

**Leadership in the Primary Catholic School in the West Midlands**

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### **Abstract**

Since the year 2000 there has been a statistically high proportion of head teachers' leaving the profession. There have been studies conducted to predict when this exodus would conclude, but not the actual reasons for why senior people are leaving their positions. Schools have found replacing head teachers' increasingly difficult and the inevitable leadership crisis has been well documented by authors, such as Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) and Harris (2007) alongside many articles in the media. The leadership crisis has been most noticeable within the Catholic Primary Catholic sector where statistics have consistently shown an issue with recruiting people to headship positions. This research has been conducted to consider the reasons for the crisis and to gain some answers as to how to solve the situation.

This thesis identifies what the leadership crisis encompasses from the negativity of the education system (through headship accountability, work life balance to salary) whilst also offsetting this with possible supporting solutions, such as the value of acting headship, succession planning and talent spotting from the beginning of a teacher's career.

This research journey has taken six years and started with a questionnaire with eighty senior leadership teams within Catholic Primary schools (English West Midlands) and then progressed to interviewing fifteen senior leaders to probe in more depth. The interviewees were pooled from five head teachers; four deputy heads, three assistant heads and three middle leaders. The research was conducted from September 2011 to June 2014.

This study captures the importance of succession planning and how expectations on faith school head teachers has many aspects that add to their working week that need to be addressed. Accountability and workload issues are adding increasing pressure on a heads' shoulders, and although many see Catholic education as a 'calling', the extra requirements of the job (such as the non-negotiables around being a practicing Catholic and following the church's rules) is putting many deputies and assistant heads off.

The research concluded that any future succession planning should include opportunities for acting headship. Both the questionnaire responses and interview findings highlighted this area as an important aspect for imminent development, and for solving recruitment issues. This would then allow schools to manage talent within the school with the ultimate purpose of securing the future of Catholic school leadership.

The other emerging theme was the impact of OFSTED, which needs to be further investigated, especially in relation to the workload levels and the accountability of senior leaders, alongside the negativity towards headship that is beginning to evolve. A longitudinal study on the impact of OFSTED on head teachers is an area of research that, from this thesis, needs further investigation.

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## Abbreviations

AHT – Assistant Head Teacher

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

BCPP – Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership

B Ed – Bachelor of Education

BRIN – British Religion in Numbers

CAF – Common Assessment Framework

Cert Ed – Certificate of Education

C of E – Church of England

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families

DES – Diocesan Schools Commission

DfE – Department for Education

DfES – Department for Education and Schools

DHT – Deputy Head Teacher

DSC – Diocesan Schools Commission

ERA – Education Reform Act (1988)

GB – Governing Body

GTC – General Teaching Council in England

HMI – Her Majesty's Inspectorate

HT – Head Teacher

ITT – Initial Teacher Training

LLE – Local Leaders' of Education

LMS – Local Management of Schools

MD – Managing Director

NAHT - National Association for Head Teachers

NASUWT – National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

NCLSCS - National College for Leadership, Schools and Children's Services

NCSL - National College of School Leadership

NFER – National Federation for Educational Research

NPQH – National Professional Qualification for Headship

NPQML – National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders

NPQSL – National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher

NUT – National Union of Teachers

OFSTED - Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

PEH – Primary Executive Head teacher

PGCE – Post Graduate Certificate of Education

PA – Planning, Preparation and Assessment

RE – Religious Education

SATs – Standard Assessment Tests for seven and eleven year olds in England

SEF – School Self-Evaluation Form

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

SBM – School Business Manager

SMT – Senior Management Team

TLR's – Teaching and Learning Responsibility Points

VA – Voluntary Aided

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### 1.1 Purpose of the Research

According to statistics regarding school leadership, published in The Independent (written by Stanford 2007), there appears to be a distinct lack of enthusiasm for headship, especially prevalent within the Catholic primary schools in the English West Midlands. In the Stanford article (based on research conducted by Education Data Surveys and their partnership work with many of the teaching unions) it was found *“faith schools are finding recruitment hardest. The re-advertisement rate in Church of England schools is 40.5 per cent and goes up to 58 per cent in the Catholic sector,”* (Stanford - The Independent 25/1/07). Indications from various other statistics discussed throughout this thesis highlight that senior and middle leaders appear to be remaining in their present positions, and as a result, a leadership crisis is imminent. It is underneath this overarching theme of ‘Leadership Crisis’ that this research investigates the actuality of the crisis, the issues inhibiting others from moving up the career ladder, and the impact that various factors are having on the teaching profession and specifically grasping the reality within the Catholic sector.

I first became interested in the debate around a leadership crisis after reading an editorial paper from Alma Harris (2007) at the time when I was applying to start my doctoral studies. I was particularly interested in the paper as I was an acting head teacher at the time and was considering whether to progress towards the position on a permanent basis. The viewpoint, from Harris, was that the *“current crisis in leadership requires some rapid policy solutions,”* (p105). Harris discussed the leadership crisis as being ‘twofold’. The first reason was due to *“democratic change and fluctuation”* (p105) and the second being *“the consequences and pressures of accountability”* (p105).

Accountability, in Harris’ opinion, whilst always being a part of education has become *“relentless... the constant weighing and measuring of school performance plus the continual stream of policy changes has meant that many heads are finding the stress too great,”* (p105). The result of the ‘democratic change’ being many experienced heads leaving the profession (due to retiring or ill health) and that *“external interference causes frustration that impacts on schools’ future potential head teachers,”* (p106).

The statistic *“58 per cent re-advertisement in the Catholic sector,”* (Stanford in the Independent 25/1/07) regarding recruitment to Catholic headship, alongside the paper from Harris (2007), also generated a personal interest. Primary Catholic Education has always been the sector, in which I have taught for over twenty one years. I also have been immersed in the system throughout my own schooling and have a strong personal faith. With

Catholic education engrained in my psyche, and with a child presently in the primary system, the apparent crisis in the system was of special concern. As a result, my initial reading (Harris 2007) made me start to question what exactly the reality of the situation was around recruitment to Catholic headship and what aspects of accountability were resulting in people leaving the profession.

The Catholic sector of education in England and Wales has a very distinctive school ethos which is based around the teachings of Jesus Christ. Children who attend Catholic schools are required to say prayers four times a day, attend religious assemblies and have two hours of Religious Education lessons every week. Alongside these aspects, pupils attend school mass regularly and there is an expectation that parents take their child to mass during sacramental years (Eucharist in Year 3 and Confirmation in Year 6) on a Sunday. Schools follow the guidance from the National Symposium (held on 16 December 2010) where non-negotiables for Catholic schools ensured that admission policies gave preference to baptised Catholic children, schools had governors appointed from the diocesan bishop, RE continued to be taught for two hours a week, and that Catholic head teachers, deputy heads, RE co-ordinators and school lay chaplains are practising Catholic. All of these directives were originally to be found in both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts but were revisited in light of National Curriculum changes that were occurring at that time. Assistant heads, although expected to be Catholic, have some leniency regarding personal faith choices and as a result, some schools, with low numbers of Catholic children, have appointed leaders of other faiths to this position.

Catholicism has been part of the makeup of England for the past two millennia. It was the dominate religion of the country until King Henry VIII's Reformation Act of 1534, which made him head of the Church of England. For the following 300 years, people who practised Catholicism was either persecuted or imprisoned. Most support for the religion went underground. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, the reigning Pope (Clement 13<sup>th</sup>) recognised the monarchy of the United Kingdom as head of the Church of England, and from then on the Catholic religion was recognised again as a legitimate aspect of society.

As a result of the directive from Rome, the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 was passed (by the UK Government) which allowed Catholic districts to be reinstated across England and Wales. From 1850, Pope Pius 9<sup>th</sup> created the present system of twenty-two Catholic dioceses across England and Wales, in which a bishop presides over the day to day running of the parish and school system. All of these dioceses are part of the five archdioceses that span England and Wales. The five being: the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Cardiff, Liverpool, Southwark and Westminster. In the five archdioceses there is an archbishop who has overall

strategic responsibility for the whole area that he is based within. The head of the Catholic Church resides in the archdiocese of Westminster, and he is Cardinal Vincent Nichols. He was awarded his Cardinalship from the Pope in 2014 to signify his authority to make decisions about Catholic Education and Church Doctrine.

The 1944 Education Act was created to try to ensure that children remained in education post 13 years of age. Ball (2013) highlighted that *“88% of children were in ‘all-age’ schools in 1938 but only one in seven remained in school after 13”* (p73). The Act was the Government's response to viewing *“post war education as an urgent necessity”* (Ball 2013 p74). The Act paved the way for the secondary education system to be created.

The 1944 Act was also fundamental in that it solidified the church's position in education. The Act permitted faith schools to become voluntary *“controlled or aided”* (Ball 2013 p75). By becoming voluntary aided the church schools were responsible for the upkeep of their own school buildings, for teaching a specific Religious Education syllabus based on the life of Jesus Christ, and for the appointment of its own staff and governors. All of these specifics were under the remit of the Archdiocese control. The Act remains relevant to Catholic Education today and is the backbone of the voluntary aided system that is still in place today.

The Archdiocese of Birmingham runs from St John the Evangelist Parish in Kidsgrove, Staffordshire to Our Lady and St Anne's in Caversham, Berkshire. The archdiocese is 8,735 square kilometres. There are 44 Catholic schools of the 252 in Birmingham, and that is where I have worked throughout my career, based solely across central and southern Birmingham. I have been a middle and senior leader for all but four of the twenty one years. I hold a teaching qualification in English and Education and a Masters degree in Catholic Education. I also have the NPQH qualification and the national SENCO award. My natural love of learning and my passion for education made me question why there appears to be difficulties recruiting school head teachers and what exactly is the leadership crisis that Harris (2007) adhered to.

This thesis looks at the factors underlying the features of the leadership challenge and strategies that could be incorporated into education policy to alleviate the problem. This research examines the many barriers that prevent teachers from taking up a leadership role within Catholic primary schools within the West Midlands, and especially the impact this has on the role of the head teacher. The thesis looks at the difficulties facing recruitment in school leadership. It offers a portrait into how people can be identified and developed throughout their career, and considers alternative options to ensure headship remains a

valued career path. The study does not look at the quality of leaders within a school and in no way questions their ability to lead.

The leadership crisis encompasses the negativity of the education system from accountability to salary, whilst also counterbalances this with succession planning and talent spotting. The leadership crisis is linked to stability within schools and people being supported to complete their job satisfactorily.

There is a media discourse around the notion of the theme of a leadership crisis and this thesis is exploring how this plays out at school level looking at two facets. Firstly, leadership in general alongside its pertinent policy context, and secondly, the faith school context and explicitly leadership within Catholic Primary schools.

Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) first indicated that there is a *"leadership problem"* (p129) in their literature from Australia where they studied the impact of Catholic education. Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) argue that fundamentally the *"Church expectations that principals be leaders of a faith community and practice their faith in a traditional manner"* (p129) is having a detrimental effect on the Catholic system as a whole. In their research on leadership succession, the specific problems associated with finding Catholic principals are causing *"surreal, unrealistic expectations"* (p129) that is ultimately stopping people from furthering their career, thereby causing a *"leadership crisis"* (p130).

Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) ask pertinent questions as to whether the non-negotiable aspects of the Catholic faith is in fact hindering the movement of senior and middle leaders. This issue of personal Catholic faith is affecting the role of a head is also discussed in the article by Stanford (The Independent 2007). The article found that there is a pressure on *"Catholic heads - as they are expected to be the spiritual leaders of their school as well as [carrying out] all their other responsibilities, (Stanford 2007)"* an outlook that is not found in the mainstream sector of education. The effect of these higher expectations, according to Stanford (The Independent 2007), is that they *"can put potential applicants off. It is hard to defend the number of practising Catholics who are ruled out of contention for headship because they have chosen, in good faith, to live with their partners before marriage, or who have been divorced despite the church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage."* Modern society mixing with church teaching appears to be encroaching on the leadership crisis, from the article, so evidence of any impact will be closely scrutinized in the analysis of the thesis' fieldwork.

An article found in the Times Education Supplement and written by Maddern (2011) entitled '*Crisis: third of primary head posts go unfilled*' is the most recent indication of the reality of a "school leadership crisis as John Howson, director of Education Data Surveys, has shown disastrous statistics whereby the number of deputy positions has fallen from 2,345 in 2006 to 1,806 in 2010 (Times Education Supplement online)." Professor Howson has been annually studying the trends within education; for over twenty-six years and he argues that "We are not appointing enough new deputy heads in the primary sector to meet the current or future demand for head teachers (Maddern –Times Education Supplement 2011)."

This reflection is very timely with news headlines such as '*Schools face teacher shortage crisis, claims Labour*' from Sellgren's article in the BBC (March 28 2013). The media is indicating that as the United Kingdom is heading for a shortage of places within primary schools (due to a population increase) there needs to be "14,545 teachers" and if the present "520 vacancies are added in, 15,065 more teachers by the next election in 2015 (Sellgren article in BBC 2013)". As with all media interpretations there is a political slant to the article, but there is indeed a shortfall of places for school starters. The National Audit Office (2013) foresees that issues related to primary places are become increasingly worse, "In 2010 the Department of Education had estimated that 324,000 additional places would be needed by 2014/15. In 2012, the Department expected demand continue to rise, and 400,000 further places could be required by 2018/19," (p7). There does appear, from available statistics and head teacher re-adverts to be a decline in the take up of teaching positions, and with the birth rate increasing, indications are that there is a teaching crisis and that this will impact even further on the future of recruitment to headship. Although there is a lot of dialogue on the future crisis, there are limited solutions forthcoming as to how to solve the problem now. From the statistics available via the General Teaching Council (Smithers report in The Guardian Newspaper 2006), Howson (2010) and Evans (2014 Wales Online) comments such as "The GTC findings suggest little appetite for headship among experienced class or subject teachers. Of those with 15 or more years' service, 64% indicated that they intend staying in the same role for the next five years" (Smithers report in The Guardian 2006) and "there is a 58 per cent in the Catholic sector re-advertisement rate" (Stanford- The Independent 2007) there is clear indication that the Catholic Church appears to be facing a head teacher recruitment crisis, but there does not appear to be any apparent urgency in dealing with the situation.

In my thesis, there was only one interview (number seven) where there was a distinct concern raised about the quality and commitment of future Catholic leaders, "it kind of worries me a great deal that we have people coming through who have no kind of idea of the

*legacy of Catholicism and the work put into creating these institutions.*" To suggest ways to resolve the leadership crisis (including how to solve the future recruitment process) the findings of the thesis questionnaire and interviews hint at some possible future directions.

If there is a lack of enthusiasm for becoming teachers, senior leaders and then ultimately a head teacher, there must be underlying reasons. Deputy headship in the last century was often the stepping stone to becoming the head, and this appears, on the surface, to have changed dramatically. There has to be questions asked as to what has happened to change the enthusiasm for school leadership. Stanford (2007) writing in the Independent thinks the reason is fundamentally:

*"responsibility. This is the word that comes up most often in diagnosing today's shortage of heads. Senior teachers just don't want to take on the extra commitments that come with headship. There has been a huge increase in the past few years in the responsibilities of head teachers and also in their accountability to an ever longer list of official bodies - from national government to local education authorities, to Ofsted, to the Health and Safety Executive, to the Learning and Skills Council, and so on. With all this responsibility and accountability has come a much greater vulnerability. Get a bad OFSTED, if something happens to a pupil, if mistakes are made, the bucks stops with the head and many, many more heads are now losing their jobs as a result (Stanford in The Independent 2007)."*

The National Union of Teachers (2014), in an online document printed by Hays, a school recruitment company, agree that the responsibilities of being a head teacher are playing a key role in why more people are not becoming heads. *"It is simply that the job of being a head teacher is extremely burdensome, and many people entering teaching do not consider that they can maintain any work-life balance and also fulfil the role of head teacher (NUT online article 2014)."* In other words, school staff are seeing the role of the head teacher and are not aspiring to that position. The report discusses the true expectations upon a school leader, which include *"ensuring that all staff understand the school's policy, arrange staff training, keep parents informed regarding the school and their children, regularly report to governing bodies, manage suspensions and maintain the smooth day-to-day running of the school. They also need to establish a method of contacting the police in the event of emergency and, in some cases, teach classes (NUT online article 2014)."* With so many expectations placed upon the shoulders of one person, the head teacher position appears, from both the article by Stanford (The Independent 2007) and the Teaching Union's perspective, to be an impossible task. John Howson's statistics, along with both Stanford article (2007) and the NUT's viewpoint (2014), makes for negative reading. The articles appear to describe possible reasons for a *"leadership crisis"* (p130) a phrase coined from Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) literature.

The rationale for this current research is to investigate the issue of a crisis in recruiting primary heads, which appears, from the statistics and literature discussed in Chapter Two, to be acute in the Catholic education sector. The method for researching the Primary Catholic School system within the English West Midlands was by way of a questionnaire to eighty schools and then subsequently fifteen individual interviews with senior and middle leaders. The research will look into the reality of the expectations of the Catholic Church on its school leaders, the possible reasons for not becoming head teacher, and also what the veracity is of being a head teacher of a Catholic primary school.

## 1.2 Educational background to the research

Education is constantly evolving. The fundamental changes started in the 1944 Education Act were reviewed and updated to create the 1988 Education Reform Act. The Act was introduced by the Conservative Government of the time, led by Margaret Thatcher.

The Education Reform Act (1988) set up the present schools system and has remained so up to this academic school year (2015-16). In Chapter One, of the 1988 Act, the National Curriculum was created based upon the expectation that nine subjects, either three core (English, Maths and Science) or six foundation (PE, RE, History, Geography, Music, Art and Design and Technology) plus a foreign language at KS3 (eleven to fourteen years of age) would be taught to all pupils following the same attainment targets. Ball (1994) argues that the head teacher's *"ethical and ideological position"* (p59) towards the National Curriculum changes, in the 1988 Education Reform Act, was central. The role of the head changed, as a result of the 1988 Act, to a more *"reconstructed"* (p59) one where the previous *"professional authority was replaced by a managerial one"* (Ball 1994 p59). Quite simply, the heads role evolved into strategic school long term planning with more emphasis on the governing body partnership.

The Act also created four key stages, all of which had a statutory test (known as SAT's) at the end of the phase. Key Stage One (KS1) was for children of 5-7 years of age; Key Stage Two (KS2) for 7-11 years of age; Key Stage Three (KS3) for 11-14 years, and finally Key Stage Four (KS4) for GCSE preparation. Since this introduction of phase end testing the main change has been the abolishment of the KS3 test.

The theme of leadership crisis has interested me throughout the past decade, as during this time, I have slowly progressed in my own leadership journey. As my own career path has developed, the National College and the NPQH qualification for school headship has dominated the education sector and been an integral part of senior leader development and training. Courses for staff have been under the umbrella of succession planning and support



the development of middle leaders through courses such as 'Leading from the middle' and 'Leadership Pathways' courses. During the time taken to produce this thesis, the United Kingdom Education system has changed dramatically under a coalition government. In April 2013, the role of the National College was amalgamated with the 'Teacher Training Agency'. The education body is now known as 'National College for Teaching and Leadership'. The work of both organizations was scaled down with 'Teaching Alliance' groups and 'Teaching Schools' increasingly becoming responsible for the NPQH, NPQSM and NPQML courses, as discussed in their literature *Teaching schools: a guide for potential applicants (2014)*. Initial teacher training (graduate) courses are moving to 'Schools Direct' with more focused partnership work between universities and outstanding schools. Succession planning is integral in the new systems, and so conclusions from this thesis could be used to influence future training courses.

In 2014, the National Curriculum changed again, by the serving Conservative party led by David Cameron, to a more flexible syllabus where school's can design their own programmes of study from a set of objectives. The only proscriptive aspect of the 2014 curriculum was the revised expectations for the three core subjects, many of which are traditional methods of teaching.

As there were many changes to education in the 1988 Act, for the purposes of this thesis, the aspects that affect leadership specifically are Local Management of schools (LMS – Chapter Three 1988 Education Act) and the role of the Governing Body (Chapter Eight - Miscellaneous). The Act can be accessed online from The National Archives website.

Chapter Three of the 1988 Education Reform Act (sections 33-51) according to Tomlinson (2011) was where *"schools were delegated their total budget through a formula worked out by each LEA and approved by the secretary of state," (p53)*. Before this, schools were responsible for the capitation aspect of the school budget, thereby allowing schools to purchase the everyday equipment required throughout schools. *"Governors were given powers to manage the school budget and hire staff" (Tomlinson 2011 p53)* which in reality meant that governors needed to closely monitor pupil numbers to ensure they remained high as this affected school budgets. Through a funding formula, every child is allocated money for their education. Quite simply, the higher the pupil role, the more financially viable a school became. Head teachers, in 1994 according to research conducted by Maychell, found LMS allowed for greater autonomy, *"allowing for staff development and allowed for a fairer distribution of money" (p110)*. However, the negatives felt by the heads, by the NFER research 1994, was the lack of time they had for curriculum and teaching, *"the higher levels*

*of stress they were feeling*" (Maychell 1994 p112) and that paperwork had increased drastically.

Chapter Eight of the 1988 Education Reform Act (sections 106-111) according to Tomlinson (2011) gave *"duties of governors clarification regarding payments for school extras and permission for voluntary contributions to schools,"* (p53). This was alongside the powers that came from all the financial control through the delegated budget expectations. The extra duties of the governing bodies included *"responsibilities to report progress to parents, holding of parents evening and the composition of the governing body for all schools with VA schools to have two LEA governors"* (p100). Governing bodies, from 1988, were made up of volunteers from the local community, school staff, and in faith schools, people of the appropriate faith background. The Act made the GB more accountable for the decisions it made and the responsibilities it had to the parents regarding the education of the pupil's within their school. The GB, as a result of this legislation, annually delegated the daily running of the school to the head teacher and called the head to account for decisions that were made. These changes are still prominent today with OFSTED inspections connecting a judgment of governance with leadership as a key aspect of their investigations.

Education is constantly evolving. Since the Millennium there has been a fundamental shift in the make-up of the school leadership team. Schools have moved from the two person school leadership team (the traditional head teacher with supporting deputy head) to teams of leaders who run schools. School Leadership Teams (SMT's) may now include assistant head teachers, special needs coordinators, pastoral managers and financial school bursars. West-Burnham (1997) saw that changes were imminent after the introduction of the Standard Attainment Tests (SAT's) and league table system, introduced in 1995:

*"There has been a tendency to express leadership as 'super-management. The model of headship is omicompetence: the skilled classroom practitioner, curriculum leader, technical expert, plus many other manifestations... It is no wonder that so many head teachers seek early retirement. The job as historically constituted is almost impossible"*

(p232).

The argument, being, that with so many facets to a head teacher position, there needed to be delegation in order to fulfil the expectations of the heads role. A two person school leading team was quite simply too small.

In the *'School Leadership Today'* document from Munby (2009) for the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) the discussion is about the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) statistics; that there are presently 17200 state primary head teachers across England, which has seen a decrease of 1400 in eight years. There are also fewer (a

smaller quantity) deputy head teachers *“just 11900, the number of assistant heads has risen fivefold from 1200 to 6000.”* (p32). This comes at a time when there has been a decline in the number of primary schools throughout England. According to The UK Government Education Statistics, completed by Bolton (2012), there were *“22,347 England state primary schools in 2002 down to 21, 469 in 2012”* (p15). This has been a decrease of 878 primary schools across England. Independent schools have increased from *“2,190 in 2002 to 2,420 in 2012”* (DfE 2012 Table 2a p15) which is a rise of 230. These statistics indicate that there are head and deputy positions that have been lost in England in the past decade, but there is an anomaly between the number of headship positions within primary schools to reveal that there is a shortfall. As a researcher these statistics intrigued me and I began to formulate questions as to how schools were addressing this anomaly with deputy heads being in just half of the primary schools. Who exactly was moving towards headship, and what was the reality regarding school leadership in this ‘crisis in leadership’ (Harris 2007)?

As a researcher, the statistics started to pose queries as to why there is seemingly a leadership crisis, especially within Catholic Education. I was intrigued to follow a line of investigation to determine if West-Burnham’s (1997) research was indicative of the present perception of the role of headship, and if senior and middle leaders felt equipped to become head teachers. Munby’s (2009) statistics and Maddern’s article (The Times Education Supplement 2011) on the decline of deputy head positions, alongside Stanford’s (2007) comments about ‘responsibility’ and ‘accountability’ raises the question as to what factors are stopping senior leaders from moving up the career path towards headship, especially in light of Maychell’s 1994 NFER research, which found heads have been under pressure from accountability and paperwork, even as far back as twenty years ago, as a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act. From the Government statistics, Union research and newspaper reports, I wanted to investigate exactly what were the aspirations of the leadership group, and the impact outside influences were having on headship within Catholic primary education.

