressures. So whilst one LA was enthused by the L2L and Dialogues for Learning structures as an avenues to explore SEL, others reflected again on the issue and

pressure of available time:

The Learning to Learn and the Dialogues for Learning structures are great but when we had our Pastoral Care meeting, LAs were saying, 'where and how will I get time'? Now we have provided the time in the Learning to Learn structure we are asking staff to invest in SEL skills for students such as thinking about and helping them to manage their own learning. We are all keen not to revert back to teaching a traditional curriculum, as this is what other systemic schools expect us to do. Despite the pressures of time and learning results we are determined that we will persevere until it becomes comfortable and commonplace. (Mitchell S.)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of professional learning was perceived by LAs as the most relevant strategy to help them with extra support to learn more effective social and emotional practices. The LAs viewed ongoing professional learning as opportunities to train collectively on site discussing in the context of their school culture and their educational mandate.

During Phase 3 (a, b & c) all five LAs noted the challenges for other staff as they endeavoured to embed SEL in the curriculum:

The most difficult part of teaching SEL is that the LAs generally do not have the knowledge or are not as skilled as they would like to be. (Susan P.)

A strong feature of all LAs interviews clearly mandated:

Professional learning would really help us all so we can identify those situations where social and emotional skills naturally fit. What we really need though is time to develop our understanding of these concepts, the time to stop and reflect on how to do this with students but we don't have this so it gets lost. (Mark C.)

During 2007, a Phase 4 interview with the Leader for Learning and Teaching, now responsible for organising staff professional development on all components of CLEs reflected on the challenge of SEL. He noted that attention to addressing SEL professional development remained a low priority:

Every Wednesday afternoon I run professional learning for staff but I have to be honest, there are so many elements in the Framework that SEL has not been on the agenda yet. I suppose, I'm not sure what I would say or explain around SEL so that is why I have left it to last – says a lot doesn't it? (Mark C.); and

One of the barriers with SEL is the lack of professional learning on it and teacher expertise needs to be built up through essential professional learning opportunities. Just like restorative practices, our new staff training and our foundational staff, re-training. (Mitchell S.); and

One Phase 3 (a) LA was adamant about the value of SEL commenting:

SEL should be viewed from the perspective of the Indian proverb – 'Tell me and I'll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I'll understand' – let's have some 'doing'!
(Matthew J.)

Professional development in a new school was a strategic process that helped alleviate the workload pressures the LAs noted and repeated in the literature on new schools. The researcher's journal note endorsed all responses thus far:

I can appreciate the pressure that teaching SEL is for the LAs without ongoing opportunities for professional learning. They have to teach the integrated curriculum and although there are some implicit references to SEL without a scaffold and curriculum to SEL becomes as experienced, a hit and miss learning opportunity. Professional learning would provide a dedicated space within which to explore and reflect on the construct but remains a lesser priority on the learning agenda. (Journal Note: 30th April 2007)

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

‘Change’ was not an alien concept to the LAs as adaptations within the educational landscape are constant and continuous. However, despite the universality of change, the impact was an intensely human experience, influenced by the LA’s particular circumstances at school and their willingness to engage in the process of working with the SEL construct. These experiences no doubt had an influence on whether the staff continues to pursue the inclusion of SEL in the context of the school.

Generally, the responses from all LAs at the end of the first year in the study indicated they valued SEL.

One LA noted:

After a year at our school, I feel that I am now connecting to some areas of the cross-curricula model, which of course includes the SEL component. (Felicity N.)

Whilst two Phase 4 participants reflected on their personal journey, a typical response was captured as follows:

Over the two years, the concept of SEL has been more about learning about myself rather than explicitly teaching it to students. I guess though this knowledge also helps me work with students in the SEL area particularly during Learning Circles and Learning to Learn sessions. (Mitchell S.); and

Our staff really has done a good job planning and teaching an integrated curriculum, as it is something that none were used to at all. Sometimes it was haphazard but by the end of the second year it feels more natural and we have a better understanding amongst the staff as to syllabus requirements. (Jennifer B.)

INNOVATION SUSTAINABILITY

The limited research on new schools revealed that most focus on a specific innovation or adaptation by a restructuring, doing or thinking about educational change. New schools were unique by the time and nature of their development, which was unlike existing schools. However, invariable over time and pressures on staff the initial intention of the innovation is diminished and the school reverts to that of traditional schools (Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). The sustainability of the new school innovation such as SEL

was a question the researcher planned to explore with the LAs in the study to ascertain if in fact SEL would cease to exist as the school developed. However, the question became moot as the study progressed because the LAs struggled to implement and establish SEL let alone develop the micro-skills to the point of sustaining it over time. Therefore, questions concerning sustainability of SEL were not pursued at this time.

CHAPTER 7 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself

Henry Ford (1983-1947)

DISCUSSION

In this final chapter the major findings of the research study and identified areas for future research are highlighted. The themes from the minor questions are discussed in detail culminating in the final response to the major research question. Finally, recommendations for future research are proposed to broaden the current research base of new school development and SEL.

This case study sought to identify and document the issues staff experienced as they implemented the innovation of social and emotional learning embedded in an integrated curriculum at a new Catholic secondary school. The findings suggested that the development and implementation phase of this new school provided possibilities and considerable challenges for the staff as they worked together to build successful and sustainable educational outcomes. New schools provide unique opportunities for staff to be educationally creative and innovate and utilise empirical research on learning, curriculum and quality school environments that subsequently build successful learning communities. However, despite over one hundred new secondary schools, both government and non-government in Australia being built during the past ten years, with aspiring educational goals, the research suggested that over time, they slowly revert to traditional models of schooling (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008).

This study was important because it added to the limited Australian research on the dynamics of new schools, innovation and sustainability practices. As a newly built secondary Catholic school, it documented the experiences of the staff undertaking this endeavour and revealed important issues to address such as the school vision and philosophy; organisational structures and processes; staff capacity to implement the social and emotional learning curriculum; leadership; workload; stress; professional development; change management and sustainability. Nicholas (2008) in the only previous Australian study of new schools recommended an integrated set of essential design characteristics, which included similar themes that

emerged in this study. In this chapter the issues facing new schools development and sustainability when implementing new initiatives are discussed. The major question is addressed under the five emergent themes of the new school's vision and philosophy, organisational structures and processes, the staff's confidence and capacity to implement the initiative, the role of leadership in supporting the staff's endeavours and the issues and stressors staff encountered as they strove for implementation and sustainability working towards successful school innovation and practices.

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW SCHOOL

Researchers on new schools, innovation and sustainable practices agreed it was essential for all stakeholders not only to agree to, but also be committed to the vision and philosophy advocated for the school. Failure to do so ultimately created tensions and a lack of ownership amongst staff, which in turn contributed to the school's reduced collective capacity to achieve their vision and philosophical aims (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Harris, Allen, & Goodall, 2008; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008).

The vision and philosophy of Cathedral College reflected the educational needs of twenty-first century learners. It was underpinned by the Catholic church, national and state curricula — namely, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998), *The Adelaide Declaration on the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (MCEETYA, 1999) and superseded by *The Melbourne Declaration for Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) — which gave credence to preparing students to be successful and productive learners in a complex global society. The national educational goals recognised the value of explicitly developing students' personal and social capacities, as they were increasingly crucial not only for successful learning but also in building personal wellbeing and positive citizenship outcomes.

The literature review of new schools noted it was necessary and not uncommon for the educational authority at the time to determine the school's educational brief including the vision and philosophy prior to staff's appointment and the opening of the school (Nicholas, 2008). The advantage of this was that it provided the incoming principal and staff a philosophical platform from which to start the school which saved considerable preparation and consultative time when the pressure to get the school operational was a priority.

The disadvantage of prior planning by the educational system, however, was that there was not any discussion afforded to the staff and thus there was a danger that there was also a lack of ownership as the school's intention was mandated by other people not teaching in the school.

The stated vision and philosophy from the Director of Schools and the Diocesan Education Office staff determined a Diocesan model of education where the learning and teaching principles reflected the shift in global expectations to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal attributes that would prepare them for the twenty-first century working and living. The learning and teaching program was organised into cross-curricula units of work called CLEs which reflected the vision of an integrated innovative curriculum that accommodated the essential curriculum requirements from the NSW Board of Studies. The principal was subsequently appointed and potential teachers who were interested in the school's innovation attended an information evening explaining Cathedral College's vision and philosophy and the learning and teaching principles underpinning the contemporary curriculum delivery. Unsurprisingly, once appointed all the LAs in the first year of the study agreed to the prescribed vision and philosophy of the school voicing enthusiasm and anticipation in being part of an innovative model of learning and teaching.

Fink (2000) and Nicholas (2008) described the establishment years of a new school such as Cathedral College, as a period of time when innovation was highly possible, where staff is excited, interested and willing to work differently to achieve the intended outcomes. Fink called this period one of 'creativity and experimentation' (p.11), which reflected the professional and social atmosphere created by the foundational staff in the planning period prior to the school opening. It was at this stage that the vision and philosophy of the social and emotional learning curriculum as a core component of a CLE was introduced to the new staff by the researcher, as a Diocesan Education Officer. The foundation staff were provided input on current international empirical research and the CASEL Model of Social and Emotional Learning (2007) noting the academic, social and personal benefits students gain when SEL is embedded into the core curriculum (Durlak et al., 1995, 2011; Zins et al., 2004). It was intended that the SEL curriculum would not be restricted to one class a week, rather it would be infused into the trans-disciplinary curriculum so that the knowledge and skills developed would be relevant and applicable to real-world situations for students.

The vision to include SEL in the daily curriculum reflected the growing public interest on the research of emotional intelligence and its application to the field of education (Goleman, 1995; Payton et al., 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). There was a strong empirical case that student wellbeing and learning were enhanced by explicitly teaching SEL skills that integrated the development of thinking, feeling and behaving knowledge and skills to achieve important academic, social and life-long outcomes. Zins et al. (2000) proposed a research-validated framework and criteria for integrating SEL into the general curriculum. The authors maintained the criteria for SEL programs should be: ‘comprehensive, multiyear, multicomponent and systematic; developmentally and culturally appropriate; and integrated into and reflected in the overall curriculum, daily routines and extra curricular activities’ (p. 31). In this way, SEL was not to be taught in a fragmented manner as in an identified but specific program for students perceived to have deficit social and emotional skills or as a single health program, limited in duration and isolated from general learning. Wells et al. (2006) reviewed mental health programs and determined they worked best when implemented for longer than a year rather than short in duration. Successful learning was sustained in these programs when the content was focused on promoting the development of knowledge and skills of building mental wellbeing rather than focusing on the prevention of mental illness. It was on this basis that the vision and philosophy of SEL was included as an integral component of the trans-disciplinary curriculum to be taught in a coherent and systematic manner.

The LAs in the study unanimously agreed in principle to the inclusion of SEL in the cross-curriculum as stated through the school’s learning and teaching principles. However, through observation and LAs’ interviews the reality of SEL implementation was less evident. This was understandable as the SEL construct was relatively new to the LAs, there was only brief SEL input from the Diocesan Education Officer, there was little time to discuss the concept and align it to the existing mandated curriculum, and the LAs experienced continual pressure to plan and teach a different CLE every five weeks. Despite these stressors and being under-prepared and under-skilled to teach social and emotional learning, the LAs remained resolute over the two years of the study that it should continue to be part of the learning and teaching paradigm.

During the school's first year of development there were sporadic efforts to explore the SEL construct as related to the theme of work under study (CLE). However, this depended on the interest and ability of those LAs in the collaborative planning groups to make the necessary links and prepare the lesson. There were efforts made to work with embedding SEL in the curriculum such as the introduction and alignment with Covey's (2000) *Habits of Minds* approach to learning for which the staff had received professional development training. Even with this addition to staff's pedagogy there was not a cohesive and integrated approach to SEL learning. Notwithstanding conversations between some LAs and the expectation of teaching social and emotional learning, none were able to identify or reiterate the specific interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioural competencies that were regarded as key features of SEL. Generally, the LAs had not acquired the knowledge or common language to describe the micro elements of the core competencies that supported their teaching such as developing students' self-awareness, social and emotional learning-management, social awareness, relationship skills or responsible decision-making indicating a basic cognisance of the construct.