From other NCSL literature there is a strong indication that the middle leaders of the primary schools in England do not appear to want to move further in their leadership career development towards the level of head teacher. In 2006(b) the NCSL surveyed teaching staff and found that *“43% of incumbent deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders do not aspire to be a head teacher due to stress and loss of pupil contact”* (p6). The NCSL in 2006 (b) produced a *Leadership Succession* report, looking at helping governing bodies with ways to ‘talent spot’ (p9) potential future leaders as the document states that *“in 2016 2,500 heads are due to retire with not enough new leaders emerging to replace them”* (p6). Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) in their research, also comment on the issue of senior personnel

development. They found that *“many class teachers, middle leaders and deputy head teachers do not seek headship.”* (p5). These figures make worrying reading as there appears to be evidence (from the NCSL 2006(b) and 2009; Stanford in The Independent 2007 and The National Union of Teachers 2014) to suggest that within the next few years there will be an acute shortage of school heads. This research will question the possible causes of demotivation of the senior leaders, through delving into the realms of accountability and stress whilst also looking for other factors not previously implied by the literature. The research will be through questionnaires to senior leadership teams and then fifteen interviews with middle and senior school leaders.

### 1.3 Definition of Succession Planning

Rothwell (2010) defines succession planning as:

*“a means of identifying critical management positions, starting at project manager and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization... to develop internal talent to meet current or future talent needs of the organization”* (p6).

Succession planning is, therefore, the identification of potential future leaders (within an organization) and giving these prospective people opportunities to gain appropriate experience in order to advance their career. Succession planning is often linked to ‘talent spotting’, not just of one person with a particular skill, but of many individuals, allowing education authorities, according to Fink (2010) *“opportunities to accelerate the development of a selected group of high-potential individuals for both current and future roles that may not be identifiable at present”* (p123). Succession planning permits schools to give middle leaders a variety of skills especially as *“a good development for potential assistant principal positions”* (p123).

Whilst in large business corporations there may be opportunities to spot future talent, in education the talent spotting inevitably comes down to two aspects. One is where the head teacher ‘spots’ potential, the second being a person’s own self belief that they could be a future leader. Both of these methods to spot future talent have the potential to be biased and so the NCSL in 2010(f) produced guidelines to support this process, as they argue *“One school is unlikely to be sufficiently large to be an effective unit of succession planning alone”* (p22). The solution, therefore, is to ensure that the talent pool is wide enough for *“groups of schools, dioceses, local authorities and other agencies working together to plan their leadership needs and take action to meet them”* (p22). While the documentation was produced to support the needs of Catholic School succession planning, the principle of a collaborative approach to identifying talent remains the same in all education sectors.

The NCSL produced many documents in 2010, specifically around the theme of succession planning and leading schools. This was as a direct response to their own comments about the need to set up procedures to replace senior leaders. The National College's website introduced a separate section with up to date statistics about the leadership crisis. The website gave its opinion about the possible main reasons why head teachers were in short supply:

*"Significant numbers of head teachers are retiring every year and this trend is expected to continue. About a quarter of assistant and deputy heads are over 55. There is a risk that the supply of younger leaders may not be sufficient. Some areas are struggling to recruit new heads. This is particularly acute for primary and faith schools. While headship is a great job issues of workload and stress are a concern" (2010 b p1).*

The NCSL document (2010b) was an updated overview on the theme of leadership succession, which had first been commissioned in 2006. The 2010(b) edition gave the most up to date data on senior leadership retirements, which they believe is at its highest presently *"increasing towards 2,500 in 2016"* (2010b p6). In 2014, the National College amalgamated with the Teacher Training Agency and is run by the UK Government so the succession planning aspect of the website has been archived but the documents are still available to view. One of the main areas of the on the website identifies the varying levels of training offered to senior and middle leaders. Exactly what the reality of this training entails will form aspects of this thesis' survey. Academy and free schools are funded directly from the government, as opposed to receiving money from the local education authority. This system gives schools more flexibility with funding and staffing issues, as opposed to money being 'top sliced' by the local authority for central services (such as legal services etc.).

#### 1.4 Models of school leadership

Since the turn of this century, schools have been encouraged to consider different and diverse school leadership models. With the demand for new leaders outstripping head teacher retirement, schools have had to start devising alternatives. The traditional twentieth century model of one head teacher is evolving, as are the leadership models and partnerships. School leadership has changed considerably in the wake of the education legislation from the 1988 Education Act. Ball (2013) describes Head Teachers as *"the manager of institutional performance... as a result of process reforms"* (p164). The emphasis on standards and accountability, though, has a much longer history and the changes are not divorced from the direction of travel following the 1988 era. Many writers date this back to (at least) the Ruskin Speech of James Callaghan in 1976. The main difference is that schools are compared formally against one another and schools have to market themselves in terms of *"achievements measured by tests and examinations through the outline of highly*

*prescriptive forms of accountability such as performance indicators, inspections, league tables and achievements” (Ball 2013 p173).* Accountability, as Harris (2007) identified, appears to be a major part of a head teachers’ job, but appears to be adding extra pressure through the external requirements placed upon the headship role.

In November 2010, the NCSL (2010c) and the Diocesan Schools Commission (DSC 2010) both produced documents on models of leadership, designed to alleviate the headship crisis in both faith and maintained schools. The body that was been set up for this purpose was the ‘leadership and partnership national support programme’ based at the National College. The NCSL (2010b) found that *“new models are emerging to cope with the head teacher shortage and also to open up career development opportunities” (p8).* This was the College’s response to alleviate some of the issues around accountability and the pressures associated with the running of a school. The documents also focused on the faith leader elements of the religious ethos of the school and the non-negotiables on being a practising member of the church community.

### Types of Leadership

There are a variety of alternative models for school leadership; from federations, co headship, executive headship and academisation. From *The Governor Statistics 31* (2013) statistics indicate that *“in September 2013 there were 1,464 primary academies (9% of all primary schools in England) and 1,736 are secondary academies (52% of all secondary schools in England).”* In data from the Office of National Statistics this was classified into specific information regarding academy chains and of the 3,304 academies 1,660 are in chains, often with one executive head teacher preceding over more than two schools. This would account for some, but not all of Munby’s (2009) statistics regarding headship decline.

With the Governor statistics (2013) indicating that academies (including stand alone and multi academy chains) are now becoming the backbone of the education system in the England, for those schools that are not presently partaking in this route what other options are available for consideration?

### Federations

Federation schooling is split into two areas: ‘soft federation’ and ‘hard federation’. Federation as a process is, from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) literature *“a shared governance structure which provides a basis for extensive school to school partnership” (2009 p3).* Soft federation is where each school retains its own governing body,

but cooperates shared teaching and learning. Chapman, Lindsay, Muijs, Harris, Arweck and Goodall (2010) conducted a three year study into the way federations work and believe that if there are agreed boundaries, from the initial collaboration, then soft federations are a great way of sharing best practice and can advantage all the schools involved:

*“All schools within a Federation share a set of common goals that bind Federation activity together. There agree protocols, and the joint committee can make recommendations, but it is up to individual governing bodies to authorise plans. There is no common budget, and each school retained its own number” (p62).*

The DSC (2010) believes that the model of leadership should *“reflect local geographic, historical and democratic factors” (p4)*. This allows for schools with key values and core purposes to link together to improve pupil progress and whole school attainment. The faith schools seem to favour this style of leadership model as it *“secures community cohesion to the benefit of society in general and promotes life-long learning in the faith across the locality” (p6)*. Throughout the research it will be interesting to determine if any Catholic schools have become federations and whether this has eased leadership requirements. Federations, could in theory, be used as a way to talent spot senior leaders in succession planning, especially between collaborative groups. In the research it is worthwhile determining if succession planning is considered across united schools.

Hard federations are schools that are joined together and where one governing body presides over another school, or schools. The schools may have their own head teacher, or there may have an ‘Executive Head’, who is responsible for all the schools in the federation. The NCSL (2010b) see being an Executive Head as an immediate solution to a leadership crisis as it *“plugs gaps... encouraging serving heads to stay in the role longer, rather than seek a new challenge elsewhere” (p9)*. This style of leadership is where a ‘successful’ head takes on a challenging school to support the leadership structure that is already in place. In job adverts for headship, executive head is often required for schools deemed ‘failing’ from the OFSTED criteria and under threat of closure. Often, these head teachers come from the National Leaders association, who have already been called upon to help schools in crisis, thereby they have to show experience to gain the specific Executive Head certificate that can be trained for.

The main difference between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ federation is that the *“hard federation structure provides a guarantee that the collaboration will be sufficiently high impact and permanent to generate significant and sustained improvements” (DCSF 2009 p8)*. This allows schools under the umbrella of ‘hard federation’ to improve together, and therefore employ staff across schools, based on needs and requirements. Hard federations may be the way

forward for schools experiencing recruitment problems due to rural geographic positions. Chapman et al.. (2010) found:

*“Federations are viewed as an innovative strategy for improving schools, particularly for (but not exclusively) those in challenging circumstances through a structural solution. They provide increased opportunities for sharing staff and other resources, joint professional development, curriculum development, leadership, and management “ (p54).*

Federations are, in effect, a connection between schools as a way of working together towards a set of shared common goals. Catholic schools often work in this way under the umbrella of diocesan support. With the movement towards academy schools now such a big aspect of secondary education within the UK, it will be interesting to determine how soft federations develop, and whether they become academy chains.

### Co- Headship

As a serving head teacher near retirement, with the governing body’s approval, the deputy or assistant head can be co-opted to work as a joint head teacher for a few days a week. Paterson (2006), writing for the National College for School Leadership, believes that *“co-headship may be part of the solution to the predicted shortages of head teachers over the next ten years” (p1)*. The main reason that the NCSL feel co-headship could support the leadership crisis is that there would be more work-life balance: *“the solution to making the role less demanding day to day and can offer better work-life balance is co-headship” (NCSL 2010b p8)*. However, this would have to be a decision that governors approve of. In addition, the ‘job share’ leadership role may not fit the requirements and needs of the school proposing the position. In the adverts for headship, the co-opted position is often advertised as a short term contract and appears to be designed as a stepping stone to full time head teacher positions. If this is the case, any benefits of work-life balance could be temporary. From records produced through research conducted by Paterson in 2006, there were only fourteen schools, in England, who operated this system of school leadership, and from the initial research they were *“acting up as an interim arrangement awaiting a full-time appointment” (p2)*. Is co-headship, therefore, a temporary solution and a way to slowly retire? Is it an option that schools consider? Fourteen is not a large number, and as a result there is no research on this aspect available to consider.

### Catholic Education

As part of the package of educational reform there have also been changes within the faith school sector in recent years. Faith education, in the UK, includes schools from all religious denominations. In the early nineteen century, the Church of England (as the principal faith of



the country) was given *“grants in support of the schooling for moral education for the masses as the British state was reluctant to fund popular education”* (Grace 2012 p500). Upon grants being allocated to the C of E schools, Catholic education was swiftly introduced by way of parity.

As Catholic education has evolved, other faith schools have also been allocated support with their individualism. Since the LMS aspect of the 1988 Education Reform Act, faith schools receive the same delegated budget as the state sector, but they have an allocated separate building account. The buildings account is held by the appropriate local diocese and funds are drawn down as projects are approved. English State schools have all their budgets allocated to them at the beginning of every financial year.

Faith schools are popular with parents because *“the work is valued for the spiritual, social and educational formation they bring for their children and youth”* (Grace 2012 p501).

Throughout the history of faith education, subsequent governments have not attempted to change the way grants are allocated. Governments, as Grace (2012) points out, know that faith schools are *“oversubscribed”* (p503) and that *“demand outstrips supply”* (p503). If governments were to attempt to remove faith schools, there is a strong indication that they could be forced to abandon the idea. Recent statistics (Grace 2012) show that *“18% of students have non-Catholic backgrounds”* (p503) and so equality has now moved towards parental choice. These statistics indicate Catholic education is still popular with parents (two centuries after its introduction) and that this will remain so.

### 1.5 My position in the research

I have been working within the Birmingham Primary Catholic sector for over twenty one years. During that time, I have been in school leadership for fifteen years in positions of key stage two coordinator with Maths and English subject lead, assistant head with SENCO responsibility, deputy head with Maths and Assessment accountability, acting head, and subsequently head teacher of a small one form entry Catholic school in south Birmingham. Leadership has been an area of interest throughout my career as I have worked under the guidance of five very different heads; from the democratic to the dictatorial in their management style. I am from a strongly practising Catholic family of dual English and Irish decent. I attended Catholic primary and secondary education, completed various catholic teaching certificates at a leading Catholic teacher training college, and gained a Masters degree in Catholic leadership. I married in a Catholic Church, had my daughter baptized Catholic and enrolled her in a local Catholic primary school.

When I was applying to take on a headship role, I noticed that job advertisements for other West Midlands primary Catholic head teachers were becoming increasingly re-advertised, and even then, appointments occasionally were not materializing. Acting head teachers appears to be 'stepping in' to cover the shortfall in permanent school leadership. In the collaboration of eighty Catholic primary schools in the West Midlands, there are three acting heads presently (in 2014) which equates to 4% which, although a small number, is indicative of how many people are leading a school in a very small geographical area. NCSL (2006b) discussed this point in the document 'Recruiting head teachers and senior leaders' designed to support governors when an appointment arises. NCSL found that *"in 2005/6 2600 schools advertised for a new head teacher. Around a third of primary schools failed to make an appointment at their first attempt...if the school is in the Catholic sector, this shortage of candidates could be further"* (p8).

In 2013, Richardson produced the BBC News article 'schools struggling to recruit new heads' which also discussed the advertisement issue and found that *"The Education Data Surveys' analysis suggests one in four primary headships advertised in January 2013 were not filled within 60 days. This compares to 15% in January 2012. The figures show that of the 261 English primary schools, which advertised for a head teacher in January 2013, 26% were forced to re-advertise within 60 days."* The underlying reason, according to the Richardson article (2013), is that deputies are not progressing to headship *"because of the relentless pressure from, among other things, OFSTED."*

The findings of the BBC article, written by Richardson (2013) links with research conducted by Fink in 2010, which also mentioned the potential link between OFSTED and a leadership crisis. Although Fink states that actually quantifying *"vulnerability and pressure"* (p38) which head teachers may feel, has many potential pitfalls, research conducted into inspection itself has shown that *"almost 9 out of 10 (86.2%) of heads and deputies said that current inspection arrangements make it 'very much' less likely leaders would apply for headship"* (p38).

The article in The Independent (Stanford 2007) and more recently on the NCSL 2010 site on 'the case for action', both indicate that recruitment is *"particularly acute for primary and faith schools"* (p1). This raises the question as to what is the truth behind the reality of a leadership crisis within the Catholic sector. Alongside this, what are the possible underlying factors and inhibitors as to why people are not moving into head teacher positions? With the statistics of attending mass being so low (one in five, according to 'British Religion in Number' 2014) the interview questions must include something about the impact these statistics are having on the Catholic Education sector as a whole.

From a research prospective, the possible reasons behind the NCSL (2005) and Richardson's BBC article (2013) statistics interest me, and from preliminary examination of the subject, I have been drawn towards possible scenarios that may be contributing factors for the shortage. Indeed, with a child in the Catholic education sector, I am also interested on a parental and personal level to ensure the future of the faith school system for the next generation. It is from the backdrop regarding accountability and recruitment of Catholic primary head teachers, that I have started to investigate a possible rationale for why these issues are happening, and how schools can encourage others into leadership. From these initial thoughts, a set of research questions started to form that research could help to generate some answers from. I then approached the Birmingham Primary Catholic Partnership (to which my school belongs) to discuss involvement in questionnaires and interviews for the project.

As a participant observer, according to research conducted by Kennedy-Lewis (2012) I had a unique "*advantage in conducting investigations and sharing and implementing findings, (p107)*". This is due to already being in the leadership group, thereby "*much of the knowledge is gained through firsthand experience. Self narrative allows educational researchers to explore intersections between research and practice that might otherwise remain tacit and inaccessible to a broader audience*" (p107). Gaining the trust of managers takes time and by belonging to the organization this aspect had already been created amongst the group. I closely followed all BERA (2011) ethical procedures when conducting my research throughout all the survey-based research.

## 1.6 Underlying factors

The NCSL (2006b) have published two possible 'underlying factors' as to why personnel are not moving towards headships. The indications were 'stress and loss of pupil contact' (p6). These two reasons (NCSL) along with the four that West-Burnham (1997) believes are the main reasons for leaving headship are the starting point for looking at the reality of a leadership problem:

*"1. There is a direct function of accountability, personal to the head in terms of legal and contractual issues in terms of inspection, league tables et.;*

*2. The increasing emphasis on performance levels, the need to demonstrate value added, target achievement... importance of results to the school;*

*3. The importance of social, economic and technical change in the extent schools can legitimise the way they function and demonstrate their impact;*

4. *A growing awareness that the world is complex and chaotic. This is the learning process where there are many variables that determine learning and many variables where leaders spend most of their time*” (2010 p233-4).

West-Burnham’s (1997) paper gives possible reasons for a leadership crisis seventeen years ago, which are still very much a part of the school agenda in the twenty first century. Looking at his findings, whilst considering the present leadership crisis, allows for investigating the way the role of the headship is viewed by the senior leadership team members. As Thomas (2009) states, *“the aim of research here is to look at practice...to determine if it can be improved...to collect information and see if it can influence things”* (p4).

Another inhibiting factor that is quoted as preventing middle leaders from taking senior leadership positions in research by both Canavan (2001) and Blandford (2006) is on the theme of delegation from the head teacher towards other members of staff. West-Burnham (1997) and Fink (2010) discuss the impact that OFSTED inspections can have on school management, and along with another discussion on accountability (West-Burnham 1997; MacBeath 2006; Harris 2007, Ball 2013) are key areas that all need exploring when considering possible factors for the decline in head teacher uptake.

‘*Leadership Succession: An overview*’ report produced by the NCSL 2010 (b) discusses the ‘mismatch’ between the belief of the perceived role of head teacher with the actual job itself:

*“The impression of an overwhelming workload and level of responsibility are clearly acting as deterrents to deputies and others with the potential for headship. Teachers and middle leaders say stress and the loss of pupil contact are also major deterrents”* (p4).

The NCSL (2010a) reiterate the *“issues of workload and stress”* (p1) again in their ‘*case for action*’ document as possible factors that also need to be considered in the research. The concept of ‘stress’ seemingly is an integral consideration to taking on a fundamental leadership role. The Co-Headship document (NCSL 2006a) believe a major contributor is work-life balance. This is mentioned also in most documentation available from the teaching unions as being important for all levels of teaching. Finally, within the Catholic sector there is also a religious ethos and expectations on following the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, which plays a large part in the roles and responsibilities of headship. Servant leadership has been discussed in various papers, for example, by Russell (2001) and Russell and Stone (2002) as specific to understanding the values within headship especially in the faith education sector. It is important to explore the link between this specific leadership style in the promotion of senior staff within the Catholic sector.

These questions about the future of Catholic primary leadership interest me on a personal level. I am a senior school leader with experience of a year long acting head teacher

secondment and school headship of over three years. Therefore, it is my intention to research the factors behind the supposed leadership crisis and to indicate possible solutions to aid the faith school sector, as this is where the NCSL (2010a) had indicated there is a 'particularly acute' lack of uptake of the head teacher role. I am also interested in the models of leadership and whether the traditional model is being slowly replaced.

### 1.7 Research Questions

From the initial articles and reports there were some patterns of thought that were emerging. Four main lines of enquiry kept surfacing which, as part of the thesis, needed further exploration.

1. What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands?
2. What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams?
3. What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?
4. What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the leadership crisis?

Within my research questions I intended to look for emerging patterns as to the possible reasons why the senior leaders are not furthering their careers. I aimed to investigate whether there really was a leadership crisis and where the succession planning agenda is connected. The five contextual factors, according to research conducted by MacBeath (2006 p 189-191), would be closely evaluated. Alongside these claims by MacBeath, I also aimed to reflect on whether delegation is an issue; if OFSTED school inspections have an impact on people's choice as to whether or not move into school leadership; constraints of leadership roles and whether people are concerned about being role models within the Catholic faith (as discussed within the servant leadership model). A questionnaire based on some of these themes was a way of gathering some initial detail about the leadership responsibilities alongside the constraints of the middle and senior leaders. From the collection of data I hoped to determine occurring, preliminary thoughts that could be followed up with individual interviews about the future of headship within the Catholic schools sector, specifically within the West Midlands. The thesis is part of cross-section survey research and in Chapter three I will discuss this process in further detail.

## 1.8 Literature

### 1.8.1 Succession Planning Literature

When considering the four research questions, one of the main premises is succession planning and the apparent link with a leadership crisis. This became the first area of consideration within my literature review. Delegation was another initial consideration as one way that applying for promotion within a team is sometimes overtly and sometimes covertly encouraged or discouraged. Blandford (2006) has collated four key areas that need to be in evidence in order for true delegation to work within schools: *“Quality of the end result, ability of the individual, relationships and time constraints”* (p25). In the literature review, in Chapter Two of my thesis, I explored these elements and through my data collection looked for evidence (from the returned questionnaires) of senior leaders being given opportunities to lead key aspects of the primary school. A possible linkage between senior persons having been given leadership opportunities and progression to headship roles was closely considered.

Jayne (1996) produced an invaluable insight into the training of deputy head teachers and the roles they were given within primary schools. This study was a precursor to the introduction of the NPQH and I feel an analysis of both research from Jayne (1996) and Rhodes et al. (2009) will give a balanced view of what factors may be inhibiting senior leaders from promotion. Jayne (1996) strongly believed that *“delegation through sharing responsibilities promoted effectiveness... and share the art of headship”* (p318).

Munby (2009) and the National College’s (2009) recent study investigated the mind-set and aspirations of senior leaders and how standards could possibly be improved to assist in promotion. The document considers possible factors that may be inhibiting senior leaders from moving to headship. Gender issues as one of the possible factors is dealt with through statistics, including *“while there are nearly six times as many women as there are men working in primary schools, only 9 per cent of these women are heads compared with 23 per cent of men”* (p32). In addition, the research needs to consider the statistics related to the perceived demands of the head teacher job on the person’s work life balance and stresses associated with it. They found *“57 per cent of school leaders are concerned headship may be too stressful or risky, 41 per cent are concerned the job is too demanding and 40 per cent are concerned it would affect work life balance”* (p40). The evidence from the National College(2009) appears to suggest that factors around perceived perceptions of the head teacher role are strongly influencing the decline in leadership uptake.

In the literature dedicated to attracting people into headship (NCSL 2009c) there does appear to be a contradiction regarding the head teacher's views to de-motivating factors, as opposed to the other leaders within school. The National College (2009) investigated the possible factors which heads find to be significant barriers in their jobs and came up with nine main aspects, inspection being second and stress seventh:

*"The most significant de-motivating factors (in rank order) are:*

1. *Administrative demands.*
2. *Inspection and measures of accountability e.g. Ofsted*
3. *Low status and negative media image.*
4. *Changes in policy.*
5. *External influences (e.g. local authorities).*
6. *Problems with recruitment and retention.*
7. *Stress.*
8. *Financial responsibilities.*
9. *Less contact with pupils" (NCSL 2009c p1).*

The NCSL 2009(c) list would seem to contradict the idea that stress is itself an inhibiting factor when actually working in the headship position. As part of my research, when analyzing the questionnaires, 'stress' will be something to watch for evidence to determine how perceptions and reality matches between leadership groups. Alongside this, what will also be considered is whether work-life considerations are stopping people from furthering their career. OFSTED and other Local Authority accountabilities may also need to be investigated further, to determine if these themes influence deputy's career choice.

### 1.8.2 Catholic School Literature

The specific issue of declining leaders of Catholic schools is the discussion in the National College (2009) publication which worked in partnership with the 'Government Office West Midlands Region' and the relevant faith representatives. It gives recent statistics of *"33% to 40% fewer headship applications than community schools"* (p2) and then tries to eradicate myths associated with taking on the headship roles within faith schools. The DSC (Diocesan Schools Commission) and the National College have liaised to help promote the importance of moving into the head teacher position. In order to consider the possible factors that are inhibiting deputies from progression, the document tries to address recruitment, professional support and next steps as ways forward. As part of my research this document needs exploration to determine if any themes appear to materialize.

Servant leadership, viewed by Russell (2001) and subsequently by Russell and Stone (2002), as a specific style of headship prevalent within the Catholic school, also needs to be appraised in the literature section. In the literature review, a consideration of the Catholic

school history should be discussed to enhance understanding of the importance of the church with the education of the poor in the nineteenth century. Afterwards, a reflection of Robert Greenleaf's (1977) work on how servant leadership evolved at the end of the last century should also be included. An overview of the theme of servant leadership will give the research some depth about the impact of a person's faith on headship, but is only a small element of the study.

Robert K. Greenleaf was the American born, founder member of the servant leadership concept. He was inspired by a professor in his youth who talked about *"people inside institutions who are able to (and want to) lead them into better performance for the public good"* (Greenleaf 1977 p18). Servant leadership is a dual problem conceived with the idea of combating the *"individual in society... who do not make themselves"* (Greenleaf 1977 p19) with the individual as *"a serving person ... with a tendency to deny wholeness and creative fulfilment"* (p20). Simplified, in Greenleaf's view (1977) these two aspects of servant leadership are hinting at the problems of materialism and the notion of a 'get rich quick' culture. The impact on this modern day phenomenon appears to be influencing people in the belief that intelligence and hard work should in some way be prohibited, and as a consequence, leadership qualities are diminishing.

Other Catholic literature needs to be considered from around the world as the decline in Catholic headship is universal. Canavan (2001) is instrumental in discussing the importance of talent spotting as a core element of a Catholic school ethos. Consideration of future school leaders should be integral to the senior leadership team. Durow and Brock (2004), alongside Dorman and D'Arbon (2003 and 2004) have all researched headship in other developed countries (America and Australia) and found possible reasons for a shortage of Catholic head teachers from the 'parish priest' themselves, to the lack of practicing Catholics willing to take on leadership roles. Statistics from the British Religion in Number website (2014) show the *"2011-12 picture as one of continuing decline. Of the 2.2% in the estimated English Catholic population there was 1.8% in Mass attendance in October 2012 (showing only one-fifth of Catholics now at Mass regularly)." All of these discussions are of interest as they hint at possible factors and inhibitors for lack of uptake of the headship position.*



## 1.9 Research Design

### Opening Deliberations

The definition of ontology, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), *“is an assumption which concerns the very nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated”* (p7). The definition of epistemology, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), *“concerns the very bases of knowledge through its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and how it’s communicated to other human beings”* (p7). From the description of epistemology there are different types of knowledge and that how research information is collated determines whether my personal stance is positivist or interpretivist in style. As I considered interpretations and interactions between staff, especially leadership styles, roles, responsibilities and delegation, I looked at contexts and situations rather than in depth statistical analysis. As a researcher, therefore, I am an interpretivist as I am *“intent on making sense of (interpreting) the meaning others have of the world around them”* (Creswell 2009 p8). In Chapter Three of the thesis I evaluate interpretivism, specifically in relation to the research methods.

Creswell (2009) calls the epistemological and ontological philosophical viewpoint of a researcher as a *“worldview... these types of beliefs held by individual researchers will often lead to embracing a qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approach”* (p6). According to Creswell the worldview that a researcher holds, determines whether the person is: postpositivist, constructivist, participatory or pragmatist. Knowing that my research is a mixed method approach and being centered on problems in the education recruitment sector, I feel that I am a pragmatist in my personal stance. This is also reiterated when I consider Creswell’s (2009) argument that links pragmatism with mixed method research, which I feel, connects my stance with the mixed method view:

*“Researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available both quantitative and qualitative to understand the problem... pragmatism as a worldview arises out of actions, situations and consequences rather than antecedent conditions”* (p10).

### 1.10 Methodology

There are many focal types of methodology in research design: case study; survey; ethnography; experiment; action research; life history and evaluation. The methodology that I intend to utilize in Chapter Three (Research Design) of the thesis is a cross-section survey approach that looks at a specific subject and analyses all aspects of that one area. By using both questionnaires and individual interviews, the survey will be a mixed method research.

Action research tries to “*develop and implement change*” (Newby 2010 p61) in a way to influence the shape of people and associations. The impact of the ‘change’ is part of the process of action research and is intrinsic in the methodology. As I am not intending to analyse a change, the study does not fit any criteria. Evaluation is about current practice and the impact it’s having. The end result may change policy or systems. The assignment is a small-scale piece of research and is not an evaluation. The best fit, as a research strategy for the thesis, was a survey, as it will generate information that may answer the research questions through “*providing the researcher with data for either a retrospective or a prospective enquiry,*” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p213). A survey will permit opportunities for generating responses on issues such as stress and accountability whilst also allowing for investigations into other factors that the literature review will highlight.

### 1.11 Research Methods

The methods that I intended to use to collect the data within the survey, mixed method field, were questionnaires and individual interviews. I was of the opinion that a questionnaire would give me an overview of the eighty Catholic primary schools within the Catholic Primary Partnership cluster group of West Midlands. I conducted my research in the Catholic sector, as that is the area of school leadership, as a participant observer, I was able to gain access to, as I am already a member. The faith sector is where recruiting heads is apparently under the most strain and where answers are needed quickly to alleviate a leadership crisis. Findings from the thesis, though, are not envisaged to just be for the Catholic sector as the management problem is overarching across all schools, whether state or voluntary aided.

The Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership was established in 1995 by Paul Walmsley who had been a head teacher within Birmingham for many years. The purpose, of the partnership of its eighty schools, according to its website [www.bcpp.org.uk](http://www.bcpp.org.uk), is to “*promote curriculum and professional development, thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in all Catholic primary schools in Birmingham and to work together in true partnership, thereby sharing expertise, so as to enrich the education of all the children in the Partnership schools, in an atmosphere of Christian love, which will benefit Catholic Education in the city (BCPP website).*” I have discussed my intended research with the head of the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership, based at Newman University College, who has given his written consent to conduct the questionnaires within his jurisdiction.

Through my surveys, I planned to incorporate links to my research questions, including asking for thoughts on possible factors that may hinder people from taking on headship roles. I was looking for what specific aspects of the job are possibly putting people off becoming a head teacher and if there is any evidence of underlying roles that are given to

deputies that empower them towards head teacher positions. Finally, one of the key elements within the questionnaire was based on promotion and what roles are needed to empower people to take up headship. I also ensured a question on leadership styles was included to look for evidence of servant leadership (Greenleaf 1977) within the headship position. I used various authors such as Denscombe (2007), Thomas (2009) and Cohen et al. (2007) to assist with my questionnaire design, especially when creating my pilot. The survey method suited the research because it allowed me access to leadership groups throughout a wide geographic area to gather as much information as possible. I was aware that the uptake on questionnaires could be relatively small, but decided to follow up any preliminary findings with subsequent individual interviews.

The interview aspect of the survey research is a way of facilitating a discussion between leadership groups on some of the possible factors inhibiting people from become head teachers. I intended to recruit four groups (heads, deputies, assistant heads and middle leader) of around equal number. I anticipated using some of the preliminary findings from the questionnaires as a starting point. It was my opinion that the interview would possibly consider stress, OFSTED, delegation and leadership responsibilities, but I was hoping to witness other factors that may not be evidenced in the questionnaire. I used a Dictaphone and field notes to capture the interview and then transcribed them afterwards.

The mixed method research using both questionnaires and interview can take a lot of time to transcribe and orchestrate, but if done well, will give both qualitative and quantitative data, which could give possible answers to research questions. The questionnaires were conducted throughout 2012 and then followed by fifteen individual interviews afterwards. I intended to be flexible with the timetable as professionals are busy individuals and will work around other staffs working commitments.

### 1.12 Ethical Considerations

I purported to work with school leaders and did not have any direct contact with children or vulnerable adults as part of the data collection process. I followed the British Educational Research Association (2011) guidelines on conducting research and considered my position as an honest researcher, presenting findings with transparency and with correct consideration to confidentiality.

Firstly, I piloted my questionnaire with two colleagues and gained feedback on its structure and content. Once the pilot had been successfully completed and any amendments addressed, I then sent out a description of my research to the 79 other schools within the Catholic Primary Partnership, which is based within the West Midlands. I then intended to

present my questionnaire to a head teacher briefing at the end of the autumn term 2011 in readiness to send out in early 2012.

Included within the questionnaire was also an information sheet about the participant's right to anonymity and with reassurances that the information presented would not be traceable to any individual. The right to withdraw from the research, if the individual decides to do so, formed part of the consent letter when working with individuals during separate interviews. I intended to conduct the interviews within my school environment in an office that was away from the main teaching areas, as I am aware of present safeguarding procedures. I produced the appropriate forms, as required by University guidelines, which had been previously passed by the ethics board.

### 1.13 Reporting of Findings

The findings of my data collection will be available for viewing on the University of Birmingham thesis site. I hope to produce some findings in a recommendation format that could be used in future training to assist in leadership development. I intend to present some statistical data from my questionnaires to show what aspects are perceived to be stopping senior leaders from taking up headship positions. I hoped to find some possible answers to my research questions, during my interviews to impact upon empowering staff to progress their roles and responsibilities.

When I have concluded my survey research I hope to be able to present my findings to the Catholic Primary Partnership and see how we can move forward together to fulfil the ultimate aim of filling the role of the Catholic head teacher together. This will be done upon full completion of the thesis process.

In the following chapter I will complete a literature review on previous research on possible inhibiting factors stopping senior leaders from moving toward headship. I will consider the perceived leadership crisis affecting the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands and also discuss encouragement and discouragement of promotion in leadership teams. I will delve further into the literature available on the theme of succession planning. This will be in context to the Catholic school history, and a brief overview of servant leadership, often attributed as a specific leadership style in faith school education.

## 2.1 Introduction

Leadership of schools is rarely out of the British media. McQueeney (2011) writing for The Daily Mail Maddern (2011) writing for Times Education Supplement and Evans (2014) for Wales Online are recent examples. Education, for over a decade now, has been protected by the UK Conservative Government from the departmental budget cuts that have affected many of the other areas, such as national defence and transport. By having money ring fenced, however, accountability has increased dramatically with the position of the head teacher being more closely scrutinized.

In the past thirty years the main introductions into the English Catholic education system have seemingly exacerbated the expectations upon the head teacher shoulders. The first main change was the 1988 Education Reform Act, which introduced Statutory Assessment Testing (SATs) within primary education. The results of the tests were presented in national, published league tables for all eleven year olds and catalogued development in the basic skills of maths, writing and reading. The original purpose was to give parents an overview of standards of achievement throughout the country.

The second, school inspection, has played an intrinsic part within state education. Inspection regimes for state schools go back to the 1830s. This scrutiny of education was previously known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). However inspection of schools has come to epitomize how standards have become so crucial to school leadership. OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) reports are now the way every school is validated for its standard of education for its pupils. HMI's are still working with schools, but are now principally involved when schools require section eight inspections. With seemingly insurmountable accountability expectations, there are many good schools, which indicates that many heads are doing an excellent job. *"On 31 March 2014 the proportion of schools judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection reached 79%, an increase of one percentage point since 31 August 2013 "* (OFSTED 2014 p1).

The third major development has been the way school budgets were delegated to the schools and with that the importance of the school governor both of which were major aspects from the 1988 Education Reform Act. Schools have always had support from parents, often through parent-teacher networks and other such vocational groups of people with a vested interest in the local school but the governor role has now developed in its purpose. The GB (Governing Body) now holds the head teacher accountable for financial management, standards of education and individual pupil progress. As OFSTED has

become more powerful, especially in its expectations upon schools, the Governing Body's role has intertwined with the heads to the point where together (the head and governing body) they hold a quarter stake in the outcome of a school inspection grading. The other three areas, which form an OFSTED report, are behaviour & safety, teaching & learning and achievement of pupils. The Governing Body is made up of volunteers and delegate powers to the head teacher annually through formal adoption, at GB meetings, for day to day running of the school.

With these developments in the education sector the role of the head teacher has had to alter. There have been specific standards for heads (second version released in January 2015), the introduction of a national professional certificate (NPQH) for headship in 2001 and school-to-school support systems; initiated through local consortiums of heads and cluster groups. Under all this rapid and sustained change, though, there appears to be a school leadership predicament.

Leadership crisis, as a phrase, has been attributed to an American leadership educationalist, McGregor Burns (1978) and has been coined as a saying ever since by Dorman and D'Arbon (2003), and then adopted by the British media. McGregor Burns (1978) wrote about transactional and transformational leadership styles and how through forward planning and collaboration, school's can avoid a leadership crisis, because time is given over to preparing for the event long before change occurs.

Within leaders of political power, every challenge to the leader involves a 'leadership crisis' of some sort or another. In the education sector specifically, the impact of initial retirement numbers of head teachers, within the final decade of the twentieth century started to be linked to a 'head teacher crisis.' A crisis is often a problem that has started as a ripple effect; a seemingly small event that generates to a quandary, which needs to be dealt with imminently. Forward planning can avert a crisis but a leadership crisis is looming, according to the National Head Teacher Union (NAHT) in the EDS Report of 2011, and this is not as a result of recruitment, *"Although a typical school will be unlikely to face recruitment issues if the process is handled properly, any school that has distinct characteristics can face additional pressures and lessons must be learnt quickly"* (p7).

Having read the large Education Data Survey and it's revelation that recruitment appears, if handled correctly, to be a different area of consideration, I began to read wider on the supposed reasons that a 'leadership crisis' may be looming within education, and especially within the Catholic sector. Initially, the research literature and statistical data, on the leadership crisis, that I considered was from information available from the National College

of School Leadership, based in Nottingham, England. I then widened the search for leadership succession planning literature to America, New Zealand and Australia where there is research about the Catholic School Principal. The research papers on the leadership problem show that it is not just a UK issue, but one replayed throughout the world, and as a researcher, I started to wonder whether there is a leadership crisis and what the underlying themes that emerge upon investigation are.

There is a lot of debate in the English media about a 'leadership crisis', as seen in Times Education Supplement (Maddern 14.02.11); Smithers (writing in The Guardian) 05.09.2006 and Evans (writing in Wales Online) 24.07.14. The media have given different takes on what the crisis actually is. The Guardian's education editor, Rebecca Smithers, (2006) in an online report discussed the finding from the 2006 General Teaching Council Report, which found that there is *"a leadership crisis - as only 4% of teachers want to become heads within the next five years."* The reasons, she states, is because *"34% are due to retire; the stress of the job; excessive paperwork and that due to 64% of experienced teachers not wanting the heads job schools will struggle to fill 40% of head teacher vacancies."*

Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) discussed the specific problems associated with finding Catholic principals in their research on leadership succession in Australia. They argue that there is a *"leadership problem"* (p129) which is fundamentally due to the *"Church expectations that principals be leaders of a faith community and practice their faith in a traditional, overt fashion putting expectations on principals that does not exist in the secular schooling systems"* (p129). They argue that the problems associated with Catholic leadership are causing *"surreal, unrealistic expectations"* (p129) that ultimately is stopping people from furthering their career thereby causing a *"leadership crisis"* (p130).

The Times Education Supplement (2011) discuss how there is a *"national problem"* in the article by online report by Kerra Maddern in the form of *"not appointing enough new deputy heads as 40% of adverts for primary posts were unsuccessful, and 60% for Catholic primaries. If deputy heads reapplied for their post every five years it would make sure they would move to the top job."*

Controversially, Evans' article (Wales Online 2014) believes that there is a *"leadership crisis in Cardiff's Catholic schools because school governors are permitted by law to appoint only practicing Catholics."* The reason that the leadership issue is exacerbated is because *"generally fewer people across Wales and England are looking for headship."*

If the newspaper articles are to be believed - the nature of the leadership problem seems, therefore, to be intrinsically linked to succession planning within schools, and specifically the

Catholic Primary sector. The three media descriptions, though, are from reputable newspapers and with the theme running through, the pieces must be given due consideration in their conclusions. The Guardian article (2006) by Smithers discusses the GTC finding which indicates that “*34% of heads say they are planning to retire imminently*” and as a result the perception of the job has to be reviewed to “*especially think about how it can make leadership of our schools more attractive*,” (Smithers 2006). There is direct conflict with the NAHT (2011) document that claims that there is no recruitment crisis against the TES (Maddern article 2011) claiming there is a recruitment emergency. The reason, but disagree on the reasons why.

Evans’ 2014 (Wales Online) article is interesting as there is no doubt from the varying statistics (NAHT 2011) that there is a recruitment problem of significant prominence in the Catholic Primary sector. The discussion for the crisis, in the article, is placed squarely on the church’s shoulders, as people have to be steeped in the Catholic faith to take on a head teacher position. The piece is intriguing as it does not make negative comments on this issue but implies that this is the root cause of the leadership problem, and that until the legislation changes, there will continue to be a problem getting Catholic heads.

In this thesis, I wanted to consider what aspects of headship are stopping senior and middle leaders from moving upwards in their careers. As the terminology, of leadership crisis is in the public domain, I have used it because it appeared in a list of newspapers and other popular literature. However, as an academic, I realise that it is not about sensationalism, but about shedding light on a problem in a balanced way.

With the literature review I felt that it would be best to organize the varying information available on succession planning; recruitment, retention and development of leaders (also known as talent management); job fulfilment and leadership within the Catholic Education system into four research questions:

1. What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands?
2. What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams?
3. What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?
4. What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the challenges to school leadership?

The principal aim was to link themes from the literature study to formulate possible themes that may alleviate the leadership problem primarily in the Catholic primary schools within the English West Midlands. The literature review chapter will concentrate on research question one; considering all previous research that has been carried out on the themes of leadership



issues in education. There will also be discussion about how faith schools originated, and the Catholic sector specifically. The chapter will touch upon the possible perceptions regarding whether, from the literature available, there is a leadership crisis or whether it is a recruitment crisis specifically. However, research questions two and three will be answered through survey exploration in further chapters of the thesis through questionnaires and interviews from serving heads and other senior school leaders. Solutions will be sought in Chapter Five in order to answer research question four, using findings from the literature and the field study work.

## 2.2 The Leadership Crisis in England

RASVAK is a Jewish organization that writes profusely about a school leadership crisis. The journal in 2014 on 'Attending the Crisis of Leadership' dedicates all its articles to the way the predicament is viewed within the educational sector and possible ways to move forward in the coming years. Being a Jewish, faith organization it struggles with the balance that *"the crisis lies not in the number of qualified leaders but in the lack of leeway that establishments provide for young leaders to lead"* (p40).

With RASVAK in America and the NAHT in the United Kingdom, both argue that there is a leadership crisis that is caused by different facets (from leadership developments and succession planning being limited) then the focus moves to what exactly is the problems within school leadership and how is it affecting the primary Catholic sector; faith schools in general.

### 2.2.1 Introduction to the problems associated with a potential Leadership Crisis

The word crisis is defined by the online dictionary as *"a condition of instability or danger, as in social, economic, political, or international affairs, leading to a decisive change"* (2011). A crisis is a situation that can lead to potential problems for individuals or groups of people that can develop into a fundamental emergency if solutions do not emerge quickly enough. From the description, there is an indication that urgency is required to resolve a growing problem or 'change'. In all forms of leadership, from government to business to education specifically, the buzzword is 'crisis'. This word is becoming synonymous with all types of problems relating to the running of business organizations. The present apparent education 'crisis' relates to head teacher (or principal) positions remaining vacant due to the lack of applicants applying for the position, or the positions being applied for attracting a field of a poorer quality than required by the school.

How then has education arrived at a leadership crisis? Harris (2007) is of the opinion that the reason is simply split into two main demographic shifts across time. Firstly, there has been a generational natural ebb and flow of head teachers who were part of the post war baby boom; *“They are reaching retirement in large numbers thus leaving a significant vacuum in leadership expertise”* (Harris 2007 p105). Secondly, from Harris’ (2007) research, the overall theme emerging is accountability linked to the emphasis on raising standards. Heads are leaving education due to the ‘pressures’ and ‘stress’ (p105) that the *“relentless accountability has placed on those in positions of authority”* (p105). Harris’ viewpoint reiterates the comments by Smithers (The Guardian article 05.09.2006) that stress is a factor causing a leadership crisis. The constant accountability, which causes stress, relates to the pupil progress evidence that school leaders are required to generate to satisfy government, OFSTED, local authorities, governors and parents originating from the 1988 Education Reform Act’s changes to education. This links too with Ball’s (2013) reference to *‘highly prescriptive accountability’* (p173) that comes from the reporting of individual schools’ results that heads are required to publish and for which they are answerable for to the many different stakeholders and organizations that have a vested interest in the schools’ performance.

Gunter (2001) has also looked at leadership and found that early retirement amongst heads is indeed related to *“the impact of additional pressures of doing the job”* (p84) but delved deeper into the reasons for the head’s decision through further research. This study unearthed that *“there is also a reluctance to continue with the challenges of how best to work things through for the benefit of the school”* (Gunter 2001 p84). Quite simply, Gunter concluded that some head teachers found the job so challenging that they simply felt unable to continue with the role. Accountability is therefore appearing to exacerbate the leadership crisis through the impact it’s causing in areas of retirement; in itself a component of the problem.

Floor targets are the present aspect that is concerning head teachers in light of the Coalition agenda on Academy conversion and in the interviews with incumbent heads this will be an area that will be explored. The government is keen to ensure all schools in England are of a good standard. If a school has a year on year pattern of eleven-year-old SAT tests going below the government recommended ‘floor targets’, which equates to 65% of children gaining a Level 4 average grade for reading, writing and Maths, a school will be forced to become an academy. This is also the case if a school goes into a Special Measures category (also known as a judgment of ‘inadequate’ by OFSTED during a school section five inspection). Is all this accountability one of the main contributing factors to a leadership

crisis? Alternatively, is stress and pressure a natural part of any job, and is it down to individual personalities as to how these emotions are dealt with?

Harris (2007) feels that a leadership crisis can allow schools opportunities to re-evaluate their styles and systems and *“promote new and emerging leadership models... to transform and innovate”* (p107) allowing for true change to fit the individual school as opposed to a ‘one size fits all’ approach. From this background, the ‘National College for School Leadership’ was set up to support with the training and development of senior teachers with the aim of increasing and maintaining headship with the schools of the United Kingdom.

Pricewaterhouse Cooper (2007) also completed an independent study to *‘examine the roles, responsibilities, structures and reward systems for school leaders in England and Wales’* (p1) as commissioned by the Tony Blair Labour Government; the party in charge at that time. On the theme of accountability, when interviewing head teachers, they found:

*“Tasks related to accountability were the most time consuming of all the tasks undertaken by head teachers. In this context, the word ‘initiativitis’ was often used by the leaders we spoke to as a way of expressing their frustration with the number of policy initiatives they were having to deal with, the apparent inconsistencies between them and the lack of resources to deal with them”* (p7).

With the paperwork increasing and the expectations being consistently changed, the issue of accountability appears to be intensifying one leadership aspect and thereby adding to the existing problems of recruiting head teachers to the top role in schools; thus, creating a leadership crisis of varying facets.

The leadership crisis, within education, though, is not specific to the United Kingdom. Government programmes are trying to solve the apparent problem in other countries including America, Australia, Canada, Israel and New Zealand. There is an instability in gaining leaders to headship and for the crisis to be resolved, solutions and action planning need to be adopted.

### 2.2.2 Symptoms of the Leadership Crisis

One of the National College aims is to consider the maintenance of headship. In an independent study, commissioned by the DfES (Department for Education and Schools) in 2007, it was found that in the academic year 2004/5 indications were that *“in the primary sector, almost two-fifths of schools advertising for a head teacher reported were re-advertisements and of these a third were unable to make an appointment. In particular, Catholic schools experienced significant difficulties... overall evidence indicates applications for head and deputy posts is declining”* (2007 p25).

Statistics from the 2010, 25<sup>th</sup> annual survey, indicate that in the last decade there has been an average of 2031 advertisements for all primary schools, the lowest year being 2009 at “1846 posts” and the highest being 2001 at “2179 posts” (p6). The information is for the first round of head teacher vacancies. The statistics show the level of re-advertised posts within the last ten years averages at 31.7%, growing to 36.6% for the previous five years (Howson 2010 p10) indicating a clear rise. Is there a reason for the upturn in the re-advertising of vacancies for head teachers? How is the impact of fewer senior leaders going to affect the future of headship? If, as reported by Smithers (2006) in the Guardian online newspaper article (from the findings of the GTC), only “4% of teachers want to become heads in the next four years and 64% of experienced or class teachers have no appetite for headship” it is worth questioning what are the issues stopping people from taking on the head teacher position.

From other National College literature there is a strong indication that the middle leaders of the primary schools in England do not appear to want to move further in their leadership career development. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) indicate the extent of the problem: “*In 2006 the NCSL surveyed teaching staff and found that 43% of incumbent deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders do not aspire to be a head teacher*” (p382). The ‘School Leadership Today’ document from Munby and the National College (2009) discusses the DCSF (Department for Children, School and Families) findings on the same topic and gives the exact numbers related to personnel in the head teacher position: “*there are presently 17200 primary head teachers across England which has been a decrease of 1400 in eight years*” (p32). Is there a link between the lack of uptake of headship and the high percentages that appear to not want to progress in their careers?

Oplatka and Tamir (2009) have researched the careers’ of twenty-five deputy heads, all of whom are women, to try to understand why they are dissuaded from progressing into headship, through questioning their “*perceived motives and rationale for remaining in the present position*” (p217). The deputy heads are all from Israel but the stories are synonymous with senior female staff members across the world. The main areas that were found to be the justification for remaining in the deputy position were “*direct and frequent interaction with students*” (p225); “*the high sense of self-efficiency and professionalism so they feel like experts in their role*” (p226); “*the heads job is totally overwhelming, high energy consuming and remote*” (p228) and “*headship is subjectively related to instructional, administrative, organizational and political tasks which result in heads experiencing great overload, stress, burnout, health problems all at the expense of family and personal time*” (p228).

The arguments for remaining as deputy head are essential, as it gives an insight into how the role of a head teacher is viewed from other people's perspective. It does not give the position of a head in a favourable light. There are many negative viewpoints expressed and without future career development opportunities being created, this perception will not be counteracted. This opinion once again linking with Jayne's (1996) conclusions that deputies need to have specific encouragement to become a head. The conclusion, from Oplatka and Tamir (2009) is to consider specific deputy head training "*so preparation programmes and in-service training focus on the particular tasks and skills of being a deputy and how to understand the head role to gain a more accurate picture*" (p234). With the NPQH available within the United Kingdom, based upon such an objective, there appears to be a starting point in which to tackle the negativity around the role of the head teacher. The challenge is to get the career deputy heads to attend the courses. In this thesis, though, gender is not really a consideration as a theme, as the leadership problem transcends this aspect.