Like all staff in schools, both new and old, the LAs in this study contributed both positive and negative influences on the successful implementation of the curriculum innovation. One LA identified broad links to SEL with the first CLE titled 'My Sacred Story' where Year 7 students explored their sense of social and emotional learning and developing relationships within the context of a new school cohort. This theme was a natural focus for a new year group coming together for the first time and in a new school with new teachers and the LAs generically identified that the content and skills addressed were part of the social and emotional competencies designated in the CLE Framework. It was interesting to note during the establishment phase of the school that these LAs recognised there were SEL elements in this unit of work, which indicated a growing awareness of the construct. Contrasted to this was another staff member, who stated his commitment to the vision of the school, suggested that SEL was really just 'values education' under another name and that this was already addressed throughout the curriculum and requiring no more attention. This attitude can undermine a CLE team endeavouring to address SEL in their planning time especially if their current knowledge does not allow for a robust discussion for its inclusion. These tensions, natural in a new school setting with staff who have not philosophically committed to the goals, can mitigate others' intentions

(Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Harris et al., 2008; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). It was at this point, that the LA chose to leave the school and seek employment in a traditional Diocesan school.

In all phases of the new school's development the continual attention from the leadership team to reinforce and promote the school's vision and philosophy was critical if the goals were to be achieved and sustained. Nicholas (2008) found in her study of new school implementation and sustainability that a planned process to ensure there was a shared understanding between staff of the school's vision and philosophy was imperative for successful and long-term sustainability. Other researchers (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1997; Fink, 2000, Hill, 2003; Margolis, 2005) also acknowledged this finding, naming support for the school's vision and philosophy as essential if other issues such as communication, collaboration, inclusivity and positive staff relationships were to be accepted and effected in practice. Eastabrook and Fullan (1977) and Fink (2000) purported that unless all stakeholders shared in the development or the renegotiation of the school's vision and philosophy, or school leaders continually reinforced agreed principles throughout the school's development, staff practices would be misaligned with expected doctrine. This was evident of the implementation of social and emotional learning at Cathedral College and will be discussed further in this chapter under the topic of issues of leadership.

Arising from the findings, then, recommendations for practice are proposed. To invigorate and enact a new school's vision and educational philosophy requires the continual focus from the leadership team to build amongst staff an agreement of collective purpose. It is the staff who are ultimately responsible for ensuring the determined vision is translated into observable practices that build the school's culture. This means the leadership team needs to be proactive in dedicating time and energies for staff to come to a common understanding and ownership for the vision of the new school. Commitment to the collective identity and purpose of the school's vision and educational philosophy means that all staff agreed to enact the principles even though they may have personal reservations about the practices. To engage all stakeholders, it is recommended that the new school's vision be publicised on a regular basis to all key stakeholders to herald where the school is headed and why stakeholders need to support the school. A common but collective understanding of the new school's vision allows all stakeholders to align their efforts and support with the common goals. It is only when new school staff have a shared understanding that a commitment to

implement and sustain change is possible. To keep the school's vision relevant for staff the leadership team must address the staff's issues of adapting to change. As is the case with new school implementation, the vision and philosophy are pre-determined so there must be genuine and repetitive efforts by the leadership team to strategically keep the school growth towards its moral and educational mandate. Therefore a specific plan is essential for establishing and maintaining a positive school culture that is the responsibility of all staff not just a selected few. It is recommended that such a plan is articulated and visible to all staff. In addition, specific goals, strategies and action steps that are measurable, achievable, relevant and assigned to a time-frame should determine the school's vision plan. Without a strategic approach by the leadership team, the school's vision and educational philosophy is in danger of being unfocused and at risk of not being supported practically by staff. Over the school's development, the contributions of stakeholders need to be evaluated to determine the level of success and any adjustments needed to support the growth and sustainability of the school's vision.

NEW ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

There were many educational decisions that needed to be made as the new school became operational such as the school's organisational structures and processes necessary that supported staff to implement and successfully sustain the school's educational mission. What distinguished this new secondary school from other traditional Diocesan schools was the innovative Learning and teaching principles informing the curriculum, the Learning Advisory Program and the structures and processes that enable these to function effectively in the school environment. Robust research on new schools (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008) found that a common but critical feature of successful new school implementation was the continual attention given to the process that promoted and enhanced effective communication and decision-making with school staff. The school's leadership team were committed to this and successfully created structures and processes for staff to formally and informally collaborate and make decisions about their core work that included building a positive school culture focused on students' learning and wellbeing outcomes.

The identified organisational structures and processes agreed to by staff and that supported the development SEL were as follows:

- a) CLE Creation Framework
- b) The integrated curriculum
- c) The Learning Advisory Program
- d) Online database (PAROT)

CLE Creative Framework

The structure of the CLE Creative Framework was the organising paradigm for learning and teaching at Cathedral College and created the most interest and the most challenge for staff. There was a significant risk, however, that despite the staff's enthusiasm for changing their practices to teach in an innovative environment that included CLE Creation Framework, without continued professional support the staff reverted back to their traditional practices (Harris et al., 2008; Nicholas, 2008). The Diocesan Education Office acknowledged early in Cathedral College's planning process prior to the school opening that the delivery of an integrated curriculum by staff would need considerable professional and financial support. To this end, a Diocesan Education Office's decision was made to appoint the principal early in 2005 to spend the year planning the school's educational agenda with key stakeholders. Incoming staff were appointed and released from their existing schools for six weeks of term 4, 2005 with the view of developing their understanding of the components of the integrated curriculum, planning in collaborative teams a number of CLEs for the beginning of the school the following year and building collegial relationships.

Despite the luxury of six weeks employment before Cathedral College began in 2006, the LAs reported not being prepared for the breadth, depth and complexity of planning and teaching all the components of the integrated curriculum. It was difficult for the staff during the planning time prior to the school opening to develop a sense of understanding and ownership of the CLEs and SEL process and the majority of time was spent becoming familiar with KLAs other than their own. In fact, the initial intention of the school's leadership team was for the incoming staff during the planning phase to prepare three to five CLEs that would be the teaching material for term 1 of the new school year in 2006, leaving time for the staff to

concentrate on other school decisions. However, during these six weeks, only one CLE was written which reflected the significant time taken by staff to work out how to accommodate all the learning components in the CLE. This meant that additional CLEs now needed to be planned during term 1, 2006, which caused concern and anticipated stress from two LAs.

All LAs noted and appreciated the Diocesan Education Office's professional and financial commitment to support the delivery of the new school model, generally not afforded to new staff of traditional Diocesan schools. However, they maintained the most pressing challenge once the school was operational, and one that produced the most anxiety, was the integrated curriculum. Only one of the total staff came from a primary teaching background where an integrated curriculum was taught and the remaining LAs reported having limited experience in this area. Researchers in their study of new schools have identified adequate time for staff as an issue challenging their sustainability (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). The school's leadership team acknowledged this in 2005 during the planning phase and made provisions for an allocated regular time in the learning timetable for staff, in small cross-curricula teams, to prepare each CLE. This structure recognised and supported the LAs' needs to have daily opportunities to reflect, discuss and share the various KLA syllabus content and outcomes. The leadership team's decision for allocating regular CLE planning time also provided a structure for staff to ensure the integrity of syllabus integration and learning outcome accountabilities. This was achieved by each of the LAs in the small cross-curriculum collaborative teams, which had the responsibility to plan each CLE as well as teach and assess students' learning outcomes. Planning was intensely collaborative as the LAs were required to negotiate the curriculum with other team members, while maintaining the integrity of their own subject area. This was unlike any approach to teaching that the LAs had experienced and required enormous mental energies as they navigated this process on a daily basis.

The inclusion of SEL, as one of the prescribed components to address in each CLE, was considered in principle as an innovative addition to the curriculum. LAs acknowledged and affirmed researchers' findings of the importance of facilitating students' social and emotional development (Elias et al., 1997; Zins et al., 2004). In their previous schools the approach to teaching social and emotional skills had been fragmented, often relegated to others to address as these are prescribed elements of the Personal Development, Health

and Physical Education syllabus such as decision-making, conflict resolution and assertiveness training in drug and sex education (NSW Board of Studies, 2003). At other times, social and emotional competencies had been included in school Pastoral Care initiatives such as school retreats focused on self-awareness, building relationships, teamwork, empathy and resilience or social justice activities advocating supporting the disadvantaged. Moreover, students identified as ‘at-risk’ with poor social and emotional development had access to booster training or were given opportunities at school to develop their knowledge and skills for managing their emotions and personal relationships. To participate, students ‘at-risk’ have traditionally been withdrawn from mainstream classes and afforded small group or one-to-one learning and support. However, the focus of SEL, as defined in this study, was based on prevention which meant explicitly planning and teaching social and emotional competencies, integrated with all other syllabi but above all relevant to the needs and development of the students. The SEL components in this context were to be identified and explicitly taught to students to enhance the CLE under study. Despite the compelling empirical research from neuroscience and emotional intelligence demonstrating the positive impact of embedding SEL into school curriculum (MindMatters, 2007; Zins et al., 2004), it largely remained an elusive learning and teaching construct at this school.

Despite the curriculum challenges of SEL the school’s leadership team was strategic in their decision to prioritise and provide appropriate effective school structures and processes that supported staff not only with the integrated curriculum but also to build supportive relationships and a positive school climate.

Social and emotional learning in the integrated curriculum

Undoubtedly, but not unexpectedly, the most significant challenge the LAs experienced and reported was their mastery of the cross-curriculum approach to learning and teaching. Addressing all components of the learning and teaching paradigm, especially SEL, required significantly more planning time than previously anticipated. A LA in the study reported this not because he or the general staff did not believe in the SEL construct but because he felt frenetic most days just making sure that all outcomes mandated in each syllabus selected were included in the CLE and little time remained for addressing SEL. Other SEL issues named by the LAs were the lack of direction from what was required. The SEL links were more implicit than

explicitly stated in the CLEs although occasionally the theme of the unit encouraged the learning and teaching of social and emotional competencies. Failure to address these issues meant that as an innovation, SEL was going to struggle to survive in the curriculum despite providing support structures and process. In addition to these pressures, the LAs were aware that the NSW Board of Studies would be closely monitoring the compilation of mandated syllabus hours assigned in the CLE to ensure curriculum fidelity and accountability. By default, this imperative took priority over other non-mandated initiatives such as SEL.

The leadership team monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of the structures and processes with staff extending the learning structures to include iCLE (independent Connected Learning Experience) and Learning to Learn time. In part, iCEL time was allocated to staff and students giving additional time to complete their CLE work at the end of the day whereby LAs now adept and knowledgeable about the content of other subject disciplines assisted students to complete their work. Learning to Learn was structured as an ongoing program of study that ran alongside the integrated curriculum proper and focused on teaching thinking skills and generic skills that are commonly utilised across the curriculum and in social and emotional learning. Staff and students attended two, 45-minute sessions of L2L each week and the skills were directly linked to the CLE under study. The iCLE and Learning to Learn structures enhanced the existing CLE structure by acknowledging that both staff and students required additional time and support to achieve prescribed outcomes.

After the staff had been working with the CLE, iCLE and Learning to Learn structures for 12 months, all LAs recounted more positive experiences with CLE preparation and implementation compared to their similar experiences reported in their first interviews. Their experiences from the first year of the school's establishment led to a broadening familiarity with other subject disciplines, which contributed, to robust discussion and easier collaboration in their small planning and teaching teams. Despite the LAs' growing satisfaction and participation with the prescribed learning and teaching process, the SEL construct remained a difficult component in the cross-curricula paradigm to address.

Social and emotional learning in the Learning Advisory Program

By design, the integrated curriculum was not the only avenue through which staff at Cathedral College was able to teach social and emotional competencies. The school's Learning Advisory Program was structured for staff to respond to students' learning, relational and pastoral needs. Accumulated seminal studies have demonstrated the importance of developing quality relationships between students and staff. The impact of such relationships contributed to building a positive school climate that was subsequently considered psychologically and physically safe for all key stakeholders (Fuller, 2001; Rigby, 2004; Wang et al., 2013). Moreover, research studies have found that attachment to school and the resilience of students was enhanced when they believe that a teacher cared about them, respected them as individuals and as a learner, listened with empathy and understanding, regarded them and their issues seriously and was able to offer help and advice where appropriate (Bernard et al., 2007; Carr-Gregg, 2000; Fuller, 2001; Noble & McGrath, 2008; Osterman, 2000). Attending to the development of students' SEL competencies in the Learning Advisory Program provided additional opportunities to identify and address skill deficits. Two structures in the Learning Advisory Program were therefore designed to support the work of the LA to develop each student's social and emotional competencies in their groups. Moreover, these structures provided regular opportunities for the LA to act as role models and mentors for students in their application of SEL skills grew through their adolescent years and attributed to real-life situations.