One key point that has been adhered to throughout the varying statistics from Dorman and D'Arbon (2003) and the newspaper articles (especially Evans for Wales Online 2014 and Maddern for TES 2011) is that the leadership problem is more noticeable within the Catholic sector. Recruitment of heads is constrained by the need for a person to be a practicing Catholic who attends church weekly and with Catholicism being the epitome of its teachings. Howson and Sprigade (2011) have closely considered the situation of appointments and job re-advertisements within faith schools (academic year - 2009/10) and found that there had been an increase in the percentages of re-adverts for a head teacher position: "*Church of England re-advertised 43% of the time; in 2008/9 it was 37%. Roman Catholic schools re-advertised 61% of the time as opposed to 49%*" (p19) to lead and manage a primary school what factors are inhibiting people from progression, in their career? The leadership crisis seems to stem from the lack of qualified personnel who want to move directly into headship. One of the symptoms for this appears to be a shortage of senior leaders furthering their career. What therefore are the perceptions, regarding the role of the head teacher, of the deputy and assistant head, especially in light of Oplatka and Tamir (2009) finding? The views of senior and middle leaders need to be researched and considered as they hold the answers about how to alleviate the leadership problem. This theme generated the rationale for my study, as answers needed to be sort.

Is there, though, really a leadership crisis? Fink (2010) argues that 'crisis' is too strong a definition. He claims that because systems and training are attempting to resolve the problem 'crisis' should be replaced with 'challenge':

*"While leadership issues in many countries have created serious problems, they are far from being a 'crisis'... I conclude that leadership succession is a big challenge but hardly a crisis." (Fink 2010 p1).*

Fink's (2010) argument is that *"there are lots of people willing to run a school... the challenge is to assign or hire the right body"* (p2). Howson (2010) statistics appear to indicate that Fink (2010) has a serious point to consider as in the mainstream education sector, head teacher positions are being filled, in the first attempt, in over 60% of occasions. However, the argument fails when consideration occurs regarding the sharp contrast of Howson and Sprigade (2011) details on Catholic schools. From the 2011 data, first attempt appointments are a low 39%. So where exactly is the crisis? In Catholic Education what are the reasons for such a poor uptake of head teacher positions? Why do only 30% of middle leaders want to move forward in their career (Rhodes and Brundrett 2009)? There is a serious problem in recruiting people to headship, and so it appears that there is a leadership crisis especially prevalent within the Catholic sector of primary education.

MacBeath (2006) argues that really there is only a leadership crisis in the inner cities of the large towns as, according to his research, these are the areas that have *"high-poverty students, low test scores, high staff turnover and unusually large numbers of inexperienced staff"* (p186). MacBeath discusses the statistics using findings from the home counties of England where only 2% of schools had to re-advertise as opposed to parts of London that had *"troubled communities.... which advertised at least three times"* (p186). Is there really only a leadership crisis in the inner cities of the UK? If this is the case, does this mean that Catholic primary schools in the inner cities are the institutions that are having the largest recruitment problems, or are there other factors at work? Research based within the whole of the English West Midlands Catholic schools should give some credence to these claims, or discredit the notion entirely. The Archdiocese of Birmingham spans a wide swath of England as it runs from Stoke-On-Trent in the North, to Oxford in the South, and therefore has schools within both rural and urban areas for the research to be conducted.

Hargreaves (2009) has pondered the role of the school head teacher in America and has found that *"principals are pressured today to generate short-term results ... or else. The consequences for failure include threatened closures of schools, external interventions, and loss of students, budgets and staff to competing charter schools"* (p20). In his article, he argues that this pressure to succeed is having an adverse effect on the education system because *"little attention is paid to long-term leadership succession or stability. The change agenda is the leadership agenda and from the very top, both are being mismanaged"* (p20).

Hargreaves (2009) is making the valid point that there is a leadership crisis because there is limited succession planning in many schools. Head teacher positions are essential, but with the present political landscape, being head teacher is no longer the job for life that it was once viewed as being. Accountability for pupil results is a theme that keeps being mentioned in the education literature with Hargreaves (2009), Harris (2007), Pricewaterhouse Cooper (2007) and Ball (2013) all indicating that this area is the fundamental issue as to why there is a school leadership problem.

When considering the various statistics and considered political context, thoughts turn to what other reasons are given for a leadership crisis? Harris (2007) along with Oplatka and Tamir (2009) and Pricewaterhouse Cooper (2007) believe that accountability of head teachers is a major factor that needs to be investigated further. MacBeath (2006) gives a list of five main symptoms that need to be addressed to solve the current leadership crisis. The five indicators are, from his research, the main causes for people not progressing to the head teacher position. The first 'stress' and second 'accountability' appears to agree with Harris (2007) as the main factor; the third is workload levels and family commitments; the fourth is salary, and finally, the social factor regarding 'teacher supply line' (MacBeath 2006 p 189-191). Many of the reasons (one to four), credited with being the main aspects of the nature of the leadership crisis, are intrinsically linked and so can then be placed under the umbrella term of contextual factors. Reason number five is a social factor and is only a problem in the main developed western countries (including the UK) and opposed to Asia Pacific Countries, according to MacBeath, where there is a *"strong sense of succession allied to a strong central forecasting system from the ministry"* (2007 p 184). The countries, in question, have successful systems in place to ensure a constant supply of school leaders and so as a researcher, it will be important to consider what can be learnt from these countries when considering possible working solutions.

### 2.2.3 Strategies suggested in the literature to solve the leadership crisis

Through the plethora of statistical data available, from Howson and Sprigade (2011), Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) and the National College of School Leadership (2006a), it appears that there is a leadership recruitment crisis in the education sector which is terminology used, within the media, as one of the main aspects of a 'leadership crisis' (TES 2011, McQueeney 2011). McQueeney (through the online Daily Mail report) quoted statistics from the 2011 Education Data Report that concluded that *"36% of primary head teacher roles for the 2010-11 academic year had to be advertised on more than one occasion after failing to find the right candidate. This compares with 34% the year before."* The nature of the crisis appears to be inherently connected with the theme of succession

planning, recruitment issues, quantity and quality of the applicants through identification and development of future leaders.

Succession planning, from the research available, is widely viewed as the way to alleviate leadership problems and is the common factor when looking at previous research on leadership crisis in education. Other strategies that need to be explored include the processes of recruitment and retention of current senior leaders; the development of middle leaders through capacity building; job fulfilment and then focus down on leadership within the Catholic Education system as the leadership shortage is more apparent in this sector than in mainstream education.

### 2.2.3.1 Succession Planning

In business, succession planning is ensuring there is a constant stream of qualified personnel who can take over the running of the organization if something untoward happens to the Managing Director (MD). Many companies have boards that help with the strategic forward planning and growth of organizations, and who are usually responsible for employing a single MD to advance the institution. Succession planning, through planned opportunities, allows people at different positions in their career to gain experience, skills and qualifications, which could eventually lead to deputy or senior manager positions. Rothwell (2010) defines succession planning as:

*“a means of identifying critical management positions, starting at project manager and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization... to develop internal talent to meet current or future talent needs of the organization” (p6).*

Succession planning is therefore the recognition of spotting talent and future leaders and giving the people opportunities to gain experience in order to advance their career.

In education, succession planning is the individual person, community of schools, faith institutions and government agencies working together to ensure that there is a constant, qualified and able group of individuals who are trained, supported and developed to a required leadership level (presently NPQH). These future school leaders will have been coached through crucial career path development; allowing them to have had access to many opportunities in readiness to lead a school. Succession planning is talent spotting and supporting staff throughout their career so that headship becomes a natural process that people feel confident to take on. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) call this *“in-house leadership learning”* (p384) where opportunities are created so that people have a trial run or can ‘act’ up whereby gaining experience of the role and also understand some of the responsibilities this can generate. MacBeath (2009) though considered the acting headship role, in



Scotland, and argues that that *"the ultimate authority was a shock for which few acting heads had been adequately prepared"* (p3). The solution, in his opinion, is not acting headship but a *"coaching and mentoring"* (p3) system for senior leaders. MacBeath argues that when support is planned for and delivered (within the school environment) successful succession planning and retention was found to take place.

Acting Headship as a method to support succession planning has been researched by Crawford (2012) who looked into the impact of the training programmes, in Scotland, that occur in readiness for headship. The study was conducted over a three year period and involved two phases. The first was 'professional socialisation' (p7) which is where the person gains *"first-hand experience derived from current and previous posts through processes such as observation and modelling"* (p7). The second phase, 'organisational socialisation' (p7) happened after the person undertook the head teacher role and what they felt were *"personal and professional values, abilities and interpersonal skills they felt to be critically important"* (p7).

The conclusion, regarding succession planning, that Crawford (2012) found was that the interviewees all discussed being *"talent spotted"* (p8) from an early stage of their career *"and encouraged to accept responsibilities outside the classroom"* (p8). The impact of this career development was that the middle and senior leaders gained self assurance in readiness for headship. This 'professional socialisation' (p7) is an integral aspect of the Scottish education system and encouraged in developing future leaders from the beginning of a teacher's career.

The fundamental aspect regarding this research though, according to Crawford (2012), was *"Secondment, promotion to senior teacher or being asked to take on a temporary acting head role"* (p8). What transpired, from the three year research, is that acting in a head teacher role allowed other teachers to gain experience of the position and by this act gave the person encouragement to advance to the position permanently. Therefore, the second 'organisational socialisation' phase is a natural transition from the first stage as the person has experienced the 'skills' and 'values' needed for the head teacher position.

Crawford (2012) conducted her research in Scotland, which has a very different educational system to England as OFSTED is not part of their inspection arrangements or school league tables. They have HM Inspectors of Education (renamed as Education Scotland in 2011) to consider how schools are run and the quality of the education. Although there are differences in the education systems within the United Kingdom, Crawford (2012) work gives many insights into acting headship, which are relevant in England and as a result will be used in this thesis as recent research into a pertinent theme.

Acting headship was also explored, as a theme, by Draper and McMichael (2002). They conducted a questionnaire inquiry into the reasons why people take on an acting head position. The study was conducted throughout all twenty four local authorities in Scotland and had a 75% response rate. Draper and McMichael (2002) found that acting headships were *"surprisingly widespread, often ten per cent of schools have acting heads"* (p289). Reasons for the substitute role was found to be because of such things as pregnancy, illness, secondment or re-advertisement needs due to retirement of the serving head.

Draper and McMichael (2002) concluded that acting positions *"have an individual career-related dimension in that they offer new opportunities in terms of role, job characteristics and career-experience"* (p292). The positive aspect of this position was found to be that it allows deputy heads a chance to experience the reality of the arrangement and from Draper and McMichael's (2002) research, it was often found to lead to the acting heads being *"influenced in subsequent career decision-making choices"* (p292). However, as with all actions, there is also a re-action and the acting headship position also unearthed a negative effect. In Draper and McMichael's (2002) questionnaire responses, there were some acting heads who felt trying the job *"confirmed their view they did not wish to be a head teacher"* (p292).

Draper and McMichael (2002) research found that when an acting head comes from within their own school *"local authorities seem to assume that they can immediately take on the task without any need of support"* (p300). They argue that if deputy heads are encouraged to try the headship position, then adequate training needs to be in place to support this. The conclusion being that:

*"An acting post that was perceived within a developmental framework as well as having a major stability function would stand a chance of offering valuable experience and helping to maintain a flow of applicants for headship"* (p301).

Draper and McMichael (2003) in another piece of research, sent out questionnaires to people who had been substitute head teachers in Scotland, and received 64 responses. One of the main findings was that an acting head maybe in a position of limbo, not being sure of which direction to take. This is primarily because they can *"find themselves in an unusual situation for a school leader: that of 'holding the fort' with little expectation of long-term involvement in, or responsibility for, the progress of the school"* (p67). The, solution, from Draper and McMichael's (2003) research is *"to provide proper formal support for all acting heads, since an informal system is less likely to be monitored and assured"* (p74). What was interesting, from their conclusions, was that after the length of acting head service (ranging

from three months to three years) *“only half (32) had applied for permanent headship”* (p78). Of the remaining 32 most felt that:

*“acting headship had been important in influencing their decision, for not progressing to permanent headship, as the role had consumed them, leaving little time for family or out-of-school activities”* (p78).

Draper and McMichael's (2002 and 2003) and Crawford's (2012) research is important as it gives an insight into the talent management and training needs that were found, in Scotland, to be of paramount importance in gaining school leaders and retaining them in that position. Acting headship, as a theme, will be explored further in my research to determine if it has had any bearing in the career paths of the head teachers. Research into Scotland's education system, throughout the past twelve years, has found that acting headship is invaluable and the questionnaires and interviews (that will be sent out to Catholic head teachers in the English West Midlands) will discuss this area further to determine whether deputies are still taking on the acting headship position, and what type of training any acting heads receive. It will also be interesting to listen for responses as to whether, if a person has experienced acting headship, it influenced their decision to progress their career or not, as Draper and McMichael (2003) found in half their research.

Another area that the literature considered was how other key individuals can support the position of head teacher, as a way of alleviating the leadership crisis. Woods, Armstrong and Pearson (2012) in research regarding how School Business Managers (SBM's) could support succession planning found that in interviews a re-occurring theme was that *“deputies can be granted limited access to aspects of the head teacher role and therefore unable to develop adequate expertise”* (p150). The development of the SBM role was at the forefront of the Coalition Conservative Government Education policy in 2014. The intention is for schools to have the support of an experienced business manager to provide assistance to the head teacher and governors with finance, human resources and health & safety issues. With research conducted by Woods et al. (2012) there appears to be a concern that deputies are lacking the expertise required to run the finances of schools, due to a lack of experience. With the development of SBM's roles, within education, this could be a solution to the transition of deputy to head role. In the questionnaires and interviews, comments relating to acting headship, or concerns of any lack of financial experience will be paid attention to.

Fraser and Brock (2006) researched the topic in Australia and found that there were many 'drawbacks' (p433) to the head teacher position that need to be addressed before succession planning can become common practice. They initially contacted forty seven

schools and collected data from twenty of them, through surveys and interviews. The information generated indicates that head teachers feel:

*“a sense of isolation, stress, insufficient remuneration, staff issues, demanding and disgruntled parents, and unrealistic expectations from employing authorities were disincentives to the job” (Fraser and Brock 2006 p433).*

From their research there is an underlying theme that head teachers become isolated from the other members of their staff and spend their time on administrative tasks, as opposed to teaching and learning of their pupils. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) agree with the previous research and go further by saying that *“high levels of workload and bureaucracy deter individuals... and that passion has been lost through over-managerialist approaches” (p385).* In my own research I intend to initially send out a survey, and I will be looking for evidence that the issues, identified by Fraser and Brock (2006) and Rhodes and Brundrett (2009), are still relevant factors.

Woods, Armstrong and Pearson (2012) found through their research that there is a possible solution to the workload issue by the introduction of a SBM becoming part of the school staffing structure. They concluded that *“through lessening workload and targeted advice head teachers reported reduced anxiety. SBM expertise is believed to support the retention of heads by improving the quality of working life” (p152).* There is a common theme developing throughout the literature that there is a workload problem that is exacerbating the leadership of schools, and that any succession planning agenda needs to look at ways to encourage the workforce to ‘have a go’ at a position before taking it on permanently. There is a strong argument, from Woods et al. (2012) that schools should look to the business world to support the heads of the future, especially to relieve some of the paperwork associated with the finance and human resources aspects.

Bush (2011) has reflected upon succession planning programmes available within England and South Africa through longitudinal research, as in his view, *“succession planning is a major plank in any cogent strategy to address the risks inherent in the supply problem” (p78 5).* The studies were conducted using surveys with school leaders (both senior and middle) over a period of two years. He included Catholic schools in his research *“to provide depth and explanatory power” (p786).* What Bush (2011) found is that *“retirement, negative perceptions of headship and inadequate salary differentials” (p797)* are the causes for the present leadership crisis. His study of the ‘Succession Planning’ programme in England noted that issues related to recruitment to headship was ‘diminishing’ with the introduction of *“local solutions such as talent spotting, leadership programmes and new models of leadership” (p797).* Forward strategic, centralised succession planning, as a whole country,

is what Bush (2011) adheres to as a solution to any future leadership problems. Making the NPQH 'mandatory' is the way forward, according to Bush, as *"leadership development opportunities is the essential part of any succession planning programme"* (p799).

With Bush (2011) appearing to dismiss that England has a head teacher recruitment crisis, the conclusion is that there is a leadership problem due to the lack of formal leadership programmes. With the introduction of the 2014 new NPQH (for heads), NPQSL (for senior leaders) and NPQML (for middle leaders) the National College appears to be following the advice of Bush (2011). The only downside is that school leaders are not required to take these programmes. In the questionnaires and interviews, leadership training will be an area of consideration to determine what, if anything, school leaders have received especially in light of moving towards headship.

The National College for Leadership, Schools and Children's Services (NCLSCS but more widely known by the shortened name of the National College) was previously known as the National College of School Leadership (NCSL). This Internet resource centre for leadership of all levels houses a section of its site on the theme of succession planning (which can be found in the leadership segment). The body was established in 2000 on the Jubilee Campus at the University of Nottingham, with the primary aim of developing headship. It was initially responsible for setting up and training senior leaders in the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) as it was originally a public body free from government linkage. The college then evolved into training middle leaders with 'Leadership Pathways' and 'Leading from the Middle' programmes, which allowed middle and senior school staff to develop their skills in readiness for headship and the NPQH certificate. These two middle leader training awards have been disbanded and in 2014, the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders (NPQSL) and National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders (NPQML) replaced them. In 2012, the National College joined the Department for Education and then in 2013 merged with the Teaching Agency.

The National College, in 2006, published out an overview of how important succession planning should be to schools throughout England and Wales. This report was modified and amended in April 2010 to incorporate recent statistics available on the leadership crisis. They found evidence, from research they conducted, that perceptions and seemingly observed head teacher roles and responsibilities were impacting on the uptake of the job of headship, to the point that *"43 per cent of deputies said they had no desire to move up to the next rung on the career ladder"* (2006b p4). The list of reasons for the lack of progression up the career ladder, according to The National College, was similar to those indicated by Fraser and Brock (2006) and Oplatka and Tamir (2009):

*“The impression of an overwhelming workload, accountability (OFSTED, local authority, parents) and high level of responsibility are clearly acting as a deterrent to deputies, assistant heads and others with the potential for headship. Teachers and middle leaders say stress and the loss of pupil contact are also major deterrents” (The National College 2006b p4).*

Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) add to the collective mix by giving some possible insight into why new head teachers are becoming a rare breed. They argue that *“shortages associated with retirement”* (p4) and *“negative perceptions of headship”* (p4) are not making the job an attractive option. This is not helped, in their opinion, by the early retirement program that allowed for many head teachers to leave the profession at 55 years of age with a very handsome pension and with deputies witnessing first hand *“the demanding nature of the job and failure to achieve work-life balance”* (p4). Bottery (2004) is even more scathing in his opinion as to why there is a head teacher shortage, and although OFSTED is not mentioned directly, there is a hint that the organization for schools inspections is having a fundamental effect on headship:

*“This is a leadership which feels itself ground down by overwork, by impossible timescales, enormous amounts of paperwork from outside interests, whose job is not to lead so much as to implement government policies which are driven by a larger political and economic force which only occasionally link with the kind of aspirations and moral agendas which many school leaders hold dear”* (p24).

When considering my research I am interested in the makeup of the head teachers within the Primary Catholic Partnership, and so as part of my questionnaire, I will consider the age mix of the present serving heads, to determine if there is a leadership crisis now or whether the predictions of the various indicators are beginning to become reality and that the next decade the shortage will indeed increase as others retire and are not replaced. The notion of over burden and work-life balance is a common theme that is reiterated in many parts of the literature, and I feel will need to be explored as possible reasons in my research design, through both the questionnaire and individual responses. There is a thread, throughout the literature, of long-term deputies staying put because they ‘see’ what headship is like and are reluctant to move forward. It would be interesting to obtain the views and reasons for the lack of movement of some incumbent deputies. What exactly is it that is putting them off? Interviewing individual deputies could be the place to discuss this concept in order to gain clarity.

Therefore, how then could succession planning work to solve a leadership crisis? Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) argue that there needs to be a change in culture. The present school leaders, they feel, have a duty to encourage an ethos of *“team-work, trust, confidence-building, availability of advice, a commitment to professional support and learning”* (p394).

There should, therefore, be policies and practices in schools to support people in their career advancement. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) feel that with stable staffing and clear strategies in place for training, "*talent pool growth*" (p394) of younger staff will allow for stronger opportunities for succession planning to occur. Rothwell (2010) agrees with this and argues that a 'talent pool' should not be seen as a mechanism for a specific leadership role, but for all leadership roles. Any staff that are given opportunities and career plans could therefore successfully take over leadership roles in the future:

*"To be effective, a talent pool should have appropriate performance management which allows for individual performance and development, effective potential assessment strategies and suitable development efforts. Instead of giving a job to those with the longest time served, the job will go to track records in performing and development"* (Rothwell 2010 p212).

Hargreaves (2009) has four solutions for successful succession planning as a way to resolve the leadership problems, both now and in the future. He believes there are four aspects that need to be addressed "*increase leadership stability; build systematic leadership; develop distributive leadership and create coaches for new leaders*" (p22-23). From his research, he argues that looking within the school community within a geographic area is important. Talent spotting should be a group exercise, as schools need different skill sets at different times. Head teachers need to be less precious about their staff and look at the leadership qualities available and try to enhance them for the good of all the schools. This is quite a forward thinking approach to school leadership and moves away from the 'grow your own leader' approach that other succession planning literature adheres to. In the questionnaire and interviews (see appendix one and four) the theme of succession planning, delegated leadership and staff mentoring are all themes that are explored as possible ways to move succession planning forward in schools in the future.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006), in their book *Sustainable Leadership*, change the terminology of succession planning to 'succession management'. They argue that whilst a plan "*is better than no plan, a succession plan alone is not enough*" (p72). The problem, with succession planning, according to the authors, is that often the motivation is for one person to 'take over'. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) discuss the drawbacks to the succession planning idea as the proposed future leader may "*get impatient, tail off in performance, prefer another opportunity or fall into disgrace*" (p72). They comment on the way individuals can be fantastic in one setting but less profound in another. This can be down to factors such as the personnel they are working with, to the networks created around them. The solution, according to Hargreaves and Fink (2006) is to look at five aspects of school succession management that can provide solutions to sustainability of school leadership:

- “1. Distributive leadership – so succession does not depend on the talents of one individual.*
- 2. Professional Cultures – that will inoculate schools against mediocre or indifferent successors.*
- 3. Pools of Leadership- create talent pools within schools and districts so that vacancies are easier to resolve.*
- 4. Support Aspiring Leaders – through outstanding schools influencing and improving development of future leaders.*
- 5. Coaching – coach individual leaders and school communities to plan for a leader’s exit from the first day of their tenure” (p76-77).*

Re-occurring themes that are emerging from the literature to support the development of future school leadership include distributive leadership, as a way of giving future leaders experience of running various aspects of the school (Hargreaves and Fink 2006, Hargreaves 2009, Barber, Whelan and Clark 2010); coaching future potential leaders (Hargreaves and Fink 2006, MacBeath 2009, Barber, Whelan and Clark 2010) and training potential leaders through NPQH and Talent Management programmes (The National College, Oplatka and Tamir 2009, Fink 2010). With so many components of succession planning (succession management) found in the school leadership literature, research on what aspects are delegated to potential future leaders, what training for leadership has been embarked upon, and whether any coaching (by other leaders) will form aspects of my thesis questionnaire.

With all the questions and potential solutions regarding succession planning, there is one area that also needs to be considered in this leadership study, and that is whether any such succession practices are taking place within Catholic Primary schools. Is there a ‘talent pool’ used and what effect, if any, does it have on the future of Catholic Education? Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) found in a small scale study that *“there is little evidence that succession planning is planned for in some schools”* (p395). The data collection will look at Catholic primary education within the English West Midlands to build a picture of how succession planning is being addressed within schools. In the questionnaire, sent out to school leaders, succession planning will have its own section. Succession planning, if it is an answer to the leadership crisis, needs to be closely evaluated and a long-term study of its impact needs to be considered. Further research in this area would need to take place to show the true impression on the leadership crisis.

#### 2.2.3.2 Recruitment to Headship

With the statistical information indicating there is a leadership crisis, the recruitment to the headship role needs careful consideration. Coleman (2002) considered the recruitment of women to headship at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and concluded that *“gender stereotypes, almost exclusively relating to women, still play an important part in the selection of the head teachers for our schools”* (p47). Coleman argues that women have to be aware of *“hidden*



*prejudice*" (p48) when applying for head teacher positions, as her research indicated that women are treated differently in interviews; indeed the whole selection process. Coleman's evidence however is over ten years old. With equal opportunities legislation (2010 Equalities Act) and changes to employment law, is there still 'hidden prejudice' directed towards women when they apply for the head teacher position? The research was initiated within the secondary sector and there is no discussion about recruitment to primary head teacher status. Within headship, is there a gender issue when recruiting occurs? With the questionnaire and individual interviews this area will be mentioned subtly to determine what, if any, information is generated.

Gunter (2001) argues, from her research, that people aspire to become a head teacher and that their experiences of being a deputy are the key to recruitment to becoming the head of a school. Gunter claims that becoming a head teacher is a choice made by the teacher early on in their career: *"Analysis of head teacher biographies shows that the movement into senior management is connected with a disposition towards being the head teacher, and a realisation that this is where they wished to stake their professional capital"* (Gunter 2001 p80). Alongside this career choice, though, issues relating to gender again are discussed as being a 'glass ceiling' (p81) to the progression to the head teacher role. Gunter (2001) indicates that from her research *"it's three times the battle being a woman in a male dominated society"* (p81).

The arguments relating to gender, from Coleman (2002) and Gunter (2001), appear to indicate that women may have to battle 'hidden prejudices' in order to become a school head teacher. There is limited research on this sensitive area, but if people choose early on that they would like to take on the headship role, there is training from The National College through the NPQH; NPQSL or NPQML programmes. There is also a post graduate certificate, compulsory, for new Special Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) and other arrays of CPD for the middle and senior leaders, but are there enough positive role model mentors or coaches available to support the deputy in their journey to headship? In the individual interviews, with the deputy and assistant heads, this whole area of training requirements was evaluated and whether the training supports their transition to headship further explored. Succession planning initiatives and researchers (The National College, Oplatka and Tamir 2009, Fink 2010) all argue that training is fundamental for the position of a school leader so the interviews and questionnaires need to ask exactly what extra mentoring occurs. One area that was considered, through the collection of the data, was the issue of gender to determine if there were any male-female differences in the responses.

### 2.2.3.3 Retention of current head teachers

Succession planning and retention are intrinsically linked. Every organization aims to retain its successful staff with proven track records of achievement. When a school has recruited a 'good' head teacher, this is even more paramount. As Rothwell (2010) comments "*few businesses want to invest substantial time, money and effort to recruit, select, orient and develop their most productive people- only to determine them lured away*" (p298). However, workforce is fluid and therefore to retain a current head teacher, support needs to be available. Morale is crucial to ensuring the head teacher's emotional attachment to the school. Fraser and Brock (2006) found, in their research, that 'workload', 'accountability' and 'stress' (p4) are factors that mean head teachers are leaving their positions. This raises questions as to how heads are supported when they are in the job, and if morale is affected, does it mean they resign or retire from their post?

MacBeath (2006) however argues that the 'crisis' is really manufactured. He agrees that there are "*long hours and high stress*" (p184) but that this is really a "*partial representation*" (p184). MacBeath discusses, through his research, that recruitment and retaining of head teachers depends on the geography of the school. He concludes that the countries which are the most successful at ensuring a supply of highly skilled and competent heads are those who have invested "*strong central forecasting... a government level forward planning and nurturing the qualities of leadership which extend beyond the school principal*" (p184).

In the article by MacBeath, the common thread appears to be succession planning that is government enforced and ensures a constant stream of head teachers. Hong Kong and Singapore are the highlighted areas in the report. The research also discusses the training and support being maintained throughout the head teacher's career. Most government head teacher support, especially within the UK, stops after the first year. The 'Local Induction Programme' was a scheme, discontinued in 2012, which linked Local Authorities and The National College together to support incumbent heads with training, advice and a named mentor. Once a head teacher completed a year, all money was stopped towards support for training. Mentor allocation, to a new head teacher still occurs, but the reality of whether they are supported and coached is open to debate. In the interviews, discussion around mentorship and coaching was considered, especially with a view for supporting deputies to take on the headship position. In the individual interview sessions, with the new head teachers, this area needed to be explored further to determine if any consensus could be reached on the concept of supporting heads for longer periods of time.

Within the last few years, talent Management is as a theme that has emerged to solve the leadership crisis. The National College has a site dedicated to this area, created in 2012,

which has recent research as a mechanism for lessening the leadership crisis. Talent management is where a school leader considers the skills of their workforce and then creates a programme of training to develop their potential.

Barber, Whelan and Clark (2010) identified three areas that can be adopted by schools in order to support their succession planning requirements. The three aspects are 'self-identification' (p9) which is where the head teacher and staff member discuss leadership capacity and where the staff member is then 'coached' (p9) to develop curriculum areas. The second stage allows the *"potential leader to take appropriate courses to build interest in leadership"* (p9). This second stage is where the head teacher takes a pre-emptive stance in order to develop the required skills individual's needed for taking on a role within school leadership. The third area is 'proactive' (p9). Proactive is where an area of responsibility is delegated specifically to the staff member and support or direction are given as necessary. All of these three themes are being reiterated through the literature as ways to support talent management, and thereby potentially reduce any future leadership crisis. The surveys considered talent management as a theme, and whether this is a way forward as part of a succession planning strategy.

#### 2.2.3.4 Leadership Potential

Another strategy that incorporates an aspect of succession planning links to developing the teacher and spotting the leadership potential 'in house'. Gunter (2001) found that people aspire to headship early on in their career, but is this reality? From some of the head teachers' biographies (from her research) this notion appears to be the case. However, there are many other people in education who also need to be considered and encouraged. Developing the current workforce and creating a bank of leaders for the future has to be planned for by the senior leaders of today, especially looking further afield to the research of Woods et al. (2012) on the School Business Manager's role.

Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) investigated how leadership talent is identified in twelve contextually differing primary schools within the English West Midlands. Part of their research included semi structured interviews with the head teacher of the school and another interview with a middle leader within the same school. The bulk of their findings related to features that heads look for when considering leadership talent spotting. Table 1 identifies the head teachers' perceptions from Rhodes and Brundrett's (2006) findings:

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Result</i>
<i>Initiative</i>	8
<i>Vision</i>	6

<i>People Skills</i>	6
<i>Sound Practitioner</i>	5
<i>Confidence</i>	4
<i>Energy</i>	4
<i>Enthusiasm</i>	3
<i>Ambition</i>	2
<i>Communication</i>	1

Table 1: Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) p275

From the research, serving head teachers believe that the key to spotting future leaders depends on the individual's 'initiative'. This links with the other research by Barber, Whelan and Clark (2010). It appears from both studies that staff members, therefore, by using their own ingenuity bring about better results within the school regarding promotion. The key, from the findings, is for head teachers to evaluate the work of middle leaders (based on their self resourcefulness) and the impact on the pupils in order to consider whether the person is a future leader. The serving head teacher, thereby, sows the seeds of leadership to the colleague and encourages the individual to further their career. Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) found that heads would *"take a risk in order to give a potential leader a project so that the individual's confidence would grow within a supported leadership role"* (p276). The middle leaders agreed with the head teachers on being allowed opportunities to lead a new project within the school, but found that a *"supportive head was essential to their professional development"* (p280). It appears, from this piece of research, that future heads are 'spotted' by serving ones; given projects to ensure school development, and the end result is a confident leader ready to progress in their career. Talent spotting as a theme is quite prevalent in all the literature as being intrinsically linked to succession planning.

Table 1 identifies that 'vision' and 'people skills' are also fairly important characteristics of leadership, but that communication is possibly the least important. With these three main characteristics, viewed by serving heads, as some of the criteria necessary for future leaders should the list be included within a school succession plan? In the scheduled interviews, the characteristics required when spotting potential future teacher leaders was a point of consideration. When talking with incumbent head teachers it was invaluable to investigate whether their previous heads allowed them opportunities to lead initiatives, and whether these opportunities have proved an asset in their early headship roles.

Recent research conducted by Forde, McMahon and Gronn (2013) on the alternative leadership preparation programme in Scotland looked at the work of senior leaders in moving up to the head teacher role. The work included *"trials conducted to provide greater flexibility in order to better match the individual development needs and circumstances of the*

*aspirant head teachers” (p440).* Seventy-six people participants of the National Flexible Routes to Headship (NFRH) Programme’ responded to the researchers’ questionnaire, and fourteen were interviewed. What was found was that:

*“The coaching process had a substantial impact on the development of the participants as leaders as coaching provided an important means of relating experience and provided structured opportunities for setting and reviewing targets but more importantly, coaching provided opportunities for in-depth sense-making and reflection” (p449)*

In the simplest form, *“Coaching and reflection intertwined in the building of a sense of self-efficacy and the strengthening of interpersonal skills” (p449)* thereby giving the senior leaders confidence to pursue a head teacher role. Coaching and training of potential heads, that allows a person to acquire skills and experience needed for the job appears (from Forde, McMahon and Gronn (2013), Barber, Whelan and Clark (2010) and Rhodes and Brundrett 2006) to be a possible solution to a leadership crisis. With indications that coaching and succinct, appropriate training is vital for attracting future leaders, questions on coaching and training formed part of the field work of this thesis in both the questionnaire and interviewing process.

#### 2.2.3.5 Job Fulfillment

Succession planning and job satisfaction are connected, as shown through research conducted by Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) and Rothwell (2010). Staff turnover is fluid and many middle leaders move to other institutions to gain a promotion. This can sometimes be due to positions in leadership being held by other school senior leaders where they are employed. One form entry, small primary schools, can sometimes lose good staff, as opportunities can be limited for core subject positions. Staff, however, can be persuaded to remain at a school, if according to Rhodes and Brundrett (2006), *“those with influence over the circumstances of teachers’ experience of work encourage the possibilities for fostering increased job commitment through their leadership actions” (p282).* The conclusions, from the research, were that successful succession planning warrants individuals having their own career maps to ensure individualized programs are suited to enhancing their skills. Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) conclude that for succession planning to work, the present senior leadership teams should tailor a plan to develop each ‘spotted talent’, to a point where the inevitable next step is headship. The task, therefore, is how to achieve this in order to prevent demotivation and negativity that can be the downside if staff feel undervalued.

Ololube (2005) conducted some research in Nigeria on the theme of job satisfaction and found that if educational establishments are not careful *“then employees become demotivated, both in relation to their job and their employer” (p2).* In Ololube’s conclusions,

he found that teachers' satisfaction with the teaching profession was lower if they felt that *"their inputs were greater than the outputs"* (p2). As succession planning appears to be linked closely to talent spotting, then ensuring that people are valued has to be a consideration. Downsides to feeling undervalued include, according to Ololube (2005), *"de-motivation (due to the employee perceiving disparity between the inputs and the outputs existing), reduced effort, becoming disgruntled, or, in more extreme cases, being disruptive"* (p2). The way to solve this de-motivation, founded from the conclusions drawn from interviews with seventy principals was *"a fair day's work for a fair day's pay"* (p7). Ololube (2005) found that job satisfaction was linked to a feeling of encouraging staff's abilities and paying the appropriate wage. If job satisfaction is connected to monetary reward, then managing staff development has to link with the teaching that is conducted within the classroom, and the leadership that is undertaken throughout the individual's career. This links with the idea of performance related pay, which has been a part of the education system, in the UK, for the past few years.

Performance management has been in existence for well over a decade. It was previously known as staff appraisal and has always been connected to improving pupil development. An aspect of the present system is to develop the individual teacher through considering their future training requirements. The system of performance management is linked to pay increments and with new guidelines introduced (originally in September 2011 and reviewed September 2014) allow head teachers more autonomy regarding payment towards performance and experience. This development gives schools a greater opportunity to look at succession planning, and to maintain job satisfaction through salary opportunities. In the thesis interviews, a discussion needed to take place on whether 'mapping out' opportunities and performance management plans were a solution to the leadership crisis, alongside the reality of salary. It is important to consider whether salary is linked to job satisfaction and whether money is connected to moving towards headship?

## 2.3 Leadership of a Primary Catholic School

The literature review of Catholic education is separated into three sections to discuss previous research that has investigated the difficulties in recruiting a head teacher in a faith school; possible reasons as to why it is arduous to retain heads, and succession planning ideology within the Catholic sector.

### 2.3.1 Introduction to Catholic Education

All schools have mission statements and ideologies based around their aims for the children that they cater for, regardless of their race or culture. In a Catholic school, however, the

basis for everything is God, and following His example in all aspects of life. Grace (2002) gives a chronological history of the origins of the Catholic school and how its original 1870 purpose was to *“maintain integrity of Catholic Education through (i) Doctrine and (ii) religious management”* (p8). Catholic Education in the Twentieth Century progressed to ensuring that *“schooling was to provide religious, personal and educational formation for the children of the Catholic poor in elementary schools of reasonable quality”* (p10). Education was mainly for the Irish, working class immigrants, to ensure that the protestant religion did not infiltrate their lives. Teachers, within the schools, were often from religious orders and the leadership style was very disciplinarian and autocratic.

Faith schools, since the 1880s, has evolved as a result of various church legislation (e.g. Vatican II in 1965) and in the last quarter of the century, religious academics (such as clergy and Nuns) have been replaced by practicing Catholic teachers who still have a strong ethos of teaching their mission about Christ to all pupils who attend their schools. The Governing Body (GB) of a Catholic school is made up of a core of people, known as ‘foundation governors’, recommended by the parish priest as exemplars of the Catholic community. These people are endorsed by the Bishops to instigate changes in the Catholic school and are at the forefront of ensuring that religious education is at the heart of everything. There is an ethos (within the Catholic school) that prayers, teaching about the seven sacraments, and Mass are fundamental aspects of everyday life. A distinct difference between Catholic and mainstream education is that there is an expectation that two hours of RE is taught each week from the age of seven.

The leadership style within Catholic education has evolved in the last century and is more democratic (in the Catholic sector’s openness to new ideas) and distributive (in its support for other staff members’ leadership training). Servant leadership, according to Greenleaf Centre for Servant Leadership (2015) *“is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choices brings one to aspire to lead.”* Servant leadership is a style that has its origins in serving the community and church in the United States of America. Its style encompasses an ethos and mission and is increasingly being linked with the Catholic religion across the world.

From the literature on servant leadership (from Greenleaf 1977 and Spears 1984) there appears to be a consensus that senior management personnel are seemingly not being nurtured and allowed to ‘serve’ and ‘lead’ (Greenleaf 1977 p20). I am particularly interested, if Greenleaf’s research is to be believed, in considering whether the modern day work life equilibrium is hindering the school leadership in any way, and whether it is a contributory factor in the low uptake of head teacher positions within the Catholic sector specifically.

Talent management, which has its basis in spotting future leadership potential, as a counter attack mechanism was a constant theme that emerged from the literature and was investigated especially in relation to Catholic headship.

Another theme emerging from the literature review is statistics showing that schools are facing difficulties in recruiting head teachers. In a faith school, the problems are increasingly acute. Concentrating on the specific education sector in-faith schools, which incorporates the voluntary aided institutions of Church of England (C of E), Jewish, Methodist and Catholic, the statistics are noticeably bleak. The C of E and Catholic schools have *“six and a half thousand schools between them, educating around one and a half million pupils which still in 2010 is less likely than others to make an appointment the first time they advertise a headship”* (Howson 2010 p 30). In the report, the statistics that there is, on average, a 54.75% chance that if a vacancy in a Roman Catholic School for a head teacher comes available it will have to be re-advertised. Church of England schools fair better with a 40.75% chance. As a researcher, within the Catholic system, I was interested in finding out some of the possible scenarios for the high statistics, and whether the view of being a head teacher was in some way stopping natural leadership progression.

From the specific information available regarding the retirement of present serving head teachers, by the end of 2014 the rate will have steadily increased, as 57% are over the age of 50 years (The National College 2010b). These statistics indicate that the leadership crisis is happening presently, but unless people start to apply for headship in Catholic education, other solutions may need to be considered from executive heads (one head teacher responsible for multiple schools) to federations (many heads with one governing body). All of these are currently being discussed by the Diocesan Schools Committee (DSC) with various stakeholders, to give a model for school governors to consider. However, with all of these concepts of models of leadership, there still needs to be a person recruited and retained to be at the helm.

Canavan (2001) wrote about the problems of recruiting Catholic head teachers in the UK, US, New Zealand and Australia (which he found have all expressed difficulty) and gave possible solutions that could be adopted to help address the problems. One of the first aspects that is discussed is the link between women and family life:

*“We must develop strategies to enable more women to accept leadership roles. This may well involve reconceptualizing some roles, including headship, to bring more in harmony with the demands of family and school community life”* (Canavan 2001 p75).

Exactly how this idea is to be moved forward is not considered further, especially as preliminary indications, from deputy and assistant heads, are that one of the inhibiting



factors in applying for headship is the perceived long working hours and the impact this has on family life. In the questionnaire review (in Chapter Four) it was important to look at the responses of work-life balance and grasp what recommendations and solutions were put forward. Succession planning, according to Canavan, needs to be a process that is at the heart of the present leadership mindset. Talent spotting should be a constant remit in the school ethos and vision. Middle leaders need to be prepared to take on responsibilities for their career development and be supported by the senior leadership team so they have delegated activities to enhance their career prospects.

Durow and Brock (2004) were more specific about possible indications as to why Catholic schools may find it hard to recruit head teachers. They surveyed twenty serving heads (in Midwest United States of America) and found that the parish priest was ultimately the reason for retaining or resigning their position:

*“Priests were often mentioned as the central figure in the conflict. The Principals’ comments descriptive of governance conflicts included inability to work with an autocratic pastor... which resulted in non-renewal of contracts” (Durow and Brock 2004 p200).*

This is one piece of literature about this topic and there is limited research on the impact the parish priest has on the role of the head teacher. The parish priest is often included in the governing body and regularly is the Chair of Governors in the Catholic Education system and it could be an avenue to explore. It is an interesting and controversial area that may be worth delving into during the senior leader interviews, to find out the real issue that puts deputies off taking the head teacher role, and whether the influence of the clergy has any effect.

The discussion by Dorman and D’Arbon (2004) on Catholic Education in Australia links to the Durow and Brock’s (2004) research as the decline of the teaching priest and nun to the position of spirituality leader in the governing body. Is there a link between the clergy and the lack of uptake of headship? Both articles, however, do not comment further, as ultimately directives about running a faith based school come from the Pope in Rome and this is part of the ‘non- negotiables ’ within the Catholic sector.

### 2.3.2 Retention of present Catholic head teachers

Durow and Brock (2004) have given some potential indicators for why ‘principals’ are not forthcoming in Catholic Education. However, from their research, the reasons generated are not faith specific:

*“Factors contributing to retention problems have been attributed to the demanding factors, ever increasing workloads, skyrocketing stress, long hours, low pay, few perks and limited respect associated with the role” (p194).*

Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) have considered the issues related to the leadership crisis and indicated that the solution could be within the schools themselves through self-growth of the future leaders. The discussion is based around whether schools should adopt a more *“proactive stance... growing one’s own leaders”* (p270). There is a move towards a more flexible headship model that allows secondment, school improvement partnership and part time opportunities, thereby allowing job share openings. This is encouraged in the literature available on succession planning and retention of serving head teachers from The National College. However, how to put the ‘talent spotting’ concept into the mantra of the primary school environment is an area that needs to be investigated further. If schools need to consider succession planning from within, then the staff available have to be of a certain standard. How do inner-city and rural schools (increasingly re-advertising for head teachers) recruit ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ staff who can then become a leader of the school?

Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) researched how to identify leadership talent within school by liaising with schools within the English West Midlands, the location of my research. They found that in order to ‘grow’ a future leader, it is important to observe ‘showing initiative’ (p275). By allowing tasks to be delegated (by the head teacher) the teacher develops an idea and then considers the impact on pupils, allowing for communication with stakeholders and evaluating their own performance. Another point raised was to encourage ambition. Head teachers should have a responsibility to ensure that people have access to professional development that can encourage leadership skills. It would be interesting to consider how school performance management cycles could influence the leadership crisis. Teachers are permitted to choose self development aspects of their appraisal, but how much of it is linked to succession planning and the skills required for headship? However, as Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) comment, the situation that the school finds itself in can influence the choice of development opportunities that potentially can be built into staff development:

*“Head teachers are able to use their power to shape the work of their colleagues and this may be heavily influenced by priorities within the school, such as getting out of special measures. It appears the context is potentially highly influential in determining succession and succession patterns”* (p279).

When looking at succession planning, as part of the leadership crisis, it was important to ensure that the eighty schools had a variety of different contexts, so that a true picture could emerge. It was interesting to determine if planning for career development, from middle to senior leadership, is encouraged in all types of schools, and whether all people are encouraged to append linked CPD to leadership advancement.

### 2.3.3 Succession Planning and Retention in Primary Catholic Education

Faith is a very personal concept and in the leadership of a Catholic School (both Primary and Secondary) this is prevalent in the expectation that the senior management team (SMT) is made up of all practicing Catholics - who attend church; gain a reference from a priest and follow the teachings and words of Jesus Christ in all aspects of their lives. Fundamentally *“a great leader is first experienced as a servant to others, and this simple fact is central to his or her greatness”* (Spears 1998 p4). Servant leaders have morals and values that are intrinsically linked to their faith that allows them to serve others and to put children first before themselves in order to bring about the ‘greater good’ society may be lacking. Servant leadership has its basis in the notion of religious faith affecting everyday aspects of life. Greenleaf 1977 summarises this as: *“faith resting on one or more of the prophets of old having given the ‘word’ for all time being heard in the contemporary voice”* (p23).

In Australia, another place where there has been research on this subject, succession planning on the issues related to the lack of Catholic principals during the past decade has been investigated in intricate detail. The recent piece of research, by Dorman and D’Arbon (2004), considered the views of *“3000 potential applicants”*(p1) for headship positions. The main aim was to consider possible incentives and barriers to taking up the role, with the ultimate objective of solving their leadership crisis. Catholic Education, in Australia, represents 20% of the pupils in education - so a substantial proportion of the population. Dorman and D’Arbon (2004) argue that there are two fundamental reasons why attracting Catholic head teachers is especially difficult:

*“The two major factors are one the decline in the number of religious congregations from whom membership, principals of Catholic schools were appointed. The other reason is that leadership places are now taken by lay persons and the apparent reluctance of Catholic teachers to apply for leadership positions is increasing”* (p2-3).

The reason expressed is the shift in culture from a priest or nun running a Catholic School (from Dorman and D’Arbon viewpoint) as being the main reason that headship is in decline in Australia. This stance is an interesting one that is worthwhile considering further in the interview aspect of my own thesis research.

In the conclusion to initial investigations, about succession planning, Dorman and D’Arbon (2004) felt that a specific *“strong formation program... embedded in strategic planners practice”* (p8) is the way forward. The program that Dorman and D’Arbon (2004) refer to is the ‘Learn: Lead: Succeed’ Australian national qualification, similar to the United Kingdom’s one – The National Qualification for Head teachers (NPQH).

The National College in 2009 worked in partnership with the West Midlands regional government offices and faith organisations to consider succession planning. They have cooperated to look at the faith institutions as one whole body to determine if they can nurture the leaders of the future. Where servant leadership links with this process is that the SMT and serving head teachers should be evaluating their present staff on the *“natural feeling that aspires to be a leader”* (Greenleaf 1977 p27). The ‘Thinking about promotion in a faith school’ document specifies that head teachers should be:

*“invited to build on their own lives on the model of Christ. Gospel values are a guarantee of peace and collaboration among all citizens in the shared commitment to serving the common good”* (The National College 2009 p6).

From the wording of the document words such as ‘serving’, ‘common good’ and ‘values’ are all reiterating the servant leadership approach within a Catholic Primary School. Greenleaf and the faith organizations are, therefore, encouraging senior leaders to consider possible future leaders when initiating performance management and teacher observations with a view of ‘talent spotting’. Servant leadership within a Catholic SMT ought to be looking for manifestations of *“people who, while being served, become more autonomous, wiser, freer, more likely to then follow on to becoming servants?”* (Greenleaf 1977 p27).

When considering the fundamental principles of servant leadership, as a researcher, I began to question whether succession planning within the Catholic sector is allocated time in the academic year. In addition, does the SMT plan for consideration of leadership development and succession planning of all personnel (within their individual schools) or is the terminology banded about and just given lip service when required? Has the constant restructuring of the education system, especially since 1988, in some way contributed to the seeming lack of natural progression in career development? This is a key question that needs answering in this research.

## 2.4 Contextual Factors

### 2.4.1 Stress

Fraser and Brock (2006) give a greater understanding as to the reasons why Catholic teachers become heads. To most, it is a *“vocation, a commitment to Catholic education, commitment to teaching and learning and commitment to the mission of the church”* (p425). As a result of this faith devotion, many who had chosen the path to headship were aware that *“insufficient remuneration, stress and sense of isolation”* (p433) were aspects of the role. The recognition of the stress involved within the heads role needs to be investigated further, as pressure is everywhere. Exactly what demands are being felt that are affecting the job?

Everyday life has its constant stresses and strains. Getting to work on time, getting the children to school, traffic jams and paying the household bills. In the working environment, stress can have a positive influence, according to Blandford (2006), as it *“provides challenge and motivation, helps to raise performance and is an ingredient of job satisfaction”* (p297).