The first structure, the *Learning Circle* was central to providing students and staff with opportunities to connect with each other and build a sense of belonging important to wellbeing (Bernard et al., 2007; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The structure of the Learning Circle, a small group approach of staff and students encouraged the development of positive reciprocity as students are supported and affirmed by their peers, and accept support and affirmation from others. The leadership team and staff's decision to create this structure enabled them to support students to recognise and attend to their academic, social and emotional competencies. LAs met daily with their group, which established a positive, professional rapport with each person and enabled them to experience a sense of belonging and connectedness with others within their Learning Circle. The Learning Circle met for 10 minutes at the beginning of each day in the Learning Circle Space for prayer and daily notices and again for 40 minutes at the end of each day where LAs supported students in iCLE time to complete work from their previous CLE lesson.

The second strategic structure to promote SEL in the Learning Advisory Program came from the Dialogues for Learning where the goal of LAs was to empower students to take responsibility for their academic and social and emotional growth. The Learning Circle Advisor met with each student and reflected and recorded on three aspects of school: CLE learning, personal responsibility and social responsibility including their contribution to school life. Importantly, the role of the LA in the Dialogues for Learning was stressed as one of 'dialogue' that was premised on the understanding that the extensive two-way conversation assisted students and staff to set sustainable goals for the term. To achieve these goals, the LA and student agreed on appropriate strategies to achieve desired learning, social or personal objectives. LAs, for example, motivated the student to experiment and reflect on their learning journey; helped tease out issues and concerns; shared effective or alternative strategies; highlighted a range of views and perspectives; helped set short and long term goals; identified steps towards success; and challenged and restructured negative or distorted thinking. For the LAs, such timetabled opportunities provided an avenue for developing the students' social, emotional and academic competencies.

Unlike the challenges to identify and plan specific social and emotional skills in each CLE, LAs agreed that such SEL opportunities aligned more naturally in the Learning Circle and Dialogue for Learning structures. These were allocated pastoral times where the dialogue was focused on empowering students to take responsibility for the academic and social and emotional growth. The individual 15 minutes assigned to each student twice a term was explicitly designed so that the student in their Dialogue for Learning had a voice to express their response to the curriculum and their learning, identified their strengths and weaknesses and decisions about the learning, understanding of social and emotional learning and their relationship with others. This structure was ideal for LAs who scrutinised their students' attitudes and beliefs, relationships with others and school, which were foundational to academic performance and school success. The LAs experienced more success developing their students' social and emotional competencies through the structures and processes of the Learning Advisory Program rather than through the curriculum delivery.

Social and emotional and the online database

Margolis (2005) and Nicholas (2008) noted that consideration and support for the staff in a new school was another essential characteristic of a successful new school. By providing adequate resources staff were able to focus more effectively on their learning and teaching endeavours. In this new school, the Diocesan Education Office, in consultation with the school leadership team, commissioned a database called the *Programing, Assessing and Reporting Online Tool* (PAROT) to guide staff and document the learning, curriculum implementation and pastoral care of students. Although PAROT was expected to be operational during the first year, in reality there were persistent technical problems that were barriers for staff recording students' *Dialogues for Learning* and the integrated CLEs. All LAs in the study commented on the challenges and continual frustrations of the poor functionality of the database. In PAROT, tags were assigned to the expected outcomes of all components of the CLEs including SEL. However, as there were significant problems with PAROT over the two years of the study, staff used it irregularly. If PAROT had been operational, staff would have been guided through the SEL CLE planning and assessment outcomes as these tags were listed at the front of all other components of the CLEs. Moreover, PAROT did not allow for documenting the outcomes of students' *Dialogues for Learning* sessions where SEL was at least being addressed through these structures.

Nonetheless, the concerted effort by the Diocesan Education Office and the school's leadership team to support staff with a process for monitoring and recording students' social and emotional learning outcomes, its lack of functionality dampened the staff's interest and efforts. All Phase 3 and 4 LAs in their interviews commented optimistically that, when functional, PAROT would be a valuable tool for mapping and recording SEL in the integrated curriculum and Learning Advisory Program.

In summary, all LAs in this study reported the school structures designed to deliver an innovative curriculum and to build a positive school culture had mixed success. There were multiple structures created so that among other expectations, SEL was addressed through curriculum and pastoral structures and processes. The planning and teaching of social and emotional learning in the daily CLEs, reinforced with their LA during small group iCLE or L2L time was less successful than individual time spent with each student in their Learning Circle and Dialogues for Learning time. It was evident that staff agreement on the new

school's vision and philosophy and the provision of relevant structures and processes for staff to build students social and emotional competencies did not guarantee fidelity of SEL implementation.

Arising from the findings, a number of recommendations for practice are evident. School organisational structures should provide the framework to support staff with their daily SEL interactions with students. There should be regular timetabled opportunities that enable SEL to be addressed, a scaffold of questions to support staff in this process and a discussion and agreement on how and what to assess in a student's social and emotional development. It is critical that staff understands the SEL competencies, are committed and well prepared prior to SEL implementation within the cross-curriculum. A review of staff readiness to teach SEL, available and appropriate materials and the developmental phase of the student cohort should be integral to the planning process. Instead of implementing SEL across the whole school in an integrated manner, an option would be to conduct and monitor a pilot study where academic learning is connected to SEL in meaningful ways. The study would be monitored and evaluated for learning and personal outcomes. This gradual introduction of SEL, if successful, would be more likely to be accepted by other staff to become a regular component the academic program.

LEARNING ADVISORS' CONFIDENCE AND CAPACITY

The confidence and capacity of staff in a new school to embrace an innovation such as SEL was critical to its successful implementation and future sustainability. Hattie (2005, 2009) confirmed through his meta-analysis study that the greatest impact on student achievement was the quality of the teacher. Their teaching capacity and confidence was affected by their perception of their abilities, skills, expertise and motivations, which in turn directed their efforts toward implementing the school vision or initiative. The challenge for LAs in this study also reflected this position. Although all but one of the LAs throughout all Phases of the study believed they possessed the knowledge, skills and aptitude to teach social and emotional learning in a cross-curriculum approach to learning, their knowledge and expertise in a new area of learning was unclear.

There was an assumption by the Diocesan Education Officers that the school's LAs, despite their lack of experience teaching an integrated curriculum, would build sufficient capacity and knowledge given preparation time and support to deliver the curriculum. However, the theory and reality were very different.

Notwithstanding the staff's initial enthusiasm, input from the Diocesan Education Officers and the allotted six weeks planning time, the LAs' pedagogical content knowledge of social and emotional learning was minimal. There was nominal time allocated to explore the components of SEL, which resulted in a superficial understanding of the construct. Instead time and energy was spent on LAs as they developed essential understandings about each syllabus that would form the cross-curricula curriculum. During the first two years of the school's operation this continued. The priority for LAs in the study was to ensure the NSW Board of Studies curriculum requirements were accounted for, however, as SEL was a non-mandatory component from the Board it slipped from the curriculum radar in the planning process. The times when SEL was included in a CLE there was a natural alignment with the content under study such as the Religious Education or PDHPE syllabi. The intention from the Diocesan Education Office was for staff to integrate all components from the CLE Framework in each CLE. However, without a SEL syllabus or any curriculum direction, developing students' social and emotional competencies was left to the various interpretations and interest of each CLE planning team.

Several researchers offered explanations about teachers' social and emotional learning efficacy, which may have accounted for the variance of the LAs as they implemented the SEL curriculum. Bandura (1997) suggested that teachers' confidence in their capacity to bring about desired learning outcomes was reflected through their experiences of mastery. In other words it was the LAs' perceptions of their teaching experiences and/or observations of others being successful that influenced their beliefs about their competence to work towards mastery of teaching skills. With sporadic attention given to the SEL component of each CLE it was not surprising the LAs did not have such experiences to develop their knowledge and competencies around the SEL construct. However, this was understandable in the context of managing the complexities, expectations and accountabilities of the external and internal pressures of starting a new school (Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). There was a discrepancy between the LAs' beliefs about their competency to teach SEL in the classroom and the variable efforts witnessed through their interview responses. The extent of the decline of the LAs' efficacy was evidenced by their actions and conversations as they transitioned from the establishment phase to the development phase of the school. One explanation for this decline may have been related to LAs' reality check as they engaged in the

complexity and pressures of planning and teaching all components of the CLE Framework. Goddard, Hoy and Hoy, (2000), Labone (2004) and Wheatley (2005) suggested that the extent of the shift in teacher efficacy as they transitioned into new contexts was in part dependent on the level of administrative support. The greater the support for staff, the researchers noted, the greater the buffer against wavering staff confidence to persevere with the innovation.

There was a strong response from the majority of LAs that the support they needed to teach the components of SEL was related to the absence of a prescribed curriculum that clearly set out the instructional design including a scope and sequence with appropriate assessments. The Diocesan Education Office's initial goal of integrating social and emotional learning into the curriculum was to be flexible rather than prescribed, aligned with the CLE under study and the developmental needs of the students in the class and not necessarily specified by a set curriculum. The LAs continual request for SEL curriculum support reflected their knowledge and skills were still at the awareness stage on a continuum between novice and expert. It was logical, then, that the LAs' limited experience of SEL necessitated a reliance on prescribed SEL material, as they had not gained mastery of the construct, which would have allowed for the flexible delivery within the integrated curriculum.

Although the Diocesan Education Officer provided the new school staff with SEL guidelines and 'draft' support materials in 2005, it was limited in scope and sequence. The SEL curriculum support needed once the school was operational, however, was infrequent so LAs were left to find and interpret their own SEL links with other syllabi, the micro-skills and content to teach. There were efforts over the two years of the study by LAs and Leaders, however, without a SEL curriculum like other KLA curricula to guide implementation it became less of a priority. Adding to this challenge and identified by Nicholas (2008) was the changing dynamics of new incoming staff of 2007 who were also required to teach the SEL component in each CLE. New staff members did not have the benefit of the early discussions with the foundation staff on the principles that underpinned the cross-curricula paradigm or the exposure, albeit brief, to the SEL research on personal and educational outcomes for students. LAs commented on this during their Phase 4 interviews and noted that new staff did not demonstrate the same interest, understanding or commitment to embedding the SEL within each CLE. Without leadership and a strong voice among staff as an advocate for

SEL, a common language to progress a professional conversation around the construct, reliance on prescribed material SEL became less important in each CLE.

The disparate commitment amongst staff to address SEL and their dependence on prescribed curriculum material may also have accounted for varying level staff ownership for the SEL in the CLE Framework. After all, the initial decision about SEL component as part of the school learning and teaching principles was from the Diocesan Education Office, in absentia from the school staff. This reflected Eastabrook and Fullan's (1977) and Nicholas' (2008) studies of new schools where they argued that although forward planning by education authorities was operationally essential, in terms of sustainability, planning by others naturally brought into question the subsequent level of staff ownership for those decisions. It was therefore vital for successful implementation and sustainability of an innovation such as SEL, that it had the full and ongoing commitment not only of the foundation staff but importantly the incoming staff.

Whilst all LAs were less confident in addressing SEL in the integrated curriculum through the CLE units of work, they reported feeling more comfortable and confident in developing social and emotional competencies with students during the Learning Advisory Program. One LA suggested that it felt more natural to unpack the micro-skills of SEL when dialoguing informally or when working with students pastorally. The social, emotional and academic growth was the focus of these sessions. However, a number of the general staff requested external Diocesan support and input on how to sustain a conversation with a student when dealing with more personal social and emotional issues, which reflected a limited capacity of some to conduct these sessions effectively.

It was apparent in the study that there was a diverse range of the LAs' knowledge and skills of their own social and emotional competencies. Hattie (2005, 2009) found that although curriculum content knowledge was important in the teaching and learning process, what was more significant and made a difference to student achievement was the pedagogy or the way in which teachers utilised this knowledge. Pursuant to Hattie's findings, therefore, LAs must have at *least* the curriculum content knowledge of SEL but there must also be mastery or expertise so that LAs adapted and applied their knowledge and skills to multiple situations for themselves and their students. Unless LAs were prepared to build their SEL knowledge and skills

thereby moving through the continuum of competency (Kotter, 2007), as an innovation, SEL remained a challenge for development and sustainability.

Seminal studies advocated teacher efficacy as a major predictor of their competence and commitment to teach (Goddard et al., 2000; Labone, 2004; Wheatley, 2005). Although teacher efficacy was an important contributor to the implementation of a new school's learning agenda, it was the collective efficacy of staff that would build a sustainable learning culture over time. Hoy and Miskel (2008) argued it was essential that staff were committed and shared their beliefs, which over time bound them together and formed the foundation for a distinctive school culture. The authors maintained that collective efficacy was associated with the tasks, level of effort persistence, shared thoughts, stress levels and achievement of groups within the school. The same issues of collective capacity and commitment of staff at Cathedral College as a new school were just as evident. The staff continually worked on building their unique school culture but it was important that the leadership team attended to strategically developing the staff's collective efficacy as this in turn broadened the school's internal capacity to sustain their innovative practices and fulfil their educational mission.

The current research recommends that staff be provided with multiple opportunities to learn about the depth of SEL and its application to learning and personal outcomes. As such, effective academic and social and emotional instruction is enhanced by well-planned, timely and relevant professional development for staff. The needs of staff should be reviewed to determine the content level of SEL and style of delivery so that they have various approaches to build their SEL knowledge and skills to mastery. As with any new learning, understanding and application of the SEL construct will take time. The expectations from the leadership team need to take into account the limited SEL knowledge and support adjustments until the individual and collective capacity of the staff is attained. Professional development should provide the theory of child development and emotional intelligence, the SEL Core Competencies (CASEL, 2000) and a common language for staff to discuss and plan units of work for students or in their daily interactions. Professional development should explicitly target the development of the staff's social and emotional competencies so that modelling, teaching, practising and reinforcing are possible when working with students.

LEADERSHIP AND IMPLEMENTTION OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Central to the success of new schools was the capacity and effectiveness of the staff in leadership positions. Increasingly, empirical evidence demonstrated the link between the quality of school leadership with the quality of learning and teaching, the motivation of teachers and the culture of the school (Fullan, 2001; Hopkins, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2000; West, Jackson, Harris, & Hopkins, 2000). A general consensus amongst researchers regardless of the style of leadership, found those holding these positions should demonstrate a deliberate determination and ongoing commitment to steer school staff towards the goals set out in their vision and ideologies (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Nicholas, 2008). Strong leadership was therefore critical in new schools, or schools aiming for improvement, so as to support staff to successfully navigate the myriad of challenges presented to achieving sustainable implementation. The importance of effective leadership at Cathedral College was also endorsed in this study.

The planning and development of this new school and its mandated innovated curriculum required a model of school leadership that demonstrated a deep knowledge and understanding of the multiplicities, complexities and contextual subtleties of a new school and its curriculum in the twenty-first century (Mulford, 2008). Although there was a leadership structure at Cathedral College including the principal and a small team of Leaders responsible for the areas of Learning and Teaching, Student Growth and Learning, Missions and Administration (non-educational), the delegation of communication and decision-making was also encouraged and distributed amongst all staff. In theory, this reflected a lateral rather than hierarchical leadership structure with all staff actively responsible for the function of the school. In practice, however, LAs indicated that what they needed in the early phase of the school's development was a top-down or instructional style of leadership whereby they received explicit guidance and professional support from the leadership team on the 'what and how' to address the SEL component of the integrated curriculum. Consequently, Hallinger (2007) recommended a new school in the twenty-first century would benefit from the flexibility of an integrative model of leadership where those responsible and with the authority, adjusted the style of their leadership to adapt to the different needs of the school and staff at the different stages of development. A new school differed widely in terms of the needs and resources that were essential for beginning schools and as such the type of leadership necessitated a different approach to move staff forward

through to sustainable practices. In reality the staff at a new school depended on both explicit instruction and direction from the leadership team to achieve the set school goals. Instructional leadership was required to make decisions on organising and coordinating appropriate structures and processes in order to get the new school established (Fullan, 2002; Mulford, 2008). An integrative model of leadership (instructional, transformational and distributive) was particularly pertinent to Cathedral College in its first two years. When LAs struggled with synthesising the components of social and emotional learning in each CLE, leadership, high expectations and direct instruction were needed and warranted.

Despite their interest, the reported difficulties from the LAs to plan the SEL component in the integrated curriculum, was understandable. The LAs were unfamiliar with the complexities of planning a cross-curriculum delivery of learning and teaching and at the same time were also expected to adapt to multiple new structures and processes that supported its delivery. The staff experienced significant stressors and challenges common in the establishment phase of a new school, which must be managed by leadership and management. In the first year of the study, the LAs lamented on their limited knowledge of content and teaching skills in addressing SEL but reiterated their desire to persevere with the construct. A number of LAs expressed their expectation that this was the responsibility of the Leader of Student Growth and Learning to lead all aspects of student wellbeing including that of SEL. There was an assumption that this Leader would provide the general staff with professional direction and support that would assist them in planning each integrated unit of work, however, this was a significant challenge for the leader. The Leader of Student Growth and Learning endeavoured to up-skill herself by accessing SEL resources from the Diocesan Education Office and other available opportunities so as to build her own understanding and to fulfil the expectation of other staff to lead this part of the curriculum. This was not an easy task and she reflected on the immense challenge this proved to be with all the other responsibilities allocated to her role. Although genuinely interested in the SEL concept, the leader noted her lack of expertise and confidence in providing staff with the necessary input they needed to ensure it was appropriately integrated into each CLE. Other LAs acknowledged the effort of the Leader of Student Growth and Learning to be the referral point, however, without specific instructional leadership including direction, support, intervention and monitoring

of social and emotional learning SEL in learning space practices, the staff was challenged to build their individual and collective efficacy of each CLE planning team.

The role of leadership in educational settings is complex which was reflected in the emerging dilemmas the Leaders in the school encountered. The challenge of meeting external and internal pressures and expectation was documented in the new schools literature as having the capacity to undermine the successful implementation and sustainability of the school's educational mission (Bulkely & Fisler, 2003; Leonard, 2002; Loveless & Jasin, 1998; Nicholas, 2008; Tubin, 2008 cited in Tubin, & Ofek-Regev, 2010). On one hand, there were pressures of external curriculum accountabilities from the state educational systems (NSW Board of Studies,) and expectations from the Diocesan Education Office to successfully implement the integrated curriculum with fidelity. Moreover, the leaders of the school were expected to have the capacities to lead and sustain this focus. Their appointments subsumed that they were equipped with the necessary leadership skills to manage emerging tasks in each of their areas of responsibility. Added to this pressure was the internal expectations from the principal and the general staff that the Leader of Student Growth and Learning in particular held the responsibility for providing the necessary guidance and social and emotional resources so that they, in turn, could deliver the integrated curriculum as proposed. On the other hand, the Leader of Student Growth and Learning did have leadership skills but experienced the same minimal professional input as all other staff, had limited knowledge and expertise and had the responsibility of student wellbeing and multiple school agendas. This Leader had not developed her knowledge of the essential components of SEL let alone had the confidence to instruct and provide resources for others as to how this might translate into the daily curriculum. The responsibility for the delivery of the learning and teaching paraadigm was then delegated in 2008 to the Leader of Learning and Teaching.

Although all staff were considered 'leaders of learning' and responsible for teaching all components of the curriculum delivery, it was unreasonable to expect that they had acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to address students' social and emotional competencies without ongoing professional learning and professional support. This will be further discussed under the professional learning section later in this chapter. With no one person leading the vision of SEL in the integrated curriculum, the educational intent was compromised, weakened and liable to fail. Despite the best intentions of the Cathedral College Leaders

and LAs in the study to ensure social and emotional learning gained its regular place in the integrated curriculum it was less successful than in its application in the Learning Advisory Program. Harris et al. (2008) importantly noted that schools such as Cathedral College supporting innovation should be considered at high risk of reverting to their past traditional educational practices if there was not significant trust from all stakeholders to actively participate and uphold their determined educational mission.

It was not enough to have general staff consensus about the school's predetermined vision and philosophy, as this did not guarantee 'buy-in' or commitment to its implementation. Strong leadership was another key feature common to new schools research and critical in managing the ever-present internal and external pressures and expectations (Nicholas, 2008). It was incumbent upon the leaders at Cathedral College to direct, monitor, intervene and evaluate what was working or not in each component mandated in the learning and teaching principles to ensure it is possible for staff to teach with fidelity.

Researchers identified the lack of allocated time assigned to staff as having a negative impact on the successful innovation of a new school (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). However, the leadership team at Cathedral College recognised this as an issue of implementation and sustainability and deliberately timetabled in regular CLE planning time and school processes for collaborative planning, open dialogue and collegial support. Nicholas (2008) reported in her study of new schools that collaborative and open decision-making and communication processes were essential for the foundation staff as routines and strategic decisions had to be made to ensure that the school developed functionally. In essence, the leadership team at Cathedral College did provide the necessary time, structures and processes to enable SEL to be addressed through both the curriculum and the Learning Advisory Program, which staff successfully attended and collaborated upon. However, it is what the LAs brought with them in their planning teams or as a staff in terms of their professional and social and emotional competencies that determined the level of success in achieving the SEL goal.

The leadership team's ability to connect with staff, and enlist their active support and participation was identified through a decade of research as a predicator of success in implementing new initiatives (Leithwood et al., 2004). To embed the SEL construct in the school's ethos and culture it required the

principal's direction and continuous public support from the leadership team to all key stakeholders of its inclusion in the cross-curricula paradigm and the Learning Advisory Program.

Outcomes of the research suggest further recommendations for practice. To guide a new school through the challenges posed by an increasingly complex environment, the school leadership team must have a clear vision and commitment to lead, challenge and support staff in achieving and sustaining the educational mission. Leaders should be intimate with the context of the new school and its challenges. It is recommended the leadership team be flexible with their style of management recognising when staff need direction and instruction or when it is of value to encourage a distributive manner of leading where consultation and working with others to create a shared sense of purpose and direction is the goal. The staff looked towards the leadership team to support their endeavours and as such there is the need to publically and privately model and support new school initiatives. The role of the leadership team in a new school cannot be underestimated. Leaders need to spend significant time in developing, monitoring and evaluation the progress of a new school development. Specific attention by leaders should be on strengthening the school culture, modifying structures, building collaborative processes, staff relationships and capacity and managing the school environment so that it is both functional and effective in achieving its educational goals.

STAFF CHALLENGES

Common in the new school literature are the internal and external hurdles the staff encounter both as the school develops and the sustainability of its vision and philosophy so eagerly embraced in the beginning.

LAs in this study identified the following issues as impacting on the implementation of SEL:

- a. Professional learning
- b. Stressors and change management
- c. Sustainability of the SEL initiative

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the many challenges for new schools with innovations is to develop the staff learning so that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their work (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1997; Fink,

2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). For the innovation of SEL at Cathedral College, the issue of professional learning was a critical one that needed to be addressed. Professional and personal learning is the primary vehicle that schools utilise to equip them with opportunities for continuous learning as this improves their knowledge and skills over time. Essentially this meant that LAs had not only developed a deep understanding of the methodology and content of social and emotional learning but also had the same level of understanding about the integrative theory of emotional intelligence and neurocognitive development that underpinned the philosophy and application of SEL in the school setting.

The LAs in the study declared a strong desire during all phases of the study for the opportunity for professional learning to better understand the social and emotional learning construct. They expressed their commitment to all components stemming from the agreed learning and teaching principles but also acknowledged at each phase of the study that they needed to learn more about SEL if they were to feel confident to teach it to students. At the end point of the study, two LAs regarded SEL as a component of the cross-curriculum that was sometimes included as part of the CLE. The consensus amongst all the LAs including the school's Leaders was that professional learning and support was essential if they were to implement the innovation with fidelity. There was a clear 'readiness' from the LAs to undertake professional learning of SEL. However, the responsibility for organising the type and amount of professional development remained with the leadership team and reflected the lesser priority assigned within the school's learning and teaching agenda. For example, the explicit knowledge and skills for planning and implementing SEL in an integrated curriculum was new for all those in the study. Despite this natural deficit, there was limited professional input on the social and emotional learning construct for the foundation staff. The first was a 40 minute presentation prior to the school beginning and the second, during the second year of implementation was 30 minutes at a general staff meeting to discuss SEL strategies for LAs help their students navigate their conversations during their Dialogues for Learning time. A handout resource was given to the staff, which set out processes and strategies to engage students in their planning and discussion on their challenges and strategies to achieve their goals in their academic learning and their personal and social responsibilities at school and beyond. However, there was little time for discussions with staff on both occasions and the interpretation and implementation of SEL was left to each LA's discretion.