Middle leaders, according to research conducted by Fraser and Brock (2006) and also Harris (2007), indicate that stress caused by the accountability to stakeholders is a key contextual factor for not progressing towards headship. Blandford (2006) suggests the way to alleviate stress is to encourage a school ethos of *“empathy”* through the creation of a whole school plan that considers *“workloads, discipline, relationships, environment, training needs and parental pressures”* (p300). To ensure, simply that teachers feel they have support when stresses build within their career.

With the UK introduction of ten per cent of timetable allocation for Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) for all teachers in 2005, workload reforms are a serious consideration for the UK government. PPA was introduced as a way of ensuring that teachers had some time, within the working week, to mark work, analyze data and plan future lessons. This initiative has been fully integrated within schools and teachers receive their entitlements on a weekly basis. However, the government also proposed dedicated head teacher time, which also equates to ten per cent of the timetable.

*“A head teacher is entitled to a reasonable amount of time during school sessions, having regard to their teaching responsibilities, for the purpose of discharging their leadership and management responsibilities”* (point 57.2 - p98).

Head teacher dedicated leadership time, however, appears to not be so adhered to (as PPA is) partly because it is a ‘negotiation point’ between the governors and the head teacher. It is not a statutory requirement within the head teacher’s job description and consequently appears to not be widely instigated. Even the wording of the 2010 pay and conditions document describes the leadership time as an ‘entitlement’, as opposed to being an obligation. Is the way forward, to alleviate the stress levels of head teachers, to make head teacher time mandatory and as a consequence would more people feel inclined to take on headship and remain in the post? This question needed to be discussed within the thesis questionnaire, which investigated specific aspects of the head teacher job, which were possibly putting people off.

#### 2.4.2 Accountability

Harris (2007) argued that due to the accountability agenda head teachers are leaving education due to the ‘pressures’ and ‘stress’ (p105) caused by the *“relentless accountability*

*placed on those in positions of authority” (p105).* Schools are accountable to the government, parents and the consumers themselves. The 1988 Education Reform Act brought sweeping changes *“including a new national curriculum, school governance, school management, funding, changes to staff pay and working conditions, student testing and OFSTED,” (Ball 1994 p11)* which are still evolving in 2015. Ball (2013) calls this type of accountability ‘highly prescriptive accountability’ (p173) as this is the very specific pressure of releasing data on a schools performance to outside agencies and interested parties that is now an expected aspect of a head teacher’s job. All of these influences are part of daily expectations placed upon a head teacher’s shoulders and appears to be having a detrimental effect on the recruitment and retention of senior school leaders

Leithwood and Levin (2005) conducted research, for the DfES, on the impact of head teacher accountability from external agencies (government, unions and parents) in order to *“develop a model or framework clarifying how leadership programmes impact on pupil outcomes... to offer suggestions about how these challenges might be addressed” (p3).* Leithwood and Levin (2005) found that accountability was directly playing a major part in all aspects of leadership, as heads become *“especially sensitive to the views of stakeholders. These views influence the conditions created in their schools and classrooms and also the initiatives in leadership roles” (p30).*

Harris (2007) and Leithwood and Levin (2005) indicate that, from their research, accountability is permeating throughout education and that the constant treadmill of grades and school statistics is a major factor in the leadership crisis. Children’s education is now easily accessible on line and so any trend of ‘average’ attainment is no longer acceptable by all stakeholders. ‘Highly prescriptive accountability’ (Ball 2013 p173) of head teachers is ongoing and persistent, whilst also consistently available for everyone to view. This is added pressure for all senior leaders, as they are constantly answerable to any fluctuations of detailed results and inspection reports.

The UK government and OFSTED School Inspectorates believe all schools should be good and that the description requires improvement (satisfactory grade up to 2012) is not ‘good enough’. With the accountability and high expectations that schools find themselves in through consistently aiming for high SAT’s results or GCSE grades (5 A\* to C), along with the year on year class progress, every class teacher is feeling increasingly pressured. Although accountability exists throughout all the school when there is a case of a bad inspection, the head teacher’s job is the most vulnerable. The *‘highly prescriptive accountability’* (Ball 2013 p173) is consistently being played in schools across the country and this adds pressure to an already demanding job.

Stress and the amount of work that a head teacher undertakes are closely *“related to issues of accountability and bureaucracy”* (p189) according to research conducted by MacBeath (2006). There can be no denying, if the information regarding the hours some head teachers work are true, that paperwork is an expectation of the job. MacBeath (2006) found that heads anticipated and acknowledged that they are accountable to various stakeholders but that *“it was the bureaucratic aspects that appear to demotivate”* (p190). Some of the excessive form filling and the constant justification of head teacher’s decisions (an example being the School Evaluation Form (SEF) that OFSTED expected upon inspecting a school); indicates a demotivation aspect that could affect choosing the headship pathway. Fink (2010) reiterated the problem, associated specifically with accountability regarding OFSTED, as heads were often viewed as *“vulnerable to sacking in light of a bad OFSTED report”* (p38). The statistics, which he uses as evidence of how much accountability is affecting the leadership crisis, make for alarming reading. Fink (2010) states that *“62.5 % of deputies said current inspection arrangements made them ‘less willing’ to apply for headship”* (p38).

It appears, from both MacBeath’s (2006) and Fraser and Brock’s (2006) research that head teachers accept that the job entails higher stress levels and workloads than when in the position of deputy head. There does, however, appear to be a problem directly stemming from OFSTED expectations and the fear of the consequence of a ‘bad’ inspection, according to Fink’s research. With accountability comes the main issue - the bureaucracy surrounding OFSTED and the fear that the organization seems to instil into school leadership groupings. Is OFSTED the main reason putting people off becoming a head teacher, and therefore becoming a contributing factor to the leadership crisis in the UK? The ‘highly prescriptive accountability’ (Ball 2013 p173) that head teacher’s feel may in some way be down to the relentless progress agenda that schools find themselves in. OFSTED was investigated as an issue in both the thesis questionnaire and interview discussions, and especially the impact it is felt across the school. Middle and senior leaders are also accountable for their subject areas and classes’ progress, so considering the expectations OFSTED have on all school leaders was also an area for serious investigation.

#### 2.4.3 Work-Life Balance and Family Commitments

There are various pieces of literature on the theme of work-life balance from the National Union of Teachers (2007) document, Schools Pay and Conditions document from the DfE (2010) and Teacher Support Network (2010) which all give advice to support head teacher getting directed time, usually through consultation with the governors. All of the recommendations state that senior leaders *“not covered by the 1265 annual working limit must ensure head teachers are not required to work unreasonable hours”* (DfE 2010 p176).

There are no directives related to time limits on leaders and indeed guidelines given to aid work-life balance are *“delegation to other staff members, ignore sticky notes on desks, get proper breaks and draw a line between work and home”* (Teacher Support Network 2010 p2). Would clear ring fencing of head teacher hours persuade more deputies to take on the role? Is sorting out the work-life balance arrangements of school leadership really the key to gaining more head teachers? In the thesis, this theme will require in depth thought and analysis to determine if any answers to these questions could be found. Blandford (2006) in her book on *Middle Leadership in Schools* looked at four key areas that need to be in demonstrated in order for true delegation to work within schools: *“Quality of the end result, ability of the individual, relationships and time constraints”* (p25). The Teacher Support Network (2010) is suggesting it is important to evaluate work-life balance and then link to school areas of delegation. This proposition was part of a questionnaire that was sent to senior leadership teams in this current research.

#### 2.4.4 Salary

Fink (2010) discusses the salary of head teachers, as another key contextual factor that needs to be investigated. This in turn may encourage people to pursue headship. In research from Ontario, Canada, they found that many deputy heads have the qualifications and skills to become a head teacher but that salary is one reason that demotivate them:

*“Salary differences between teaching and administrative roles are becoming less of a motivator. In Ontario, sixty per cent saw inadequate salary as an inhibitor... vice principals felt salary was insufficient to compensate for increased pressure, accountability and loss of family time”* (Fink 2010 p30-31).

Whilst Fink (2010) initially discussed Canada, he also looked into salary as an issue in the UK. The link between the theme was that *“salary seems to be another major deterrent to prospective leaders who trade off family time for pressures and extra hours for school leadership”* (p169). In the UK, the governors of a mainstream or faith school set the parameters for a head teacher salary; a salary is set by the boundaries of the Schools Pay and Conditions Document. Each school is attributed a ‘school group’ according to the maximum permitted amount of children the school can admit. In a small, one form entry school, the groupings are ‘school group two’, which presently start at leadership point 12 (£50,000 in 2014) and finish at point 18 (around £60,000). However, a deputy of a two form primary school could earn the same salary (as the head of a primary school) just because they work in a larger sized school. The problem lies in how to attract deputies into the heads role when they could potentially earn less money. As Fink (2010) found, deputies feel *“it’s just not worth it,”* (p169). The solution, according to Fink, is to ‘reward’ staff with an



appropriate salary. He argues that governors should be allowed to be flexible with their money, as this is a major 'disincentive' (p170) to staff progression.

MacBeath (2006) also discusses the issue of salary and found too that the *"perceptions of salary ranged from lack of sufficient differential between positions and the size of the school"* (p190). If salary is a dissuading factor, in applying to be a head teacher, then how can this issue be addressed? From September 2014, performance related pay moved towards more flexibility regarding salary and there is now greater freedom regarding payments to reward success. This could give even greater feelings of accountability to senior leaders and only time will tell the impact this could have on the school leadership crisis. Salary is an emotive subject and one that was considered in the thesis only when the subject was mentioned in the interviews sessions.

#### 2.4.5 Teacher Supply Line

MacBeath's (2006) fifth symptom considered (as a way to solve the current leadership crisis) the social factor regarding 'teacher supply line' (MacBeath 2006 p 189-191). This contextual factor is different to the other four as it considers the leadership crisis from the beginning of a teaching career. The concern is that people are turning their back on teaching, and as a result, recruiting all staff is becoming a crisis. MacBeath (2006) indicates the extent of the problem:

*"The General Council of Wales found that one in ten teaching posts remained unfilled. Heads don't have enough choice of applicants to make the appointments they want... In some ways they have no choice at all"* (p191).

This research is arguing that there is a whole teacher crisis that is inevitably going to impact on the future of school leadership. The recruitment crisis data, though, was conducted in Wales and was before the global financial crisis that has been widespread since 2007. Schools in the UK have had budget cuts and schools are making many support staff redundant. Is there really a teacher recruitment crisis or is it down to the geography of the school wishing to make an appointment? The article by Ward in The Guardian online (14. 6.14) reports on finding by United Learning which found that there is a definite decline in the amount of people wishing to become a teacher, because graduates are *"tempted into other careers and had as highlighted there are now difficulties in recruitment in key subjects"* which was further validated by *"the ATL and NAHT unions which have warned that a recruitment crisis could develop."*

If numbers are declining, as has been indicated by MacBeath (2006) and reported by Ward in The Guardian (2014), then there is a strong argument that indicates another head teacher

recruitment crisis will occur in the next decade or two. In the individual interviews, recruitment of new teachers was only discussed in the context of the Catholic school ethos and beliefs. Without Catholic graduates coming into Catholic schools there will inevitably be issues with school leadership, but that would require further research over a long period of time.

## 2.5 Perceptions of School Leaders

### 2.5.1 Perceptions of Incumbent Head teachers

The daily activities of a head teacher were recorded, for two weeks, by The National College (2007) to counteract the preconceptions some leaders have about the role. By then, commissioning analysing of the head teacher data (on the exact activities that headship face) the research attempted to focus on the *“concepts of well-being, work-life balance, stress and job satisfaction... the tasks that head teachers are expected to undertake have changed greatly and their work is increasingly perceived as pressured”* (The National College 2007 p4).

Analysis of the work of 39 head teachers, in various differing stages of their careers, found that:

*“24% of time was spent on admin, 17% spent on work for external stakeholders, 9% on internal stakeholders, 15% on management (mainly issues related to staff), 9% CPD, 18% on unspecified personal issues and the rest on strategic leadership (mostly through SMT meetings)”* (The National College 2007 p 6).

From the survey and observations of the head teachers, over a two week period, there were some similarities that were identified in the report by The National College 2007. The 24% administration time issues activities included: the general running of the whole school day; assemblies; and dinnertime supervision and breakfast/after school club observations. This indicates that the main activities of the head teachers' day are the visual presence of the person in every aspect of their school. The 17% work 'on external stakeholders' and 9% on 'internal stakeholders' considers the paperwork involved in governor meeting preparation, and the networking that head teachers' are a part of. The management of staff would obviously depend on issues related to the head's school. What is surprising with these statistics is that there is 18% of time on 'unspecified personal issues.' This could be simply being at the school gate before/after school, or being on lunchtime duty where presence of the head can often improve parental, pupil and head relationships. In the era of accountability, though, 18% equates to almost a day of the working week, and a solution to

this may need to be looked at if time management is indeed an issue regarding head teachers perceived hours.

The National College (2007) article surprisingly does not mention children, which must ultimately be the main reason that people become school leaders. This may be that leadership takes the individual out of the classroom. From the heads, interviewed by the National College, the only mention is the leadership *“stressed the importance of having a high profile in the school, both for students and staff alike, to model desired behaviour and establish the ‘right’ ethos”* (2007 p8).

As a theme, needing further exploration is workload of heads. All the literature available indicates that head teachers work long hours and it is argued *“heads often worked on average 52.9hrs a week by over 70% of heads”* (The National College 2007 p6). The report also indicates that increased hours increase stress levels and that work-life balance is affected directly by the emotional involvement the job entails. Stress and work life balance are repeated themes emerging from the literature review. The two, interlinked, themes leads one to question if deputy and assistant heads’ observing the ‘paperwork and meeting’ workload of their head teacher are deciding that they do not want to take on that role. Could life factors be a fundamental reason for heads leaving the profession? In order to consider if there is a leadership crisis, all outwardly perceived problems, related to being a head teacher, will need to be explored in both the questionnaire and individual interviews. The areas that will be investigated are: school leadership recruitment; aspirations of middle and senior leaders; the policy context around accountability; stress and work life balance; and the economic context question around salary.

### 2.5.2 Perceptions of Deputy and Assistant heads

The primary school leadership team, historically, was made up of the head teacher and a deputy head. The deputy was a full time, class based teacher who was relied upon often in crisis, but the responsibility for the school was solely the head’s. The 1988 Education Act changed the direction of leadership by allowing governing bodies to have more influential power on budgets, staffing and a new National Curriculum which to monitor through governing meetings.

The Education Act (1998) has allowed other senior teachers to progress to positions such as assistant head or phase leaders. There has also been the introduction of the school business manager, as more financial control has been assigned from local authorities. The delegation of some responsibilities has been given from the head teacher to middle leaders, so they can gain experience of making decisions and are able to consider the outcomes of

these decisions. The middle leaders, therefore, have become accountable for their judgments when questioned by outside agencies. Canavan (2001) cited this as *“providing development opportunities that are critical to an individual’s leadership preparation”* (p76). Distribution of tasks, specifically designed to enhance succession planning, maybe a solution to the leadership crisis. Planning for future career development was an aspect that could be explored further within the senior leaders’ interviews.

In 2008, the National College conducted a piece of research with Halliday-Bell, Jennings, Kennard, McKay, Reid and Walter into why there is a head teacher shortage, and found that there were *“negative perceptions”* (p1) or inhibitory factors to headship about the role itself from the senior leadership teams. The work looked initially at the enthusiasm and energy of six head teachers, in a small scale study, but then found that senior leaders viewed the demands on head teachers in a negative way and this formed the main findings in their report. The inhibitory factors were grouped as either *“emotional or operational”* (p1).

### 2.5.3 The Inhibitors of Headship

#### 2.5.3.1 Emotional Inhibitors

The emotional factors, according to Halliday-Bell et al (2008), are *“guilt and anxiety”* (p2) and the operational inhibitors are *“flitting, fire-fighting and procrastinating”* (p2). From the descriptions, the emotional factors that was found to be factors in stopping people from moving towards headship, was attendance at meetings. External meetings stop head teachers from being in their school environment and the perception stops them from teaching; all of which causes guilt:

*“Examples of particular areas of tension include using time as a resource and creating a work-life balance”* (Halliday-Bell et al. 2008 p2).

Feelings of guilt and anxiety triggered by some of the harder aspects of headship are usually created by people. This could be disciplinary or capability issues, for example. Staffing and parental concerns can cause leadership stress and the notion of ‘book stops here’ approach means that the head teacher can often become the *“sole decision maker”* (p2) which is a view held by other members of staff. A collaborative approach, working alongside the SMT, may prevent feelings of isolation, but if middle leaders see anxiety in their school leadership does this put them off? Halliday-Bell et al. (2008) seem to imply that the head teacher should:

*“Endeavour neither to carry guilt nor avoid the critical issues they face... through modelling the importance of displaying commitment to learning and their own well-being”* (p3).

### 2.5.3.2 The Operational Inhibitors

The three aspects that Halliday-Bell et al (2008) feel are inhibitory factors, towards headship, are very similar in their content. The operational factors are all time consuming activities that prevent strategic, forward planning from happening. The three areas are 'flitting' 'fire-fighting' and 'procrastinating' (2008 p2). Flitting is simply looking busy but not really settling to work. Fire-fighting is similar in that everything has to be completed as a matter of urgency, creating unnecessarily panic amongst staff. This is also the sometimes overwhelming accessibility that people feel they have on head teacher's time, making a "*dependency culture*" (2008 p2).

Procrastinating is similar to flitting, except it involves not dealing with important issues, burying one's head in the sand concept. All three of these operational factors could stop middle leaders from developing their career, as the head teacher role could be viewed as very time consuming, paper work orientated and frantic. Do middle leaders perceptions of the daily work commitments need to be changed in order for people to further their career? From the National College funded research in 2007 and 2008 (Halliday-Bell et al.) there appears to be wide gaps between the 'observed' participation of the head teachers' role and the actual job itself. As a researcher, it will be very important to explore the perceptions in greater detail to try to summarize the reasons, in order to gain some possible ideas for moving forward. In the thesis interviews, senior leader discussions about inhibiting factors were explored fully to determine if the perceived daily activities of headship are in anyway obstructing people from moving forward in their career. Discussions on the roles and responsibilities of head teachers may give an insight into the realities of the everyday actions of the school leader and possible solutions for development of the job.

## 2.6 Leadership strategies to alleviate the crisis

There has though been an attempt to address the lack of leadership development by the previous Labour Government. Alongside the National College, a qualification was introduced that is now compulsory to have if a person is to apply for a head teacher post. The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) was introduced in 1997 and from September 2009 became a legal requirement when considering personal specifications and qualifications. Research by the National College (2010a) into the use of the qualification indicated that:

*"Only 30% of graduates are making applications for headship. Among deputy head teachers, aspiring towards headship is greatest for those below five experience and least for those over ten years" ( p4).*

As a researcher, and a person with the NPQH qualification, does the NPQH award assist in the head teacher's daily duties, and does it help prepare for the diversity of the role and responsibilities? There is a question about the validity of the qualification, especially when reading the statistics from Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) that *"reveal that overall only 43% of NPQH graduates actually make the transition to headship" (p4)*. This makes for worrying reading, as 57% are remaining in the senior leaders role without pursuing the headship position and forms questions regarding the reasons why this is the case. Do long term deputy positions result in people not wanting any further development? There is some indication (from the top five concerns that NPQH graduates) that needs exploring with the interviews. The National College (2010a) found from 1000 graduates:

*"The first concern is the work-life balance. The second concern is moving out of one area to find the correct role. The third concern is the loss of teaching and learning contact with children. The fourth concern is lack of experience. The fifth concern is not actually wanting more responsibility" (The National College 2010a p8).*

These are the main aspects that the NPQH people view as deterrents to their career development. As the National College research on the head teacher's job indicated the average working week is fifty-two hours a week, often with meetings after school, there seems to be an area that needs further investigation. Is this the major cause of the deputy heads not furthering their career? As part of all aspects of the questionnaire and senior leader interview meetings it was imperative to explore this theme. In addition, in my questionnaire, there was a consideration of the overall importance of NPQH training, to evaluate any impact the award has on the headship role and whether more training may make senior leaders step up into the head teacher position, especially as the NPQH is no longer a compulsory requisite to a headship post.

## 2.7 Evaluation of Common themes from Literature Review

From the statistics available from the DfES (2007), the National College (2009) and 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Annual survey of senior staff appointments in schools across England and Wales (2010/11) there does appear to be a leadership crisis in the education sector which gives the impression of being more prevalent in the Catholic schools. The statistics all point to re-advertisements, lack of uptake of headship roles and a dip in people becoming deputy heads (originally seen as the natural stepping stone to the head teacher position). In addition, of those presently deputy or assistant heads, there is a lack of interest in the headship position and many are quite happy to remain in their present position. The possible reasons, for not taking up the role of head teacher are vast and could be at an individual level (where

leadership prevents staff development) on a national level (lack of people with the NPQH qualification).

Having considered the various pieces of literature available on succession planning: recruitment, retention and development of senior leaders and the leadership crisis within Catholic primary schools, I felt that further research was required to try to identify the true nature of the leadership crisis in the English West Midlands. I was interested specifically in the leadership crisis that appears to be occurring, and in analyzing any themes emerging. In order to gain a true picture of whether a leadership crisis is indeed being created, national statistics, from all aspects of primary education, are required to give the frank, big picture as the Howson (2010, 2011) reports form one source of information, but survey research would give another dimension.

One of the themes that emerges consistently throughout the literature review is the issue of work-life balance. This is an area that must be included in the thesis, as this appears to be one of the foremost reasons for lack of uptake of head teacher vacancies, especially the perceived long hours. Work-life balance has been a consideration in more recent literature, since the turn of this century, as a possible reason for lack of uptake of headship. I included a question (in the questionnaire) about this area and feel further reading may be required around this subject. Stress was a consistent drawback to the role, as commented upon by the head teachers themselves throughout the literature. The stress of the role incorporated: staffing issues; discontented parents; and accountability to stakeholders and OFSTED. As work-life balance is often associated with stress management (as a possible reason for lack of career development) this needed to be another discussion point within the survey research.

OFSTED's affect on the uptake of headship is an area that also needed further investigation, but needs to be a longitudinal project to gain a true picture of the issue (with regard to accountability). However, there is evidence (from MacBeath 2006 and Fink 2010) that OFSTED is influencing deputies to stop applying for headship and therefore needed to be considered in both the thesis questionnaire and senior leader interviews especially, as accountability was regarded as the major contributing factor by both Harris (2007) and Pricewaterhouse Cooper (2007) for lack of uptake of the head teacher position. Accountability was mentioned in the questionnaire and interviews to gauge exactly what leaders feel accountable for, and any knock on effects this may have with a leadership crisis.

Delegation is an area that emerged from the literature also; especially linked to helping head teachers achieve a decent work-life balance and also as a way to entice senior and middle leaders into promotion. It is interesting to consider if heads allow deputies to take on budget

and strategic direction, as opposed to delegating administrative and behavioural activities. Delegation was on the questionnaire to determine what, if any, opportunities are given to senior leaders in order to gain headship skills. This is an area that I felt was not key to the leadership crisis but was worth exploring, as it links to the NPQH (NPQSL and NPQML) training of skills required for school leadership.

From the mixed method processes of questionnaires and interview sessions, I was looking for evidence of 'persuasion' from the SMT to try and improve the career path of its entire staff, whilst also looking for common traits that appear to stop people from progressing to headship, whether it be the guilt, fire fighting or procrastinating factors as discussed by the National College research conducted by Halliday-Bell, Jennings, Kennard, McKay, Reid and Walter (2008).

One of the most important areas that needed to be investigated further was succession planning and whether this is happening in Catholic primary schools in the English West Midlands. The questionnaires and interviews discussed this issue and asked for possible solutions to the problem. Discussions around talent spotting and mapping out careers of middle leaders needed to be discussed in the individual consultation sessions. With the incumbent heads, a discussion around what initiative opportunities, they were given when holding a deputy position, and whether this delegation of power encouraged them to seek promotion? The small scale survey research may give some new ideas of how to link succession planning with the seemingly very necessary need to gain head teachers in faith education system. I also felt, from the literature research, that a discussion on the influence of parish priests and having to gain a reference (to show the applicant is a practicing Catholic) may be hindering progression to headship, and I felt that this needed exploration.

The next chapter will look at how I conducted the research through methodology and methods. I considered further the mixed methods approach and discuss how I intended to conduct my research using the survey method.



### 3.1. Introduction

According to statistics regarding school leadership, published in The Independent (Stanford 2007), there appears to be a distinct lack of enthusiasm for headship especially prevalent within the Catholic primary schools in the English West Midlands. Statistics from the National College for School Leadership (2006a) found that *“in 2005/6 2600 schools advertised for a new head teacher. Around a third of primary schools failed to make an appointment at their first attempt... if the school is in the Catholic sector, this shortage of candidates can be worse”* (p8). This research was conducted by a *“consortium led by the Hay group over a period of more than two years”* (National College p5). To quantify this further the Catholic Education Census in 2009 indicated that there was:

*“A 4.4% head teacher vacancy in England and 6.7% deputy/assistant head vacancy...the proportion of vacancies for headship rose slightly compared to 2008... The average period before filling vacancies was about two terms overall,”* (2009 p20)

From the statistics and media coverage, it has been indicated that *“faith schools are finding recruitment hardest. The re-advertisement rate in Church of England schools is 40.5 per cent and goes up to 58 per cent in the Catholic sector,”* (Stanford 2007). This as one aspect of a ‘Leadership Crisis’ is what this research is investigating, alongside other issues inhibiting people from becoming a head teacher and the impact that various factors (such as accountability, work life balance and stress) are having on the teaching profession within the Catholic primary system.