Professional learning such as this did little to develop staff from novice to expert or from individual to collective capacity sharing the common responsibility of adopting the SEL component in the innovative curriculum. The request for professional learning was a reaction to staff stressors at that time rather than a planned systematic approach to the needs of the staff. Desimone (2009) posited a core set of features of effective professional learning and stressed the most important was that of teacher learning. This was evident in this study as LAs were challenged with simply building the early stages of their SEL knowledge. Without the LAs' knowledge of the breadth and depth of SEL and the ability to transfer this knowledge and skills into each CLE, its implementation was questionable. Clarke (2005) suggested, that 'true learning happens only when what is to be learned is relevant to the learner's experience' (p. 4). The process of learning for teachers was essentially no different to that of their students in that the professional learning needs to be relevant to teachers' lives and with issues and questions that concern them. Social and emotional competencies and learning were based on the same principles for staff as for students. If LAs had responsibility for actively teaching, modelling and practising these competencies it stood to reason that they also needed to understand and have developed their own social and emotional competencies to be able to recognise and support students in this area.

It was paramount that the school's leadership team identified and created timely SEL professional learning opportunities for staff. After all, teachers should not be expected to adapt to new practices if they were not afforded the opportunity to learn new and meaningful practices to add to their teaching skill set. Moreover, Hinde (2004) reiterated that unless the staff conceptualised and found relevance for themselves with the SEL construct, they would dismiss the importance of professional learning and the research that linked it to improved wellbeing and learning outcomes. Richmond (1997) postulated that teachers would adjust their pedagogy given support, time and meaningful professional learning experiences. Therefore, if SEL was to remain an acknowledged component of the learning and teaching paradigm and the Learning Advisory Program there should be ongoing professional learning opportunities for staff to collaborate with their colleagues and apply their learning in the multiple school settings.

Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) referred to design principles of professional learning that should be addressed to ensure effective teacher learning outcomes. The learning experience, the authors argued,

should be based on intensity, continuity and connected to their teaching practice; addressing the content (social and emotional competencies); aligned with the school's vision, philosophy and goals and ultimately build connected relationship among teachers thereby creating a professional learning community. The staff at Cathedral College worked hard to develop a professional learning community, however, social and emotional learning was rarely on the agenda for discussion and reflection. Although clear about their need for professional development, the LAs interviewed did not have opinions as to what method of delivery and what social and emotional content would be most relevant to them in order to build their SEL competencies. This was not unexpected as it was difficult for the LAs to ask for what they did not know they needed. It was at this stage of innovation development that the school sought access to an external expert to work with staff in the context of the school setting to support and inform their internal practice. The potential advantage of professional learning on-site was it created an opportunity for staff to discuss and learn from others, build their collective knowledge and skills thereby enhancing their capacity to teach social and emotional learning in the unique context of the curriculum and within the Learning Advisory program.

There were common barriers to accessing professional learning identified in the new schools research literature and evident in this study such as the competing school and curriculum endeavours, available time and the capacities of staff (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1997; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). These staff stressors are further elaborated in the next section of this chapter. However, the goal of the professional learning is premised on bringing about long-term changes in the staff's beliefs and actions thus contributing to the desired school culture. If through professional learning SEL was considered of value by staff in supporting student development and learning outcomes, its inclusion in the school setting would be a priority addressed.

For any innovation including that of establishing a new school, it is critical that the school's leadership team know, acknowledge and act on the staff's ongoing need for professional learning both at the beginning of the innovation and during the implementation and development phases.. Professional development is important at all phases of the innovation but if it is available inconsistently or without purpose, there will be limited measures of success. Failure to do so especially at the implementation phase will undermine any successful outcomes. However, with planned and meaningful professional development where staff engage with

professional learning, their insight and a deeper understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of SEL would help shape the LAs' confidence and expectations to influence their own practice both as individuals and as part of the learning teams.

STAFF STRESSORS AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

There was general consensus amongst researchers that in order to develop new curriculum ideas that contribute to student learning and at the same time ensure the effectiveness of the school organisation, all stakeholders must be both willing and committed to adapting to the change process (Fullan, 2002; Nicholas, 2008; Scharmer, 2007; Starr, 2007). The process of change was familiar to all school staff as they encountered it on a daily basis during their school experiences. Notwithstanding the normality of change, more often than not it was of the first-order or incremental kind where LAs' existing knowledge and skills permitted their adaptation to directives from either the Diocesan Education Office or the school's leadership team. This was exemplified by the LAs' compliance with new school policies and the school's operational procedures. The LAs at Cathedral College also were required to adapt to more challenging changes that transformed school practices ensuring they were aligned with the school's mission. The research literature on change suggested that second-order or fundamental change demanded a shift in a person's beliefs and attitudes, which was more open to resistance than incremental change (Fouts, 2003; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, 2004; O'Donnell, 2007).

The challenges experienced by staff as they adapted to the new school environment were evident, not so much with incremental changes such as timetabling, meetings and routines associated with early development and implementation but with the dynamics of fundamental change that required them to transform their understanding and action towards SEL. The LAs' knowledge and skills acquired from prior teaching experiences were readily adapted to teaching a mainstream curriculum, however, teaching in a new and innovative school required more fundamental shifts in their educational ideology for it to be successful. Discussions and decisions about the organisation and appropriate structures for the new school were implemented without too many challenges. However, situations where LAs were required to radically shift their thinking and to re-imagine and teach differently were the focus of their reporting during their interviews. The LAs were expected to process and action not only the innovation of SEL but also learn a

cross-curricula approach to learning and teaching and adapt to the continuous changes a new school naturally encounters. These are profound adjustments (second order) for LAs that required the same magnitude of support from both the school leaders and the Diocesan Education Office. Despite planning time been afforded to program SEL into the CLEs and organisational structures providing opportunities to explore the core competencies, the leadership team did not demonstrate well the seven responsibilities of second order change leadership noted by Marzano et al. (2005). What was difficult for the leadership team, was not the willingness or agreement to support SEL in both curriculum and organisational structures but with a new staff knowing who needed first or second change support and to tailor that support accordingly. Of course, amongst the leadership team itself was the same personal and professional variances as observed with the LAs and the same need for different levels of support in guiding and sustain the school's vision. It was for this reason that it was incumbent on the Diocesan Education Office to continue providing support reflective of the magnitude and need from the leadership team until mastery of SEL was achieved.

The LAs commented on the increasing pressures they experienced as they endeavoured to inculcate second order changes to regularly planning an integrated curriculum, peer teaching in open learning spaces with large numbers of students and workload stress. The LAs noted the pressures as being required to have some knowledge of all KLAs other than their own subject area, the unfamiliar construct of SEL and the skills to embed these in each CLE which diverted dramatically from their previous experiences and added to feeling overwhelmed with work. The cyclical demands of planning and teaching CLEs created ongoing stress and concerns about the various syllabi accountabilities and their existing knowledge and capacities to implement SEL in each CLE and within the Learning Advisory Program.

Planning time was also identified as a major issue for staff in new school development (Desimone, 2002; Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008). However, this was recognised by the Diocesan Education Office who appointed and financially supported the school's foundation LAs with critical planning time six weeks before the school began in 2005. Moreover, the leadership team at Cathedral College timetabled dedicated regular planning time in each learning cycle for small staff teams to prepare the cross-curriculum CLEs. Although these opportunities for planning time were appreciated by the LAs, the challenge was the immediate imperative to demonstrate confidence and abilities in both planning

and teaching the CLEs. For the LAs to work and teach in small cross-curriculum teams in each learning cycle was a dramatic departure from the staff's previous teaching experiences in traditional secondary schools.

The introduction of SEL into the school's curriculum rather than the Learning Advisory Program challenged LAs' professional and personal comfort. Each day, LAs were confronted with making pedagogical decisions about what and how to teach the CLEs, which meant their teaching philosophy, established values about education and teaching methods elevated and maintained their stress levels. In theory, the regular allocated time to meet with other LAs to share various KLA insights and successful pedagogical practices met one of the key features of new school implementation (Nicholas, 2008), however, in reality transferring SEL learning into their own teaching context remained challenging.

The practicalities of implementation SEL generally subverted the LAs' enthusiasm, motivation and engagement to persevere with its applications. It required the LAs to transform their thinking and practices to meet the school's contemporary learning and teaching paradigm. It appeared to be a disconcerting experience for many of the LAs, as it required them to radically change from thinking in past paradigms to become learners of new paradigms, particularly with the SEL construct. This was evident from the interviews as LAs discussed their beliefs and practices, their continual adjustment to meet the demands of the new school and also confronting their concerns about the accountabilities and effectiveness of the integrated curriculum and the Learning Advisory Program. The LAs were even less comfortable and confident when it came to planning and teaching the social and emotional learning component of the Framework as this was relatively unknown and not explicitly taught in an integrated mainstream curriculum. These reactions from the LAs in the study resonated with research findings on the dynamics of change in the education setting where the discomfort of complex second order changes confront existing beliefs and practices about the nature of learning and the learner (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005; Starr, 2008). It was not until the LAs had opportunities to explore come to understand new learnings that it was possible to translate into having adequate new knowledge and skills necessary for the new paradigm.

There were ongoing challenges for the LAs as they encountered the multiplicity of decisions needed to create a new school culture. Sustainability and success fundamentally relied on the leadership team managing the process of change and the inevitable level of emotions and responses from staff. No matter the level of change (incremental or fundamental) the reaction of staff determined the outcome. The central factor on how LAs responded depended not on simply learning something new such as SEL but on their discernment about the impact that the change had on their lives and perceived capacity to master and apply the new knowledge and skills. O'Donnell (2007) postulated that the level of change influenced the types of feelings staff experienced. The more complex the change and expectations attached to that change the higher the feelings of stress and perceived incapacity the staff experienced. Consequently, it was important that the Diocesan Education Office and the school's leadership team acknowledged and appreciated the possible affective or emotional factors that naturally operated as LAs adapted to the new school process.

The new consciousness Scharmer (2007) theorised in his presentation of the 'U Theory' suggested that transformational change occurred not from leaders knowing what to do or how to lead but with their conscious efforts in understanding and attending to the emotional and social drivers of their intentions and actions. It was the affective and social domains of each person that contributed to the various responses to complex change. In essence, just as SEL was important for student achievement and wellbeing, so it was equally important for adults. This, Scharmer (2007) referred to, was the 'invisible' or 'blind spot' of leadership rarely attuned to in the research but nonetheless a critical component of successful change.

What was fundamental for successful change in this school setting was for those with the authority to validate and accommodate the pervasive feelings and reactions from staff (Hopkins, 2001, 2004). For example, one of the LAs in the study experienced considerable stress and anxiety and demonstrated signs of 'burnout' in the first two years of implementation. The LA reported the pressure of staff expectation to lead and provide SEL resources so that teaching occurred without delay and at the same time held a leadership position that required significant time and energy. Fink (2000) and Nicholas (2008) noted in their studies of new schools that a common issue was that staff felt overwhelmed and suffered high levels of stress, which ultimately impacted on the successful new school implementation. Other LAs in this study, although not as overwhelmed, commented that the stress they experienced was associated with adapting to the complexities

of the new school's vision. The focus of planning time was on the cross-curriculum CLEs leaving little time for anything else; teaching the CLEs in open classrooms with up to ninety students at one time; and the pressures of the day-to-day expectations ensuring the school's functionality elevated some of the LAs' anxieties. This was also supported by empirical studies of new schools that located sources of stress and pressure for teachers to include among others, changes in the education system (Duignan, 2012; Hargreaves, 2003), time demands and workload issues (Eastabrook & Fullan, 1977; Fink, 2000; Margolis, 2005; Nicholas, 2008).

Fullan (2002) suggested that the way in which people adapted to change was intensely personal and inevitably linked to the effect it had on their lives. Change that produced interest and stimulation and impacted positively on their lives encouraged pleasure and commitment whereas too much pressure and perceived stress meant negative impact and subsequent turnover of staff (Nicholas, 2008). One of the Leaders, despite his commitment to the new school philosophy, reported frustration and professional dissatisfaction at the direction of the innovation of the new school during the early establishment phase. This Leader cited the reality of the day-to-day struggles, the direction of the leadership team, and expectations of his role and the implementation of the trans-disciplinary curriculum as reasons he resigned and returned to teaching in a traditional school with a traditional curriculum program. Notwithstanding the significant reported stressors of workload, exhaustion and burnout for LAs in the first two years of the school's implementation, the turnover of staff remained at just this one indicating a general satisfaction from the LAs with the direction of the school.

There were several reasons why the innovation of SEL generally failed to find an equal place on the curriculum agenda at Cathedral College. The change process associated with the innovation was significant for LAs as it represented the need for considerable efforts to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to teach social and emotional skills to students. However, staff directed their efforts to teaching and accounting for the mandatory requirements of each syllabus. The pressure of a visit from a member of the NSW Board of Studies checking how the different syllabi mandated hours were accounted for in the integrated curriculum and an annual review from the Diocesan Education Office in the first two years meant staff efforts were aligned to meeting these outcomes. The planning and teaching of social and emotional

competencies in every CLE became too challenging without a prescribed syllabus and /or resources to assist LAs organise their thinking and to develop their attitudes, knowledge and skills so they felt confident to teach others. Moreover, the absence of professional learning opportunities meant the LAs did not know the context of SEL, methods of integration and/or successful learning strategies. Researchers also endorsed this observation and proposed that the role of teaching relied strongly on the quality and capacity of the teacher to implement the innovation (Hargreaves, 2004; Hattie, 2005, 2009; Weare, 2000). Without the LAs' deep knowledge and capacity to teach SEL the level of successful implementation was limited.

Ever-expanding research studies recommend explicit characteristics essential to guide the implementation of a SEL in the curriculum (CASEL, 2005). The CASEL researchers suggested the success of implementing SEL depended on school's addressing critical aspects of the organisation. These included staff understanding the theory of child and cognitive psychology and emotional intelligence; the ability to teach and apply social and emotional skills and ethical values in daily life; a focus on building connections to school through caring and engaging classroom and school practices; the provision of developmentally and culturally appropriate SEL instruction; the development of a unifying framework through cross-curriculum instruction; the attention to specifically linking SEL skills to enhance academic learning; the openness to actively involve all stakeholders in the school community; the provision of organisational supports and structures that fostered success; and their attendance at relevant professional development and support that included ongoing evaluation and school improvement reviews. In view of these recommended guiding characteristics it was evident that the implementation of SEL at Cathedral College reflected the lack of staff readiness, knowledge and skills and the subsequent piece-meal approach in planning their CLEs.

The internal capacity of the school during the first two years of the school's development was understandably limited to what was necessary and achievable. Fullan (2007) suggests that not only was it essential for the school to have the benefit and guidance of external system support to implement and sustain an innovation, any change process that failed to account for the internal capacity, both individually and collectively for managing change within the school was bound to be less successful. The school's internal capacity for implementing SEL was confined to each LA's ability to guide its inclusion into the CLE unit of work. Nevertheless, without systematic and relevant SEL professional development support from both the

school leadership team and the Diocesan Education Office and failure to follow up in addressing the particular barriers to SEL implementation, it would remain a low priority for staff.

Cathedral College was ideally situated to develop their unique culture based on the core philosophy and values that underpinned the relationships between stakeholders, student wellbeing and the contemporary curriculum. To do so required the leadership team to direct and guide the necessary change in the LAs' thinking, attitudes and actions towards SEL. However, the management of the dynamic change process that accompanied the new school development must be directed and managed by those with the responsibility and knowledge of the staff implementing the innovation. There was a place for instructional leadership at Cathedral College as the LAs looked to the leadership team to influence the behaviours and attitudes of the general staff toward the SEL vision and goals.

It was evident that the number of functional changes at Cathedral College delayed the more complex adaptation of staff to planning and teaching SEL in the integrated curriculum. Fullan (2002) advocated that innovating selectively but with consistency was preferable to just having good ideas to implement in a new school. It may have been prudent for the school's leadership team to acknowledge staff's intense workload and ongoing stressors common to new schools and innovation and delay the inclusion of the social and emotional component of the learning and teaching curriculum until staff had mastered the cross-curriculum content of each CLE and could then manage new learnings. During the principal's phase 4 interview, she was adamant that SEL had a designated place in the curriculum and was not in jeopardy of exclusion despite the staff's haphazard approach to it in planning CLEs. To support the LAs with SEL implementation an alternate suggestion was to break SEL into simple and manageable elements to include in each CLE until the LAs were professionally comfortable teaching the whole SEL construct.

Successful change for the LAs such as SEL and the integrated curriculum was difficult to achieve when mandated or imposed upon from external sources. The ever-increasing demands of competing educational agendas meant that the staff at Cathedral College needed to feel confident that there were strong empirical reasons to address SEL both in the integrated curriculum and throughout the Learning Advisory Program. When the LAs had evidence and believed that SEL promoted academic achievement and also developed

students for twenty-first century learning and living they were more likely to act as their own change agent, relinquishing old curriculum ideas and integrate the new SEL construct within their teaching practices.

Time in a new school was limited, learning and student wellbeing accountabilities many and LAs' energies finite so that effectively managing the staff through change process was critical. As an innovation, SEL would be most successful when the leadership team and the staff of Cathedral College had ownership of the nature, extent and control of change process to support the cross-curricula delivery of learning and the Learning Advisory Program rather than complying with external expectations. Ultimately, at Cathedral College, the changes both incremental and transformational change took time to implement which was unique to the issues and development of the school. The pressing challenges of staff stressors, levels of readiness, buy-in and capacities, temperaments and attitudes all contributed to creating opportunities for the leadership team to provide open and honest dialogue with staff with the aim of cooperatively working towards the resolution of these issues so that all stakeholders in the school community benefit.

INNOVATION SUSTAINABILITY

The goal of a new school innovation was to sustain effective educational practices, not be driven by external accountabilities. Although the LAs' commitment, attitudes and actions supported the external accountabilities, it was maximising learning and wellbeing benefits for all students that underpinned Cathedral College's mission. This required strong and consistent leadership with continual attention with staff to the direction of the school's vision and philosophy (Nicholas, 2008). Another noted key element of new school characteristics, therefore, was the ability of the whole staff to build their individual and collective capacities to develop the school's culture and to sustain practices that supported the school's new vision and philosophy (Fink, 2000; Hargreaves, 2004). Whilst all the LAs at Cathedral College enthusiastically shared their commitment to the SEL innovation, turning it into reality remained a challenge of compromise and negotiation. Successful innovation programs usually have very well defined and specific goals with measurable outcomes (CASEL, 2002, 2005). This was not the case with the SEL component in each CLE. Consequently, the SEL innovation appeared fragmented and delivered, not as intended, in an integrated curriculum manner on a regular basis. However, the LAs found opportunities for developing students' social

and emotional competencies through the timetable Learning Advisory Program and the structures that supported the implementation.

There were pressures for the leadership team and the staff, establishing and developing Cathedral College, which demanded significant personal and professional time and energies to continually negotiate, make decisions and create the desired school culture. Although teaching SEL was agreed to by staff and written into the school's learning and teaching principles there was minimal directed reflection and evaluation of its implementation. Nicholas (2008) stressed that it was a critical element of a new school design for the leadership team to ensure there were school mechanisms for continual feedback from staff about the school processes and outcomes. Although there were school processes for open dialogue and negotiation about other school issues there was only token time allotted for staff reflection and discussion of the successes and barriers to SEL. Without the regular opportunity for staff to reflect and evaluate SEL and the guidance and direction from the leadership team ensuring SEL was accounted for in each CLE design, it was reasonable to expect that the SEL construct remain an elusive component of the integrated units of work. Until SEL was viewed as having equal parity to other KLAS' content, the staff given the necessary personal and professional learning support to build the school's internal capacity, specific time given for SEL planning it remained a challenge to embed it in the school's culture and practices.

This research capitalised on the unique opportunity provided by the Diocesan Education Office to explore the feasibility of an innovative curriculum that is extended to include the explicit instruction of SEL in a new Catholic secondary school. The experiences of the staff at Cathedral College endorsed earlier research on the barriers and issues associated with establishing and sustaining new schools. There was an unavoidable compromise between what the Diocesan Education Office advocated for Cathedral College and what the leadership and staff were reasonably able to achieve in the first two years of its establishment. The success of integrating SEL into the daily curriculum was less successful than developing students' social and emotional competencies within the Learning Advisory Program. The importance of reviewing both SEL in the integrated curriculum practice and SEL embedded in school systems and structures along with staff values and expectations has been emphasised in this chapter.

Arising from these findings, it is recommended that there be appointed a school leader with knowledge and skills to ensure the successful implementation of SEL in the cross-curriculum CLEs and within the Learning Advisory Program. Initially, staff needed the support of a SEL curriculum developed for them within the specific context of the school that includes teaching strategies and relevant resources to support them in their teaching endeavours. Once SEL mastery is attained, the staff can make the explicit links to the cross-curriculum CLEs without relying on the provided curriculum. Importantly, school leaders must understand and support staff through the significant stressors and pressures they encounter as they adapt or resist to the influences of both first and second-order changes. School leaders need to allocate time to listen to and validate staff's thoughts and feelings to help them cope with the pressures of change. Specific efforts and opportunities need to be planned to encourage open dialogue with staff to discuss their perceived barriers for SEL buy-in. Leaders should also spend time to understand their own emotional drivers as they lead change in the school as this can influence preparedness of staff to engage with productive and sustainable change.

LIMITATIONS

TRANSFERABILITY

One disadvantage of the single case study method was that authentic replication is not possible. The uniqueness of the data in this study meant that its references were only valid for Cathedral College and its staff and the issues and challenges encountered in meeting the demands of developing a new school and teaching an innovative curriculum are particular to that school context. The learning and teaching paradigm including the designing CLEs with all the mandatory components cannot be reproduced exactly but at best be a version in another school. Each educational system, school and its staff are unique and have their own history and culture that will overlay implementation of any initiative. The purpose of this study was to document the constructions of the LAs' experiences in the unique setting of new school dynamics. Guba and Lincoln (1989) rejected the idea that certain sampling strategies precluded generalising to other similar settings but stressed that the research and resultant findings are restricted by the context and time in which they are studied. The researcher accepted this as a limitation of the small sample size and therefore would not proclaim the results as applicable in transferring the initiative to another school setting. The results,

nonetheless, can suggest systems and processes for adapting to the challenges of new and developing schools as well as managing new initiatives with staff at the same time.

BIAS

The small sample size of this study might also be considered a limitation. As the LAs were volunteers, it required their willingness to commit to the duration of the study which given the pressures of developing a new school with an innovative curriculum meant fewer were prepared to commit to additional responsibilities. With a limited number of participants, only their views were noted which indicated a potential bias. Each LA in the study was interested in SEL and the new school process so they were more aware and willing to commit to the study. Still, in the spirit of constructivism and phenomenology, the researcher's interest was not in the outcome but simply to gain better understanding of the interpretations LAs attached to their school experiences and challenges experienced in adapting to a new school systems, process and educational change.

The unexpected but prolonged length of the study had both positive and negative impacts on the outcome. Conducted over a two-year period meant there was a possibility of participant attrition, moving to another location or withdrawing from the study. This occurred early in the study with one participant leaving during term two, 2006 to relocate to another Diocesan school. Nor did the 2006 or 2007 replacement LAs have the same background information or the experience the foundation staff had first to explore the social and emotional learning construct in the curriculum. Indeed, the replacement LAs did not share the same experience as the other LAs who began at the school at the same time and experienced the same challenges with preparing and teaching in a new school. However, the two replacement LAs' responses were compared and contrasted with that of their peers with surprisingly with little difference. Conversely, the extended period of the study meant that the LAs had significant more time to work with the SEL construct and so developed a stronger understanding of the construct. For example, as the study continued some of the LAs in the study developed a common SEL language that enabled them to have a professional conversation, albeit limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is another step in developing an understanding of the complexities and drivers of new school development and the implementation of SEL in a cross-curriculum learning and teaching model. For schools to remain relevant and prepare their students for twenty-first century life and work much research remains to be done in the area of new schools and SEL. Future research needs to:

- Document the process of new school and innovation implementation for education systems to provide incoming principals with a set of new school design characteristics and support to address to ensure the development and sustainability of the new school's educational vision.
- Document the phases of new school development to inform education systems of the essential systems and planning processes to achieve the school's goals. These will include, among other considerations, ongoing financial commitment past the first year of establishment, supply of human resources as needed and professional development for the appointed leadership team.
- Conceptualise a model for integrating core SEL competencies across all KLAs and within supportive organisational structures and ensure there is a common understanding of the components of SEL for both staff and students.
- Develop a variety of SEL assessment tools to monitor and evaluate staff and students' knowledge and skills. These instruments should measure the educational system and school staff's readiness to undertake SEL implementation, monitor the degree of fidelity of implementation and provide benchmarks for student assessments.
- Compare the impact on student learning and wellbeing outcomes by assessing the impact of three different approaches of teaching universal SEL skills on student academic outcomes. These would include teaching a single, SEL program within the context of the PDHPE syllabus over one year; teaching a single, short-term SEL program through student wellbeing structures; and explicitly integrating SEL in a cross-curriculum approach to learning and teaching over one year

- Ensure that teaching social and emotional competencies are not just taught in the curriculum or a particular class but integrated and reinforced throughout the school day in the daily interactions with students.
- Prepare pre-service university students in the Education faculty with the Model of SEL. Two groups of students, one a control group exposed to one session of explicit training in understanding, developing and implementing SEL within the context of the syllabus. The non-control group would have the normal cursory exposure to the syllabus through their lessons at university but had to make SEL links in the syllabus. Baseline data of the students' SEL knowledge and skills would inform the undergraduate's confidence and capacity to teach SEL. Undergraduates in both groups would teach SEL skills during their practicum and post assessments of their experiences would inform their readiness to teach SEL. Preparation for undergraduate and existing teachers is essential if SEL is to be widely and implemented with fidelity.