### 3.2 Research questions

*“Research questions are statements of the issue we want to research... The research question pins down the things we want to investigate... what is particularly important is the way we phrase them can affect our approach to research... research questions point us to the data we need and are also indicative of the methodology that will give us the data”* (Newby 2010 p65).

The research questions that initially were decided upon in Chapter 1 were the ‘statements’ of my preliminary investigations. Habermas (1971) provides three typologies where research questions link directly with the method of investigation. The first is ‘technical interest’ which encompasses a controlled experiment. This links to positivism. The second is ‘practical interest’ which focuses on insight into people and situations and links with interpretivism. The third is ‘emancipatory interest’ which focuses on a critical aspect and attempts to remedy the situation and is based within critical theory. The typology that the research questions will be answered through is ‘practical interest’ as questionnaires and face to face interviews will be at the core of the study.

The statistics about headship and especially Catholic primary leadership needed questioning to determine what the truths behind the numbers are and why it may be happening. These questions evolved and developed through my reading of various articles by Harris (2007); MacBeath (2009) and Oplatka and Tamir (2009) so that the questions which were formed in Chapter 1 linked well with the intended questionnaire and subsequent fifteen interviews:

1. What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands?
2. What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams?
3. What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?
4. What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the leadership crisis?

The research questions did not need to be amended as they connected with the literature review and introduction chapters of the thesis. Derived from the previous research, within the literature review, further questions about leadership styles and succession planning needed probing further within the questionnaire and individual meetings. Separate considerations, for the questionnaire, were the different identified inhibitors (as mentioned in the literature) and the importance they had as perceived reasons for lack of headship uptake. Stress, OFSTED, accountability, work-life balance and the parish priest all were rated from the supposed 'main reason' to the 'least motive' within the questionnaire.

### 3.3 Wider Framework

The wider framework context for the assignment had its foundations in the philosophical approach of humanism. Humanism is the consideration of the person and their individual *"emotions, viewpoints, perceptions and understandings"* (Newby 2010 p35). When investigating the relationships of senior management teams and reasons for/against promotion, the approach that was used considered all the different elements of humanism, specifically focusing on emotions and experiences related to leadership and what truths can be related on the theme of school leadership crisis. Newby 2010 equates a humanistic researcher as a person who is after the *"experiences that help us understand what we might do to change, manage or reproduce those experiences"* (p36). Throughout the fieldwork, answers were being searched for about the crisis in Catholic primary leadership and whether the view of headship was impacting on the crisis itself.

Gunter and Ribbins (2003) introduced the six concepts of 'knowledge provinces' (p133) in their writing on school leadership, based upon their extensive fieldwork. They argue that a researcher chooses a wider framework in order *"to constitute the truth underpinning the intention behind any leadership activity"* (p133). From the six concepts, the province which I

felt best described my principles behind my research, humanistic was the best description. Gunter and Ribbins (2003) equate this notion to someone who is:

*“Concerned with gathering and theorising from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led” (p133).*

Humanistic approach, from the description above, has similar wording to servant leadership in its basic description. Through the research, the intention was to get the stories behind leadership in the Catholic sector, and to try and find answers as to why headship is in decline in this area. Through questionnaires and individual interviews sessions, I hoped to gauge the experiences of the senior management team and try to unpick the reasons for lack of career progression. The humanistic approach allows the researcher to gain the personal stories behind each leadership path and then find out, through face to face contact, the barriers to further promotion. This wider framework allows for engagement directly with head teachers, deputies, assistant heads and middle leaders.

### 3.4 Philosophical Approach

When conducting research, it was imperative that everybody's different experiences of the world were equally valued. However, it was important that personal considerations of leadership position and life experiences were also acknowledged through the responses given in the interviews. This was through the direct planning of interviewing five heads, four deputies, three assistant heads and three senior school leaders, to allow for different level of leadership experience to be expressed in order to determine if themes were similar regardless of leadership position within schools. I, therefore, felt that my work was working within the interpretivist mode. I deemed that my labour with individual interviews of senior leaders' and the emergent themes, which I hoped to encapsulate, linked better with the interpretivist field than the positivist. The initial questionnaire allowed participants to consider delegated roles in school; what CPD is needed to allow leadership to be developed; hindering factors to headship; motivating factors to becoming a head teacher; how the leadership crisis could be alleviated; what (if any) succession planning is in place and which style of leadership is best suited to Catholic education. From the analysis of the questionnaire responses, the individual interviews then further considered some of these themes. The questionnaire informed and initially directed the interview questions in a semi structured way.

#### 3.4.1 Interpretivist Approach

Interpretivist researchers *“begin with the individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them... arising from particular situations” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p22).* Using questionnaires and Interviews would allow the participants

an opportunity to explain school leadership from their own perspectives. Interpretivism is the delving into the behaviour, perceptions and interconnections between people. As I intended to study people (in an interview setting) I inevitably watched the interplay and body language of the individual. Thomas (2009) summarises the approach in one explanation:

*“Interpretivism is being interested in people and the way that they think, form ideas about the world and how their worlds are constructed... Given that this is the case we have to look closely at what people are doing by using ourselves and our knowledge of the world” (p75).*

As an interpretive researcher, I was intending to consider the people within the senior management team through separate interviews, to try to find common links and themes that emerged; with a view of trying to find evidence to conclude my research questions. Having been an assistant head, deputy head and head teacher for the past twelve years, I had my own view of the role of headship, but as a researcher, I was looking to relate other people's opinions with my own. I was hoping to find a common understanding of the head teacher role, but was also searching for the realities. Thomas (2009) discusses being a *“participant in the research situation and understanding it as an insider” (p76)* and I felt that because I have knowledge and understanding of the role of Catholic primary head (having been a head for over three years) that this approach to research is where I was best situated. I was too closely involved with school leadership, that even with the aim of being ‘neutral’, I would have found it difficult to remain so and therefore concluded that interpretivism was the correct philosophical approach for this assignment.

### 3.4.2 Pragmatism

As I used a mixed method approach, by including a questionnaire that formulated the direction of the conducted interviews, I felt I needed to also consider pragmatism. This was due to the statistical data, which I collated from my questionnaire; often viewed as quantitative in literature studies. The description that Creswell (2009) gives, regarding, pragmatism is the central aim in this research:

*“Instead of focusing on methods, researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem... inquirers draw liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they engage in their research” (p10).*

Pragmatism is, by definition, solving problems using a mixed method approach. *“Pragmatism in research is becoming acceptable. What we have to do, as researchers, is present a strong case for tackling an issue” (Newby 2009 p65).* When carrying out data collection, the questionnaires gave me limited answers about the individual factors associated with headship. However, in order to gain further evidence on this area, fifteen face to face interviews allowed for extra vital snippets of information to be imparted; crucial to reaching

the true picture regarding the Catholic primary sector. Using the pragmatist approach to mixed method research, I hoped to gain as extensive a depiction of the realities of leadership as possible and I believe that the two methods allowed me to achieve this aim.

Newby (2009), Creswell (2009) and Denscombe (2007) all equate pragmatism as the link to the third strand of data collection when quantitative and qualitative individually do not give enough evidence but when combined appear to do so:

*“when attempting to answer a research problem it leads researchers to regard the use of mixed methods as the third alternative – another option open to social researchers if they decide that neither qualitative or quantitative research will provide adequate findings for the particular piece of research they have in mind” (Denscombe 2007 p117).*

The argument that I was trying to formulate was to use varying research methods, as they appeared to best suit the questions I was trying to find answers for. I used qualitative and quantitative data combined to create a true picture of the roles and responsibilities of headship and the possible barriers to this career progression from senior teachers. I was looking for the *“useful methods”* (Denscombe 2007 p118) to generate answers to my problem, rather than solidly following a qualitative path. The questionnaire and fifteen individual interview sessions linked together to start to generate answers to the posed research questions.

### 3.4.3 Social Reality

How the researcher behaves towards interpreting social reality, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), depends on the individual's understanding of ontology and epistemology, which are relevant aspects of research paradigms in this thesis. When conducting research there are different questions and suspicions that need to be considered whilst creating the questionnaire, administering the interviews and subsequently analysing the data. There is the need *“to know if the conclusions are the right ones that reach different as well as similar conclusions to previously published authors” (Briggs and Coleman 2009 p 18)*. The research allows for connections and further conclusions to be made between previous literature and research with the findings from the fieldwork for this thesis.

Epistemology, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) *“concerns the very bases of knowledge- its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and how it's communicated to other human beings” (p7)*. Thomas (2009) believes that this fundamental question about knowledge can be distilled further into *“are there different types of knowledge and are there good procedures for discovering it?” (p87)*. Epistemology, therefore, is about knowledge and when relating to education, the consensus from the scholars appears to be an agreement that when individuals research a topic consideration needs to identify an awareness that

knowledge is a *“frail thing and that nothing is certain”* (Thomas 2009 p87). As a result, conclusions that are generated should be viewed as tentative and a researcher should always be cautious in stating the results are a certainty.

The definition of ontology, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), *“is an assumption which concerns the very nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated”* (p7). It is where a researcher questions what is being observed and decides what the *“correspondence view of knowledge”* is (Thomas 2009 p86) is. In other words as a researcher the person considers an action from their own personal experience of the world and links prior knowledge of the world with what is actually being observed. The research on school leadership is concentrating on the human experiences within the education system and dealing with circumstances and ideas about a leadership crisis. It is epistemological therefore from this perspective.

Ontology is *“assumptions which concern the very nature of essence”* (Cohen et al. 2007 p7) whereas epistemology is *“the very bases of knowledge- its nature and forms, how it can be acquired and how it’s communicated to other human beings”* (Cohen et al. 2007 p7). Briggs and Coleman (2009) highlight that throughout all research there has to be a *“ontological perspective and an epistemological perspective to support any methodological approach”* (p38). Both perceptions are based on acquiring knowledge but there has to be an acceptance that the researcher brings their own viewpoint and opinions that have to be acknowledged. The thesis starts from a school head teacher’s viewpoint and so some of the knowledge comes from being in the role. The ontological basis, for this thesis, identifies that there is an issue with school leadership (through recruitment, identification, accountability, succession planning and talent spotting) and as a researcher this can be proven through unbiased questionnaires and interviews.

### 3.5 Research Strategy

The argument in favour of a mixed method approach within my research becomes more persuasive when I considered the strategy in which I foresaw the organising process for my data analysis. I believe that the research questions influence the study direction as all of them start with the consideration of the questions ‘how’ or ‘why’; classic pin pointers to the direction the enquiry is taking according to Yin (1994 p1). The thesis has all the components of a survey research strategy.

Survey research concentrates *“on several types of descriptive examination including longitudinal, cross-sectional and trend or prediction studies”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p205). This strategy tends to concentrate on embracing various diverse methods in

order to *“focus on a snapshot at a given point of time and a dependence on empirical data”* (Denscombe 2007 p8). The study, as described in chapters one and two, is about the humanistic elements of the leadership crisis and honed in on the perceptions of people in various stages of their career progression through a questionnaire and individual senior leader interviews.

A longitudinal survey is when a consideration is repeated over a long period of time *“largely using a different sample or a new sample... as a way of showing changes to make inferences”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p212). The long term study of trends over a period of time would benefit some of the aspects of this research, especially in relation to looking at the benefits of head teacher qualification programmes, but for this thesis was not the study that was the most appropriate.

The second type of survey is the trend study as this style *“focuses on factors which are studied over a period of time. New samples are drawn at each stage of the data collection, but always focus on the same factors”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p213). The trend survey can be conducted for either a short or long time span but always looking for relationships in the data collected.

The third survey, that was the most appropriate for this research, was the cross-sectional survey. This survey style is taken at a given point in time and the data generated is from that point in history. Many of the opinion polls work in this manner and are used for quick answers to a specific question. As Cohen et al. (2007 p213) comment: *“the single snapshot provides researchers with data for either a retrospective or prospective enquiry.”* Many of the statistics quoted in the literature chapter have been generated using a ‘snapshot’ concept and the questionnaire findings influenced the interview schedule. This particular style of survey, therefore, has been used as the basis to answer the research questions. The questionnaires and fifteen individual interviews are all short time, cross-sectional surveys, which allow for *“comparisons to establish patterns of change in order to predict what will likely to occur in the future,”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p213).

A cross-sectional survey had several characteristics that were evident in the way the research was conducted. These qualities allowed for *“indirect measures of the nature and rate of change,”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p213) to be discussed through the questionnaire and individual interviews with school leaders. The cross-section survey, as a strategy, generated information that would answer the research questions through *“providing researcher with data for either a retrospective or a prospective enquiry,”* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007 p213). Surveys, as a research strategy, allowed for honing in on issues that the literature indicated (such as stress, work life balance and accountability) whilst also

allowing for investigations into other factors that the questionnaires and interviews generated.

The design of my research strategy was a survey study. By repeating the process of sending paper questionnaires to nearly eighty schools, and then holding interview sessions, the findings should, according to Yin 1994, reveal *“similar results... for predictable reasons”* (p3) thereby allowing for hypotheses to be approved or disproved in relation to the Catholic primary school leadership crisis. The cross-section surveys gave a variety of viewpoints on the leadership crisis and gave some ‘predicted reasons’ such as delegation, stress, work-life balance and accountability (as discussed in chapter one). The questionnaire and separate interview process ensured a consistent configuration of analysis to gain a wider perception of the ‘reasons’ why there is a leadership crisis. Simply, there is previous research on ‘why’ there is a leadership crisis but very little on interviewing people in leadership roles with a specific viewpoint on what maybe causing the leadership crisis. My study will give an insight into possible reasons for remaining a senior leader that may not have previously been considered and this may be reflected in the general findings at the conclusion of the research. By conducting mixed methods of questionnaires and interview sessions I was looking for matching factors in the responses when analysing my findings.

With a mixed method design, using a cross-section survey strategy there are some disadvantages that need to be considered. When incorporating mixed methods of questionnaire and interview research together there has to be a consideration of time and cost involved. In order to send out enough questionnaires to generate statistics the cost to the researcher can be great. The time to transcribe the interviews and the review of comments from questionnaires can also add to the pressures of completing mixed methods research, all of which must be considered before the data collection process starts. As Creswell (2009) states:

*“There is a requirement for a researcher to be familiar with both qualitative and quantitative forms of research... which can be a challenge for the inquirer”* (p205).

This type of mixed method research is often referred to as the ‘*Concurrent Triangulation Strategy*’ (Creswell 2009 p213) as the method and subsequent analysis allows the inquirer to do both qualitative and quantitative research at the same time and consider the emerging results, especially looking for patterns which tie the theories together. Creswell (2009) links this method to the interpretivist researcher *“as a way to merge the data... this side-by-side integration of two databases first provides quantitative statistical results followed by qualitative quotes to support or disconfirm the results”* (p213). As my research schedule was



to first do questionnaires, followed by the interviews, I feel that I followed this concurrent triangulation mixed method.

Denscombe (2007) however argues that mixed method designs, such as the concurrent triangulation one, *“do not allow for emergent research to be flexible”* (p119). The consensus is that as a researcher chooses a set order to carry out quantitative and qualitative mechanisms, which means ‘flexibility’ can be replaced with rigid structures that can stilt *“a direct response to unforeseen outcomes”* (p120).

Through being aware of the possible drawbacks to carrying out mixed method, cross-sectional survey research strategy, I still argue that the research questions are best addressed through the use of a questionnaire and fifteen individual interviews. I therefore felt that the concurrent triangulation, cross-section survey was fit for purpose and that this strategy was therefore the one I pursued.

### 3.6 Research Methods

#### 3.6.1 Questionnaire

Having previously, in both the introduction and the literature review chapters, considered the information on headship there appeared to be no specific defining reasons as to lack of uptake for the head teacher role. Having posed many questions in chapters one and two as to possible causes, the most appropriate first choice for my research method was to conduct a questionnaire with other Catholic primary practitioners. My school is a member of the Birmingham Primary Catholic Partnership, based at Newman University College in south Birmingham and as they collaborate with eighty catholic schools within the West Midlands I feel that these should be the schools that I target. After the questionnaire, though, I felt a more in depth probe needed to be initiated to gain the humanistic viewpoint, and this would be best achieved by face-to-face contact. Interviewing, individually, fifteen senior leaders allowed for a more honest reflection on possible reasons for a head teacher recruitment problem than from a questionnaire completed as a whole SMT. As an interpretivist researcher, the main element of the research was based upon the interviews where initially themes, generated from the questionnaire analysis, were investigated and deliberated in greater detail.

In order to create a questionnaire (see appendix 1), I first looked at both Denscombe’s (2007) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison’s (2007) templates. I also considered fully what the different facets of my research questions were in order to gain possible answers to the four ‘whats’. I used a variety of different questions including close questioning; open ended and rating scale options in order to encourage descriptive answers on the role of headship,

NPQH uptake and succession planning. There were also five point rating scales within the questionnaire to indicate how senior leader views were about such issues as delegation, CPD opportunities and trust.

The questionnaire itself was designed to be completed in less than fifteen minutes, and once the general information on the form was completed fills two A4 sides. Thomas (2009) states that ideally it should only be a side long as *“response to a questionnaire decrease in proportion with its length”* (p174) but to allow for responses to the 15 questions the questionnaire would have looked crammed and squashed if I tried to achieve this aim. I sent the questionnaires to the SMT of each of the other seventy-nine Catholic Primary Partnership Schools. As a member of the leadership team within my school, the University of Birmingham’s ethics board felt that I should not send the questionnaire to my own staff and I agreed with their decision. In September 2011, I piloted the questionnaire with two senior leaders. One was an assistant heads in central Birmingham and the second was an acting Deputy in the south of the city. As a result, I left the questionnaire in its original form, except for adding C7 on leadership style, to try to gauge whether servant leadership is prevalent in the faith schools. This, though, was only answered by deputies or assistant heads to try to ascertain if they understood the faith element of leadership styles as opposed to any taught to them in CPD sessions.

It was from the pilot that the concept of emailing the questions was first mentioned. The assistant head felt that having the option to email the answers back directly to me was an easier way to give information. I considered the data collection site ‘Survey Monkey’ but felt that the free text boxes would not fit into the Survey Monkey’ design. The acting deputy only suggested that some of the teaching qualifications or further education degrees (requested in section a, questions 6/7) may not be required but otherwise found the questionnaire easy to follow.

With the consideration of the cost involved with sending out stamped addressed envelopes to so many schools, a disadvantage to a mixed method approach, I did consider an internet survey. The reason I decided against this process was for two reasons. The first was I wanted to allow for confidential responses. In order to understand people’s reasons for life decisions, about their individual career choice, I wished for people to be able to remain anonymous and thereby give truthful answers. I had no way of being able to track the respondents and this hopefully allowed for more transparency of responses. The second reason was by using an Internet survey; people may have felt inhibited and give me biased answers, which they may think should be the reasons for not taking up headship as opposed to the reality.

The suggested changes were considered and although 'Survey Monkey' was rejected; I did include an email address for people to return questionnaires. Moreover, the majority of the returned questionnaires were sent via email. When considering A6 and A7 (see Appendix 1) I did, though, leave the probes in their entirety. The reasoning behind this was that as previously the government requirement was for new head teachers to hold the NPQH qualification, I felt the question linked with the initial teaching qualification and the subsequent discussions that could happen in future individual interviews.

As with all research, if an organisation is being used, it is the proper course of action to discuss the project with them. Creswell (2009) argues that it is morally right to "*gain the agreement to provide access to study participants,*" (p90) through the use of a gatekeeper. The gatekeeper is an influential leader who can support the research through the use of their own contacts. After reflecting upon the pilot questionnaires, I then sought permission from the gatekeeper in this research – the director of the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership (BCPP) to gain his permission to approach the head teachers with the final version. I telephoned the Primary Partnership director to explain my thesis project and the part that I needed the schools' help with, in order to gain access to specific information to answer my research questions. The director was accommodating and so I visited the head of the Primary Catholic Partnership, based at Newman University College in Birmingham, to gain his consent to contact the schools under his jurisdiction. I obtained permission for sending out the questionnaire on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and intended to send it out in January 2011, at a Catholic head teacher meeting, so that the data analysis could be completed before the end of December 2011. This allowed for the main interview sessions to be conducted by the spring of 2014.

I ensured that I personally handed out questionnaires to the other seventy nine primary schools that are part of the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership (BCPP). From the responses, I found that they were predominantly completed by the head teacher. However, I gained responses from seven senior leadership teams (within the twenty one) so that I generated information from other senior leaders within school settings also. Appendix two (the questionnaire analysis) shows clear links to the findings evident within the literature review on the barriers to head teacher uptake and the true picture of school succession planning. The analysis of the data and the findings can be found in chapters four and five.

The Catholic schools that are within the makeup of the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership are actually made up from all throughout the English West Midlands. The Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership was established in 1995. Its core purpose, according to its website, is to "promote curriculum and professional development, thereby

enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in all Catholic primary schools in Birmingham and to work together in true partnership, thereby sharing expertise, so as to enrich the education of all the children in the Partnership schools, in an atmosphere of Christian love, which will benefit Catholic Education in the city.” [www.bcphp.org.uk](http://www.bcphp.org.uk) website front-page (2015).

The schools are made up of sixty Catholic primary schools from all areas of the city of Birmingham, eight from Walsall, three from Sandwell, five from Dudley, one from Lichfield and two from Tamworth. The final member is a Catholic Independent school based in central Birmingham. All the schools are listed on the Partnership website but in order to remain as anonymous as possible options were given as to how to return the questionnaires. The questionnaire was sent out to all heads in these schools and the responses are reflective of the whole of the West Midlands.

Upon receiving my first batch of responses, the leader of the Primary Catholic Partnership (gatekeeper) sent an email reminding head teachers to return the questionnaire, and so altogether there were twenty one responses; of which some had been completed by the whole senior leadership team. The second email only gained a further three responses.

#### 3.6.1.2 Validity and Reliability

Data that is collected “*systematically and rigorously*” (Cohen et al. 2007 p254) ensures that the findings are an accurate reflection of the true life context that is being researched. Whilst undertaking any research, the aspects of validity and reliability must be considered. This allows for the humanistic, personal position of the researcher to become more balanced in their findings. With the thesis concentrating on questionnaires and interviews, as strategies for data collection, all negative and positive arguments for validity have to be discussed in order that any findings are non-biased.

#### 3.6.1.3 Validity and Reliability in Questionnaires

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) describe two viewpoints about validity and reliability regarding the use of questionnaires as a research tool. The first is that the research must ensure that “*respondents are accurate, honest and correct,*” (p157) with their answers and secondly that the researcher must be sure that any findings reflect “*that those who didn’t return would have still given the same distribution of answers*” (p157).

In order to counteract the perceived low percentage of questionnaire returns, as Cohen et al. comment “*is a disadvantage... as too low a percentage of return is commonplace*” (p158)

there needs to be an explanation regarding the questionnaires' purpose in order to generate interest in the theme. Within the questionnaire, a covering letter was attached to describe the reasons for the thesis and asking for support to generate a response from many senior leaders within the Catholic West Midlands group. The covering letter also gave an indication as to the amount of time the questionnaire should take, a description of the mix of styles of the questions and returning information. In line with Cohen et al. (2007 p157) I also considered the length of the questionnaire. The whole document was six A4 sides, of which only Section C (eight questions) required free flow answers but four pages were either a tick box or number scale thereby allowing for information to be gained in a quick a way as possible.

### 3.7 Interviews

With the questionnaire giving the information in a written form, the individual interview is a meeting to gain the vocal interpretation of the initial findings. There are three styles that can be used to conduct an interview – structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The structured interview allows for *“tight control over the format of the questions and the answers”* (Denscombe 2008 p174). Structured interviews are where a researcher orchestrates the session very closely and the answers are very much prescribed beforehand. In this research on school leadership, the questionnaire is very controlled in its format and so the style of structured interviewing would not allow for flowing responses from the candidates.

The unstructured interview, though, is at the other end of the spectrum. This is where a researcher *“starts the ball rolling by introducing a theme and then letting the interviewee develop their train of thought”* (Denscombe 2008 p175). This style is similar to a one sided conversation where a theme is given and then the person who is being interviewed just talks. The researcher would record the interviewee's response to the theme and let the person elaborate on their own thoughts, without intervening. This type of interview is great for gaining a viewpoint on one area, but for gaining specifics to a problem, it may not suit. The information gained could be too broad and may not allow for data to be collected.

A middle approach to interviews is the one that suits the follow up to the structure of a questionnaire. The semi-structured interview allows the researcher to set some probing questions and then allow the interviewee to respond. This design permits the researcher to *“gain open ended answers and to check rather than discover a person's views”* (Denscombe 2008 p175). With the interviews being on individual senior leader basis, this style suited the

mixed approach research. Following on from the literature findings and analysing of the questionnaire, the semi-structured interview gained further insight into leadership areas.