The results from future research will add recommendations for educators to consider in policy and practices both on new schools and SEL implementation, development and suitability. It also adds to the limited research on new schools in Australia so that the key characteristics of the 'what' and 'how' inform education systems and school leaders to consider for successful development.

CONCLUSION

The prime objective of schools is to educate young people with an extensive but equitable education that both provides opportunities to master basic academic skills and also prepares them to become responsible and contributory adults. Preparing them for the complexities of life in the twenty-first century is a moral imperative of all educators so reforming schools and the curriculum for relevance must be a priority.

There is a strong research base that SEL interventions improve students' success in school and in life (Durlak et al., 2011; Zins et al., 2004). The characteristics of successful SEL implementation identified programs that were extensive, multi-year and multi-component approaches as providing relevance for students' learning. It was on this basis that SEL became an integral component of the learning and teaching principles to be implemented in an integrated manner across a number of school settings.

The success of SEL for the Learning Advisors was within the Learning Advisory Program where students were taught to identify and apply SEL skills to their academic, social and personal contributions to the school. These small groups grounded the Learning Advisors' and students' relationships and provided students with close connections to the school by the establishment of a caring and engaged school community. However, the Learning Advisors experienced significant challenges embedding SEL into the integrated curriculum in a new school setting. This case study highlighted the imperative that the leadership team continually build the staff's collective capacities so that they were equipped and to support the delivery of the proposed innovations.

A strong leadership team guides and reinforces the clear and consistent direction of the school's vision and philosophy. The study also demonstrated the importance of leaders to ensure buy-in and commitment across all school stakeholders. In order to change the staff's professional practices, collective ownership in developing and sustaining SEL as an agreed innovative practice is critical. Leadership in this new school needed to be flexible, adjusting to the demands of new school development. In this instance, both instructional and distributive leadership was needed to ensure SEL implementation. Instructional leadership was necessary to keep the staff focused on SEL implementation but once there was collective ownership and capacities to work with the SEL construct, the distribution of leadership in modeling and teaching is possible.

The experience of the Learning Advisors in this study endorsed the research literature on the necessity of attending to the key characteristics of successful new schools and innovation implementation. Interest from the Learning Advisors in being part of educational change in a new school was not enough to ensure successful implementation, development and sustainable outcomes.

In conclusion for successful SEL innovation organisational structures and processes, strong and directive leadership, staff commitment, personal and professional learning and mechanisms to address the continuous pressures on staff and increasing educational accountabilities must be addressed collaboratively. Cathedral College ran the risk of eroded innovation goals which when not planned and taught with fidelity were unsustainable and over time would slowly revert to a remodel of a traditional school. This research study

has highlighted the conditions necessary to manage change and leverage sustainability of a new school's educational vision. Embedding evidence-based principles and practices in the culture of new schools and systems is a slow and gradual process that is dependent on the ability of leaders to guide the direction of the school and to build the collective capacity of staff to support the journey. Notwithstanding the uniqueness of the new school setting and the specific phases of establishment and development for the staff, it was evident that there were common new school issues that became a paradox of priorities for the leadership team. Despite the work of Nicholas (2008) there still remains a significant gap in the research on new schools. However, this research builds on the knowledge base both on new schools' issues and dynamics and the emerging research on the benefits of SEL for all stakeholders in the community.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION PACKAGE FOR POTENTIAL STAFF

A faith-filled learning community, abiding in Christ,
developing in all learners a Eucharistic imagination with which to
transform their world.

Operating within the Diocese's commitment to improve the learning outcomes of every student in every school and to provide a professionally rewarding working life for staff in every school.

LEARNING

LEADING

GROWING

SUPPORTING

Diocesan Leadership Framework: 'Life accepts only partners, not bosses. We cannot stand outside a system as an objective, distant director' (Margaret Wheatley) . . . through the nurturing of positive interpersonal relations, leaders are able to distribute responsibility, accountability and decision making and support a community of ethical inquiry.

LEARNING COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

' . . . where people can continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective inspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together' (Senge).

What are the big ideas that reflect the core principles of a learning community?

- *Ensuring that students learn and respond in a systematic, timely and direct manner when students experience difficulty*
- *Creating structures to promote a collaborative culture in which teachers analyse and improve their classroom practice*
- *A focus on results*

The staff model has been developed according to the following principles:

- All staff, both teaching and support staff, are in a Learning Team led by a member of the School Leadership Team: Principal, Leader of Mission, Leader of Learning & Teaching, Leader of Student Growth & Learning, Leader of Administration (non-teaching role)
- The staffing structure designed to meet the requirements of the specific learning and teaching focus at each stage of learning through:
 - Integration of learning areas
 - Specialization in subject disciplines
 - Links with external providers and community agencies
 - Effective allocation of support staff
- Learning Advisors work intensively with a group of students for longer periods of time
- Learning Advisors work in teams which will be responsible for units of work known as *Connected Learning experiences (CLEs)*
- Learning group sizes are based on the subject matter and the learning needs of students
- Subject matter expertise and knowledge is pooled and shared – teacher to teacher, teacher to student and student to teacher
- Specialists (e.g. Special Education, Pastoral Care etc.) are located into teams
- Students are supported and challenged to direct their own learning
- Learning Advisors are ‘assigned’ a small number of students to enable teachers to map learning outcomes and goals, and to be available to students for problems and challenges. The structure is known as a Learning Circle. This structure provides the platform for students to have a genuine voice, providing direct evaluative feedback to their Learning advisors during afternoon reflection time particularly. In the initial weeks, students will focus on the CLE fertile questions:
 - *How are we to define the learning community at Cathedral College?*
 - *How are we to be together?*
- Learning Advisors will have blocks of time to plan with their colleagues, and to work to build curriculum, make decisions and observe one another. Planning time and meeting time will be used for the purpose of building useful teaching strategies for individual students, to gain advice from colleagues and to develop teacher expertise. Teacher as leader model.
- A flexible approach for the delivery and continuity of the curriculum

The Learner Profile Program – creating structures to promote a collaborative culture

- An online database consisting of a planning and a learning advisory module. Learning Advisors document *student dialogues*, informal and formal assessment data, awards and extra-curricular activity, all of which is accessed by parents



Learning Advisor: Role Description

Catholic schools in the Diocese of [redacted] proclaim ‘*that we are God’s places not simply because we teach about God and his church, but more importantly, because we teach and care in the way of God. God love human beings into fullness of life through experiences of belonging, searching and learning, celebration, respect and hope.*’ [redacted] following the way of God, is a place where these experiences are paramount.

It is principally in their role as *Learning Advisor* that every teacher, including the Principal, is able to reflect the belief that each individual is at the heart of Christ’s teaching and that ongoing formation is relational: relationship with God, relationship with others and relationship with self.

The school community is committed to realising the potential of all members of our learning community in an environment that encourages collaborative decision making and collegial relationships among teachers, support staff, students and parents. We strive to live our motto and to integrate gospel values into every aspect of school life.

In attending to the academic and to the pastoral and social/emotional learning needs of students and by building a culture of affirmation, recognition and support, the Learning Advisor will also be working towards the realisation of the overarching goal of the national Safe Schools Framework to create safe and supportive school environments.

Students are presented with choices in how they approach learning activities, which allow them to organise their learning in a way, which personalizes their learning experiences

At [redacted] an understanding of multiple intelligences and learning styles is recognised through an innovative model of curriculum delivery that utilises a diverse range of instructional methodologies including lectures, seminars, labs, small group work, independent study and one-on-one instruction. Students at [redacted] are presented with many opportunities that allow them to personalise their learning experiences.

Our goal is to have each student graduate from [redacted] who is:

- A discerning believer formed in the Catholic faith community
- An effective communicator
- A reflective and creative thinker
- A self-directed, responsible, life-long learner
- A collaborative contributor
- A caring family member
- A responsible citizen

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LEARNING ADVISOR

Working with Students

A vibrant spirituality of pastoral care informs every facet of the Learning Advisor's role, as they fulfil their primary responsibility to support, monitor and analyse their students' learning and development. The single most important relationship between a student and LA is embodied in the Learning Advisory Program, where students thrive as they see purpose in learning and set their own learning goals. We have an understanding that because students learning in different ways and at different rates that quality of the curriculum should be the constant and not time.

The LA will meet with their students on a daily basis and also for a more extended period of time each fortnight, to discuss and monitor students' learning and development across all aspects of school life. These discussions will take the form of, and follow the school-based guidelines for Learning Conversations.

The LA will assist students to develop the skills to engage productively as reflective, autonomous learners in Learning Conversations with their Learning Advisor. The will assist students in their development of goal setting and learning to learn skills across all facets of school life. Flexibility in the use of time is integral to the school and permits students to control and direct their learning. To realise this expectation LAs serve as coaches, mentors, facilitators and guides and stress collaboration and high expectations.

The LA analyses their student's assessment data to inform learning and teaching. LAs support assessment strategies, which encourage students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of forms in order to support the improvement of learning and as a means to assess the learning. LAs are encouraged to employ a wide variety of formative and summative assessment strategies. The process of continuous progress is one of accountability involving the student, parent and Learning Advisor working together to develop a plan to meet the needs of the learner.

The LA assists students in connecting and directing their learning experiences both in and beyond the school. This involves establishing a positive, professional rapport with each of their students to enable them to experience a sense of belonging and connectedness within the school community. It requires a holistic approach to student development, supporting their spiritual, academic, social and emotional growth. This includes developing students' understanding of restorative justice principles and practices so that they appreciate the impact of their actions and recognise their social responsibilities as members of the school community.

Working with Colleagues and the Leadership in a collaborative teaching environment

In the delivery of an integrated curriculum, Learning Advisors at [REDACTED] will plan collaboratively within the framework of the Connected Learning Experiences Overview. This collaborative planning will include the design of the timetable for the various planned learning experiences. On a day-to-day basis in this team approach to the delivery of the curriculum, Learning Advisors will be variously working with students in their advisory group and other students within and across stages. This teaching begins with an analysis of learning styles, prior knowledge and skills in order to build a learning environment suited to the aptitudes, interests and needs of each student.

All LAs will be supported in their work at [REDACTED] through their membership of a Learning Team led by a member of the Leadership Team. This team will meet on a regular basis to discuss and reflect on their teaching and their work with their Learning Advisory group. The effective functioning of this group is vital to the establishment of a culture of reflection, review and continuous improvement within the school. Each LA will actively engage in the development and ongoing evaluation of the Learning Advisory system.

The LA will be dedicated to their own professional learning as well as that of their colleagues. The LA will participate not only in professional development opportunities but will be an integral part in leading the professional development of others in the school – the LA will assist other teaching staff to develop an understanding of the specific learning needs and styles of students in their advisory group.

Working with parents and the wider community

The LA will provide assessment of learning to parents and support students in effectively demonstrating their learning to parents and other mentors of learning. The regular LA interviews and reports generated allow for meaningful ongoing communication concerning the progress of the students with parents and with the students themselves.

The LA will work to build relationships of trust, cooperation and open and ongoing communication with parents, including acknowledging the diverse cultural and family structures. The LA will work with parents recognising them as partners in the student's developments and achievements.

The LA will, where necessary, liaise with the networks of care both within and beyond the school community to support the development of students in their advisory group.

SKILLS REQUIRED FOR WORKING AS A LEARNING ADVISOR

The LA will have high levels of interpersonal skills along with high quality communication skills, both oral and written.

A passion for learning, both by the students in their advisory group and in the cohort they may lead, as well as their own learning, and that of colleagues is crucial to the success of the LAs and the work of the school

The LA will have excellent leadership skills for the work of their advisor group, recognising that leadership of a talent disparate group of students requires a level of discernment as to educational possibilities and outcomes.

LAs will be committed to addressing concerns about students' progress, both in relation to communicating with the students, concerning the necessary steps to encourage learning, communicating with the family of the student and their colleagues about ways of improving the situation for the learner in order to help them achieve their goals and learning outcomes.

The LA will have a high level of organisational and administrative skills as well as having an excellent ability to access, use and manage technological platforms that support the learning strategy of the school.

Leader: Role Description

The Leader works in partnership with the Principal to define, support and lead the mission and vision of the school in the context of the contemporary Catholic Church. The Principal and the Leaders will ensure the smooth day-to-day operation of the school and ensure that the school is positioned for the future. This requires Leaders who are active in scanning the environment, understanding the current position of the school, planning change processes and implementing changes at school and school community level. The School Leadership Team, comprised the Principal, the Leader of Mission, the Leader of Learning and Teaching, the Leader of Student Growth and Learning and the Leader of Administration will be individually and collectively responsible for:

LEARN

- The learning vision and the curriculum vision of the school
- Building and developing effective curricula and cross-curricula teams that have systems and processes that focus on the individual learning of each student and on the development of authentic learning community practices

LEAD

- With the Principal, leading the faith development of the school and ensuring the infusion of Catholic values into the curriculum and culture of the school community.
- A group of teachers and school support staff referred to as the Learning Team
- Monitoring the professional outcomes of staff within the Learning Team to ensure that they are working effectively in the management of student individual learning plans, learner advisor groups and teaching teams and assisting staff in overcoming any system or interpersonal issues that inhibit the achievement of desired outcomes.

GROW

- Coordinating communication and planning processes that engage staff in setting future direction and setting of plans that will enable the school to deliver new outcomes.
- Monitoring outcomes across all elements of school life. Analysing where the school is currently positioned across the areas of learning and teaching, pastoral care, administration and strategic direction in comparison with other schools and against global best practice.
- Actively liaising between the school and its community including parents, clergy and outside entities

SUPPORT

- With the Principal, ensuring the learning, pastoral, religious and social and emotional needs of the students are met
- With the Principal, leading and coordinating the Professional Development activities of the school on both the macro (whole school) and micro (individual) levels and ensure that reflective practices and dialogue underpin teacher professional interactions.
- Coordinating the school response to new policy and directions from the Diocesan Education Office or external legislation and ensuring there is an effective system in place for planned review of existing policies and procedures.

Each of the Leaders will have particular overseeing responsibility as follows:

LEADER OF MISSION

Leadership of all matters pertaining to the faith development within the school community and the building of authentic relationships

Including the development of:

- The liturgical and prayer life of the school community
- The Religious Education curriculum
- Activities which promote the spiritual growth of students and staff
- Intra-school relationships
- School and parish relationships
- School and community relationships
- The emerging charism and culture of the school
- Social justice and community outreach activities
- The infusion of Catholic values into the curriculum and the culture of the school community

LEADER OF LEARNING & TEACHING

Leadership of all matters pertaining to the learning context and the curriculum framework and its delivery

Including the development of:

- An integrated curriculum within a team-based approach
- Authentic learning community practices
- Effective, innovative pedagogical practices
- The effective integration of ICLT
- Implementation practices to fulfil Board of Studies requirements
- Assessment and Reporting practices
- A culture of reflection, review and continuous improvement
- Professional learning practices for staff

LEADER OF STUDENT GROWTH & LEARNING

Leadership in all matters pertaining to the effective operation of the Learning Advisory Program and the learning development of students

Including the development of:

- The Learning Advisory Program ensuring that it meets the learning, pastoral, spiritual and social and emotional learning needs of all students
- Systems to monitor and document students' learning outcomes and learning experiences
- Effective analysis of student performance data
- Students' Learning to Learn skills
- Strategies to meet the needs of students with special education needs
- Students awards, recognition and behaviour management systems
- Effective networks of care
- Strategies to facilitate students' learning beyond the school

DIALOGUE FOR LEARNING

RECORD

YEAR 7

2006

Student: _____

Learning Advisor: _____

What do I need to do before my Dialogue for Learning?

How do I journal?

Each student will complete journal entries in his or her Learning Circle's My Classes' page. Each week 15-20 minutes of Learning to Learn time will be allocated to journal writing. Students may use their own time to journal more often if they wish to. Students may use some of the following prompts to complete their journals each week. Students and their LA may also wish to store additional prompts in the class files of the Learning Circle's My Classes' page.

Thinking about the CLEs

- What is suggested by the name of the CLE? How is this evident in the learning experiences?
- What other questions are suggested by the fertile question?
- What interesting/positive/new information did I learn?
- How does this fit with what I knew before? From other experiences in the CLE? From experiences in different CLEs? From home? . . .
- What must be completed for this CLE? What could be attempted if I have time?
- How could I use this in a new situation?
- Which skills do I need to practise? How can I tell if my skills are improving?
- What am I finding challenging? What can I do to help this?
- What am I interested in? How could I take this further?
- What could I do for my own learning in iCLE time?
- What learnings can I/should I take from this CLE into the future? How will I need to use these learnings? How will I be able to use these learnings?

Thinking about Personal Responsibility

- What habits or skills do I have that are helping me? (e.g. time management, persistence, organisation, thinking clearly, concentration, good listener, apply past knowledge to new situations, commitment, goal setting, able to work by myself)
- What habits or skills do I need to develop to help me more?
- How can I act on my good intentions?
- What supports can I put in place for myself? (e.g. study timelines)
- What do I need help with? How can I get that help?

- What positive self-talk would help me to improve my achievement goal? My friendships? My behaviour? My happiness?
- What happened to my feelings when I . . . e.g. answered a questions/asked a question, did group work, did homework?
- How do I uphold the expectations of the school? What can I do better?
- How have my feelings/attitudes/behaviour changed since the beginning of the year or from the last Dialogue?
- How do I learn best? What tasks suit my learning style? What can I do to improve my work in tasks that I find difficult? or less interesting?

Thinking about Social Responsibility

- What do I do to help others enjoy school? Help others with their learning? How do I do this? Can I do it better?
- What am I finding challenging in social situations? What can I do about this?
- What makes me a good friend? What do I need to do to be a better friend?
- What do I value in my friends? What can I do to support these friendships?
- What do I notice about [REDACTED] better (e.g. run lunch activities, support others in iCLE time)?
- What am I doing to include others?
- How do I respond to others? What do I need to do? How do I need to think to change the way I respond for the better?
- What can I do to improve relationships at [REDACTED] (e.g. manage emotions, manage impulsivity, manage conflict, accept different ways of being . . .)?
- What gifts do I bring to my relationships? Are these always gifts? Do I always use these gifts?
- Do I treat others, as I would like to be treated?
- What skills, attitudes, and feelings . . . do I have that I can use to help our school community? How can I act on this? What can I do to maintain this action?

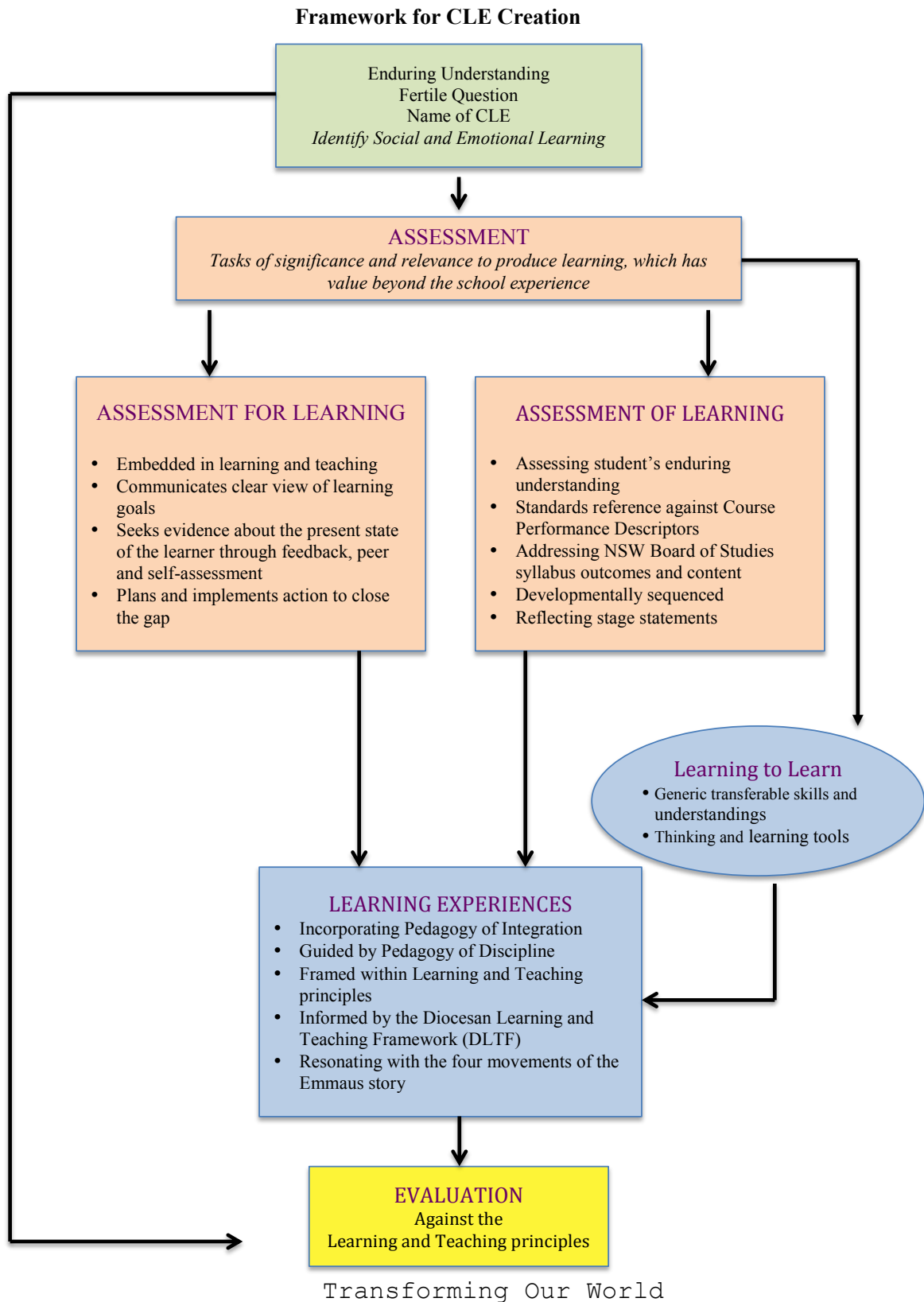
How do I plan for my meeting?

Before the meeting I need to ask myself:

- What do I want to achieve from the meeting?
- How am I thinking/feeling about my learning? Myself? Friends? School?
- What is stopping/slowing down my progress?
- In order to progress through a task/relationship/situation, what do I need to do? What can others do to help? What will help this to happen? What is the first step? What timeline do I need to set for myself?
- How can I get feedback? Stay on track?

Date:	<input type="checkbox"/> On time
Time:	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepared
Venue:	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
LA's Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled
	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs to be made up in student time

APPENDIX 5: CLE CREATION FRAMEWORK



CATHEDRAL COLLEGE

WEEK 2

GAINING ACCESS

What is the dynamic in a learning session?

FOCUS OF COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE:

Responding to formative assessment

- Respond to formative assessment from Week 1 by making appropriate adjustments for:
 - Whole group
 - Individual students
- Chunking of content to enable students to access and utilise new learning within existing understandings
- Authentic integration
- Clear connections, little 'clutter'
- A balance of learning/events/activities: bookworks, computer, practical, group, individual
 - Within and across CLEs

FEED UP to answer the question

'Where am I going?'

FEED BACK to answer the question:

'How am I going?'

- Ensure understanding at Process Level: the main processes needed to understand and perform tasks
- ***Focus on students' self-regulation: self-monitoring directing and regulating of actions (SEL)***

PAROT/ADMINISTRATION FOCUS

- Use PAROT 'Pedagogy' section for stimulus
- Review Assessment of Learning (Core Task) and adjust as needed based on formative assessment
- Check 'Learning to(s) and Learn about(s)'
- Learning to Learn connections: text types; skills; learning strategies; thinking skills etc.
- CLE Learning Journey Sheet
- Produce Assessment Core Task
- **Student Facilitators of Learning and Teaching** to lead Evaluation Focus Groups (previous CLE)