As a researcher, it is important to create an interview schedule. This allowed for adequate coverage of a cross section of the leadership group. The intended time scale of a year allowed for these interviews to take place on a fortnightly to three week basis. It also allowed for rescheduling, if necessary. The interviews were conducted using a Dictaphone tape recorder on a one to one footing, with field notes being taken throughout.

In view of the concurrent triangulation, mixed method aspect of my research which linked qualitative and quantitative data through the questionnaire and individual interview, Creswell (2009) reiterates that the interview and questionnaire data collection allows *“the researcher to embed one smaller form of data within another larger data collection in order to analyse different types of questions so the qualitative addresses the process while the quantitative the outcomes”* (p15).

Creswell (2009) reiterated that the triangulation of the mixed method approach using both the questionnaire and individual interview created a harmonious research design but can have huge time implications on the inquirer. This is in order for the validation of the data to be orchestrated fully and comprehensively. There was, though, a protocol for qualitative interviewing of people that must be adhered to.

Creswell (2009) discussed that there are some aspects of interviewing protocol that must be consistent. It is important that there should be field notes taken by the interviewer. Technology breaks down at inopportune moments and when taping someone the interviewer cannot afford for this to happen. *“If audiotaping is used, researchers need to plan in advance for the transcription of the tape”* (Creswell 2009 p183). The components included making sure there the interviewee have *“an ice breaker question; 4-5 subsequent questions based on the qualitative research plan and then 4-5 questions to explore in more detail what they have said”* (2009 p183). Using this structure, the interview questions probed details on the leadership crisis, what is stopping people from applying to leadership roles and possible solutions to the crisis.

### 3.7.1 Data Collection

The intention for the research was to conduct fifteen individual one to one interviews. In order to ensure participation, I intended to have a reserve list of one or two other people in case on the day people cancelled or decided not to take part, which is in the rite of withdrawal document that was signed before the meeting. I hoped to recruit the members

through people contacting me after completing the questionnaire and also by a personal invitation at the Primary Catholic Head Teacher briefing that I attended in October 2011. I envisaged the sessions to be last around an hour at a time and I set up the meetings either in the leader's school or my own, at no cost to the individual, other than their time.

In order to gain support for my research, first I approached the people in my Catholic school cluster to determine whether anyone would be willing to be interviewed. I decided to try this cluster of seven schools because the majority of the schools are in the inner ring of the city centre to incorporate a cross section of schools. From this pool I successfully sampled two head teachers, one deputy head and one assistant head interviews.

The second group were the local Catholic schools within my consortium. Consortia were set up as a networking opportunity for all heads to work together, regardless of school type, to improve children's education opportunities in a small area. In my consortium there were three Catholic schools out of twenty eight schools from the state. From this pool I successfully sampled a deputy head interview.

The final group that I worked with were the eight Catholic feeder schools that all link together to send pupils to the local Catholic Secondary School in south midlands. This group is a strong group and are in the process of becoming a multi academy collective of schools. The remaining ten interviews came from this group. There was only one school where I interviewed both senior leaders and they were based within this group. In this group, I interviewed three head teachers, two deputy heads, two assistant heads and three middle leaders.

It took me the whole school summer term to recruit interviewees. I struggled to enlist people to participate in the interviews. This was due to a couple of factors. One reason was quite simply time. Schools were called by OFSTED so we had to reschedule; key members of staff being off unexpectedly and ultimately the head having to suddenly attend important meetings. Therefore re-arranging diaries became a huge hurdle. Secondly, people agreed initially to be interviewed but then when asked if they could be recorded, declined the offer. Obviously this is quite within the protocol but with limited time, people were changing their mind up to the moment of interview. All in all this meant that actually gaining fifteen interviews was not as easy as I initially envisaged.

Once I had successfully sampled my interviewee's, I arranged to conduct the interviews throughout the academic year 2013. In my diary I considered dates that would least impact on my own school as well as considering the senior and middle leaders' timetables as many had teaching commitments. In order to conduct field research I found first thing in the

morning suited most senior personnel. I allowed twenty to thirty minutes per interview and travelled to the place of work of the senior leader. Although I invited people to my school, there was only one head teacher who came as she lived close by, so wanted to be interviewed before going to her work. From the schools where I conducted the research, one was 'outstanding'; one was 'requires improvement' and the rest were 'good' according to their most recent OFSTED grading.

Throughout the interviews, I consistently considered the validity and reliability of the questions and responses. Open ended questions, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) has to be given careful consideration "*of developing a satisfactory method of recording replies*" (p155). I therefore produced field notes to catch the key information points during the interview. This allowed me to also quickly review answers to the questions when analysing the findings. In order to ensure that my own opinions were not included and that all information supplied was from the interviewee I have kept the recordings in a secure place as is required by the ethics committee.

Upon completion of the interview, during the same day, I finished the write up through transcribing. Along with the field notes, this ensured that the findings were a true and accurate record of the interview. A copy of the transcript was sent to the participant and none were returned to me, to be amended. All responses were depersonalized and any references to their own or other person's schools were indicated by a letter, to ensure confidentiality rules were adhered to. Anonymity rites were also adhered to throughout the research.

The focus of the interviews was around the leadership crisis and succession planning. The group of five head teachers, four deputy heads, three assistant heads and three middle leaders of school core subjects (through separate meetings) were asked the same questions about the role of headship, succession planning, leadership styles, CPD and inhibiting factors which may be stopping people applying for head teacher positions. The questions that were created were generated from the questionnaire analysis. This allowed for flexibility when applying to the ethics board. As this was small scale research, I intended to use a Dictaphone to record the interview proceedings and to write some field notes as the sessions evolved. I collated all the interviews and if there was any information that the interviewee felt needed to be removed, upon seeing the write up, then I intended to do so. Nothing was subsequently changed from the transcribed transcripts. All participants were happy with the copy produced.

The table below shows the gender and leadership position of the fifteen interviewees:



Interviewee Number 1	Female	Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 2	Female	Deputy Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 3	Female	Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 4	Male	Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 5	Male	Deputy Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 6	Female	Assistant Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 7	Male	Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 8	Female	Deputy Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 9	Male	Assistant Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 10	Female	Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 11	Female	Middle Leader
Interviewee Number 12	Female	Middle Leader
Interviewee Number 13	Female	Assistant Head Teacher
Interviewee Number 14	Female	Middle Leader
Interviewee Number 15	Male	Deputy Head Teacher

The participants were made up of three female heads; two male heads, two female deputy heads; two male, two female assistant heads; one male and finally three female middle leaders.

### 3.7.1.2 Validity and Reliability in Interviews

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) argue that when there is a shortfall of responses from a questionnaire, the way to balance the low responses is to engage in a series of interviews:

*“The question of accuracy can be checked by means of the intensive interview method that include familiarization, temporal reconstruction, probing and challenging,” (p157).*

In order to gauge the possible comments that may occur in the interviews, I discussed the proposed questions with the school senior leadership team. They were not able to be part of the fifteen separate interviews due to their direct contact with me but by piloting questions, beforehand, this ensured that any possible leading questions were added as probes (see appendix one). I focused my questions in order to ensure that any potential perceived bias, due to my head teacher position, could be dismissed. In order to maintain that there was no bias within interviews the *‘characteristics of the interviewer and respondent’* (Cohen et al. 2007 p150) were all known through the interview schedule information, sent out to the senior leaders, beforehand. This information made clear that I was a head teacher conducting research on school leadership and that any information discussed would not use names of persons or school environments. By gaining anonymity, the responses could be collected without any threat to a person’s position and thereby gain more reliable data for the research on a school leadership crisis within the Catholic sector specifically.

Cohen et al. (2007) comment that *“the way to ensure reliability is to have a highly structured interview with the same format and sequence of words,”* (p150). The questions were all created from the responses generated from the questionnaires. There were certain aspects, such as head teacher pay and the comments regarding acting headship that became probing questions as *“sometimes they may be necessary in order to obtain information that the interviewer suspects the interviewee may be withholding,”* (p150).

The research is valid as there appears to be a problem with retaining school leaders and therefore enquiries need to be conducted to try to resolve the dilemma and thereby challenge the potential lack of leadership uptake within Catholic education.

### 3.8 Ethics

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) discuss the linkage between ethics and evaluative research as having two main principles *“the principle of benefit maximization and the principle of equal respect”* (p70). In simple terms the ‘maximization’ is where the researcher is aware of the importance of ethically correct actions towards the subject being probed and that representations are a true reflection. The ‘equal respect’ idea is when the researcher respects the individual’s rites and that all are treated equally. Research, in order to be valid, needs to be transparent in its conduct and ethically sound in its process. I felt that with an anonymous questionnaire, and an awareness of confidentiality within fifteen individual interviews, both principles were adhered to.

As I am working and researching in the school leadership environment in which I am locally known, I also closely followed the BERA (2011) guidelines regarding ethics on equality and respect towards *“The Person, their Knowledge and their Democratic Values”* (p4) to ensure that confidentiality, anonymity and data protection were adhered to. All this was considered whilst also weighing up my own personal position to ensure the reporting and analysis of the data was both applicable and legitimate. Alongside these BERA prompts, the University of Birmingham has an ethics review board. Doctoral researchers are required to fill in an ethical review application to consider the vulnerability of the group being researched. Before conducting any research I had already submitted the various required ethic forms and the thesis questionnaire, all of which were passed by the review board after a short period of assessment. By passing The university ethics board, the questionnaire complied with the requirements of the ethics community. I created a ‘Participant Information Sheet’ explaining the process of the data collection and a letter of consent were sent to the individual interview participants, which included information of a rite to withdraw and the deadline for doing so. All interviewees saw the write up of their meeting and were able to request removal of

information; if necessary. Nothing was changed when the transcripts were viewed by the interviewee.

I feel that the research design that I had chosen was an interpretive, mixed method approach. It is humanistic in its framework as I was considering leadership within Catholic primary education. I sent out an initial questionnaire to SMT groups within eighty schools inside the West Midlands and followed this with a second data collection by way of individual senior leader interviews. I envisaged the data collection to be completed before the spring of 2014. My data collection was initially quantitative because of the questionnaire but that the majority of my research information was qualitative, after conducting the interviews; therefore the research followed a concurrent triangulation in its design framework.

### 3.9 The Process

The research process started with a development of a questionnaire. Using the literature review chapter as my basis, I created a questionnaire using prompts found in the questionnaire chapters of books by Denscombe (2007) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007). The aim of the questionnaire was to acquire answers for my four research questions. I devised the questionnaire using a variety of different question types (mainly semi structured) whilst also including rating scale options for the ten possible reasons mentioned in the literature regarding the possible reasons for a lack of school leaders.

I generated the questionnaire and then considered the wording for the background information on the front page. It was important to explain the theme of the thesis. This was following Denscombe (2007) six point guide, *“Explain if the researcher is alone or part of an institution; what the purpose is; return address and date; an explanation on confidentiality, expression of voluntary response and thanks for participation”* (p159).

The information provided was intended to engage the senior management team. I wished to gain insight into present serving head teachers whilst also collecting thoughts from senior and middle leaders also. I was keen to make sure the questionnaire was no longer than fifteen minutes to complete but still had the opportunity for free text so that opinions could be fully sought.

On production of the questionnaire, the University of Birmingham ethics board was approached. The questionnaire was designed to be filled in by professional individuals (see appendix one). No vulnerable groups were to be included in the research. The ethics committee approved the questionnaire and also the subsequent interview schedule. I

intended to interview five heads, four deputies, three assistant heads and three middle leaders (core subject coordinators) to gain a broad spectrum of leadership experience. I was unable to give the ethics board specific questions for the interview sessions as these would come from the themes and answers found in the analysis. This was accepted by the establishment in 2012, before any fieldwork was conducted.

### 3.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research has the basis in a cross-sectional survey in its style. The research was concurrent in its triangulation as both a paper questionnaire and fifteen individual interviews is where the fieldwork was based. The research was conducted over a school academic year and the literature chapter generated the original questionnaire. The interviews were formulated from the responses to the questionnaire.

The research design was an interpretive, mixed method approach. It was humanistic in its framework as I considered leadership, especially in regard to how middle and senior leaders viewed themselves as autonomous within their career paths within Catholic primary education in order to answer the research questions. With the purpose of ensuring that the thesis was valid and reliable the questionnaire had a covering letter and a serious consideration of the length. At all times a person's right to anonymity was considered and the questionnaire was sent back either in an envelope or anonymous email through the silent sender mechanism available to schools through the West Midlands school Zimbra email network.

The University of Birmingham ethics board approved the questionnaire, which had been previously sampled by members of my senior leadership team. In order to ensure non-bias my school members could not be included in the questionnaire and interviews. This allowed for the data collected to be reliable in its findings. The research was conducted under ethical conclusions and valid in that the suggestions for relieving the leadership crisis all came from the interviews and questionnaires.

## Chapter 4

### Presentation of Findings

#### 4.1 Introduction to the presentation of findings from the Questionnaire

The four research questions that this thesis is considering are:

1. What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands?
2. What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams?
3. What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?
4. What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the leadership crisis?

The research questions were formulated in order to look at the *“leadership crisis”* (p130); the terminology attributed to Dorman and D’Arbon (2003) who found, through their research, that without forward planning, there would be problems with getting people to become head teachers. The reasons ranged from recruitment issues, accountability, stress, work life balance and the commitments associated with being a Catholic head.

The first research question was answered, to some extent, through the literature review in chapter two. This chapter builds on the discussions in chapters one to three by using evidence from my study to explore the leadership crisis. Nevertheless, all four questions needed elaborating and therefore through the survey design I hoped to find the answers. Firstly, I conducted a questionnaire with eighty England, West Midlands Catholic Primary School senior leadership teams and then analysed the results. Secondly, I then reviewed the results in depth to generate ten questions to pose to senior leaders through individual interviews. This mix method research was designed to answer the research questions.

The literature review generated some preliminary themes encompassing the lack of enthusiasm within the education system regarding accountability, work life balance, the expectations of the Catholic Church and salary whilst also counteracting these concepts with succession planning and potential talent spotting. The questionnaire and interview process

were linked with exploring these themes further in the mix method process. The questionnaire was sent out to head teachers within the Birmingham Primary Catholic Partnership and the interviews were conducted one to one after the responses had been collected.

The themes that emerged from the questionnaire were similar to the previous research, but there were some anomalies between the literature about salary having an influence on headship especially with the Catholic school system and the role the priest plays within schools. The two main issues that came out were workload levels and accountability (especially to OFSTED) and how acting headship should be mandatory.

The fifteen people interviewed were asked specific questions regarding acting headship as this theme had limited literature previously available (Draper and McMichael (2002) being one such piece). The findings from the questionnaires became a fundamental issue when analysing the data and subsequently became a probing question attached to question five in the individual interviews.

#### 4.1.1 Introduction to the Questionnaire Process

My thesis is centred within a mixed approach as a way to consider the reality of the leadership crisis within Primary Catholic Education in the British West Midlands. The cross-sectional survey had a mixed method approach with a substantial questionnaire and senior leaders' interviews at the centre of the research design.

The questionnaire was sent out to head teachers of seventy-nine schools, within the West Midlands, who are members of The Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership. The head teachers were informed, by way of a personal letter, of the reasons for the research and were asked to pass them on to their SMT's once they had responded. The riposte to the questionnaires was slow and a second attempt was endorsed by the BCPP leader himself through a follow up email, which subsequently had a questionnaire attachment. However, the response was still diminutive. Due to the timing of the summer holidays, a subsequent third reminder did not generate any further reactions.

#### 4.1.2 Findings from the questionnaire

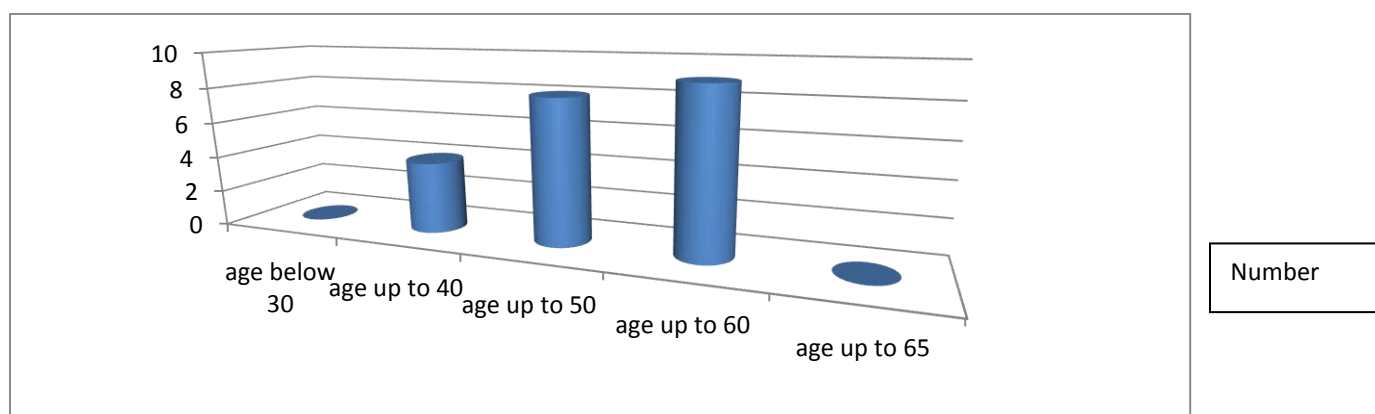
The overall return rate of the questionnaire was 27%. This equates to 21 responses out of 79. Denscombe (2007), in his book *The Good Research Guide*, believes that "*with large-scale postal questionnaires it is not uncommon to get a response rate of 10-15%*" (p23). With my thesis questionnaire gaining almost double the response that Denscombe (2007) comments upon as usual "*15%*" (p23) the reply rate would seemingly appear quite acceptable.

From the twenty-one replies received, seven were completed by whole senior management teams. To analyse the information, I then had a separate part (within section c) for answers to be completed by the head teacher and deputy /assistant head. This was to gain a specific view of possible reasons for lack of head teacher recruitment from the people next in the leadership line.

The eightieth school, within the BCPP, is the school that I was head teacher in. In order for the research findings to remain neutral and unbiased, none of the senior leaders within the school were asked to participate with the study.

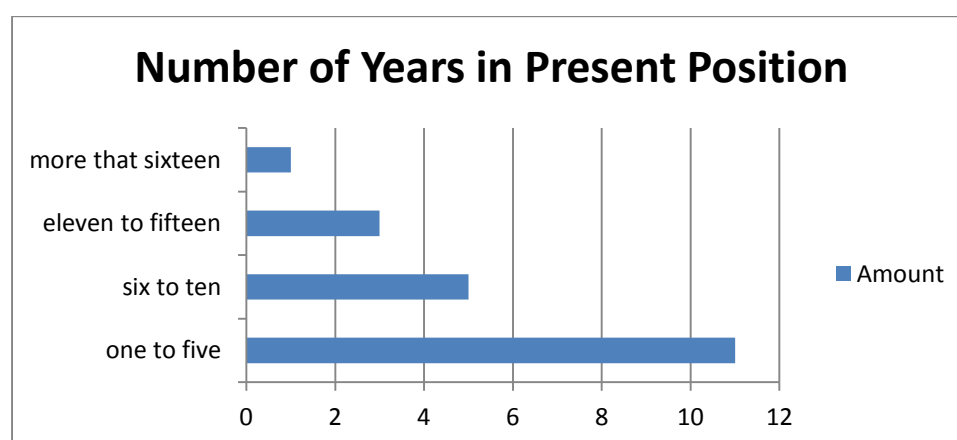
The information in Section A was to give some background information to the people returning the questionnaire. As the responses were from head teachers, the first question indicated that it was almost an even split male/female who replied to the questionnaire. This equates to a twelve female to nine male ratio. The gender question was to highlight that in primary education there is less of a gender imbalance in 2012, than in 2002 when Coleman argued that women have to be aware of *“hidden prejudice”* (p48) when applying for head teacher positions. Her research seemed to conclude men are treated differently in interviews; indeed the whole selection process. From the fact that more females replied to the questionnaire and that from the West Midlands Catholic Directory, there are presently more serving female head teachers than male; this ‘prejudice’ issue appears to be insignificant and can be disregarded as a factor in this thesis. It does, suggest though, the possibility that the leadership crisis could also be about a decline in the numbers of men willing to apply for headship. This would need to be considered in further research to gauge the true picture of the gender makeup of headship in order to determine if this is indeed a factor to be addressed, especially within Catholic primary education.

The question relating to the ages of the head teachers (see graph 4.1) links with the works of West-Burnham (1997) and Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) who found that the average head teacher is within ten years of retirement and therefore without succession planning could make the recruitment crisis even worse, within the next decade. From the literature available regarding the retirement of present serving head teachers, *“by the end of 2014 the rate will steadily increase as 57% are over the age of 50 years”* (The National College 2010b p14). Graph 4.1 seems to reiterate the findings of The National College as the largest age group of respondents (9 out of 21) were in this age range.



Graph 4.1 – Age of the Head Teacher Respondents

In order to closely analyse the experience of the senior management, question five asked for the length of time served at the present school. The reasoning behind this question was to understand the leadership pathways that each head teacher had. It was important to gauge if the enthusiastic, incumbent head in their early years of headship gave the same type of answers as the experienced, more mature divestiture head (terminology allocated to headship career paths by Gronn 1999). The average of the experience highlights that none of the respondents had less than thirteen years practice before progressing to a senior leader position.



Graph 4.2 Years' service in their present position

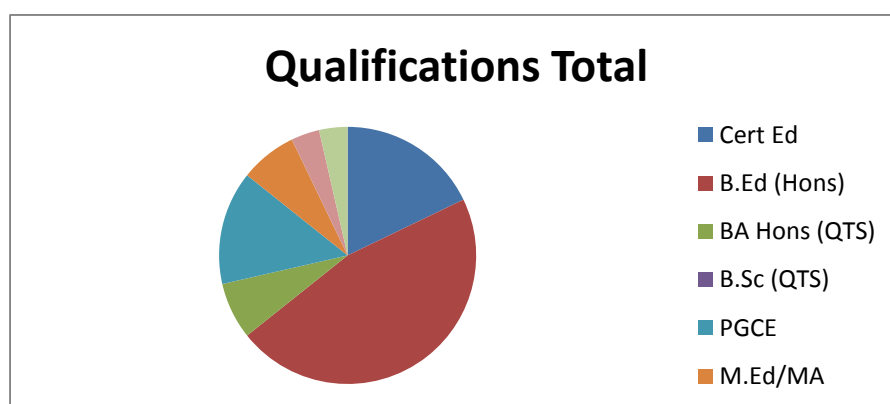
The analysis of the graph includes the six deputies or assistant heads that are all within one to ten years of service. The information, which has been collated from the questionnaire, was from a broad spectrum of serving head teachers and so the information generated has balanced findings. This is indicative as at the one end of the spectrum one head teacher was just appointed (first year of headship) whilst at the other end there was one head with sixteen or more years' experience. The research, as indicated from the responses, is a true and accurate picture of the serving leadership teams within the Catholic Education system



(in the English West Midlands) at present. The age factor indicates that further, future problems could arise within the next decade without a solution to the imminent problem.

The replies, also correspond with Munby and The National College of School Leadership (NCSL) 2009 statistics, in that there are fewer (a smaller quantity) deputy head teachers *“but the number of assistant heads has risen fivefold from 1,200 to 6,000.”* (p32). Chart 2 highlights that the assistant heads had been in post a relatively short time, whereas many of the head teacher respondents have been in their current role just under ten years. This finding, therefore, seems to give weight to The National College of School Leadership (2010a) argument that many head teachers become heads later in life as *“There is a risk that the supply of younger leaders may not be sufficient as about a quarter of assistant and deputy heads are over 55 already”* (p1).

When conducting the pilot, one person felt that the qualifications question was not a necessary requirement. I felt that the types of teaching degree gave an indication of the different directions people travel towards leadership. Chart three shows that the majority of heads and deputies have completed a Bachelor of Education (B Ed) honours degree, as opposed to the split subject based degree followed by the year long Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE). One thing that was suggestive about the length of service in education was the four head teachers, who hold a Certificate of Education (Cert Ed). Historically, this certificate was awarded to trainee teachers from the 1960s to the early 1980s and took two years to complete in a teacher training college. This award was replaced by the B Ed in the 1980s and required a degree from a university linked teacher training college. Head teachers, who had this degree, from the respondents, did not also hold the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). This group also had not furthered their professional development with postgraduate degrees either.



Graph 4.3 Qualifications of the questionnaire respondents

'Do you have the NPQH award?' was the question that linked to the qualification analysis. The National College has had many senior leaders trained in this award since its introduction in 1997. Indeed from September 2009 it was compulsory to hold this qualification as a new head teacher. This has since been downgraded to a 'desirable' feature of headship since 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012 as a direct response to the British coalition government's attempts to combat the head teacher recruitment crisis.

Table 4.1 indicates that from the small scale research more senior leaders hold this certificate than not. From the results of the questionnaire presently no one is presently working on the award in the west midlands area. This may be as a result of the changes to the award not coming into force until September 2012 or people awaiting the full details of the revised content of the course. Either way, NPQH has been seen as an indication of a senior leader's intention to become a head teacher and will remain so for some time yet.

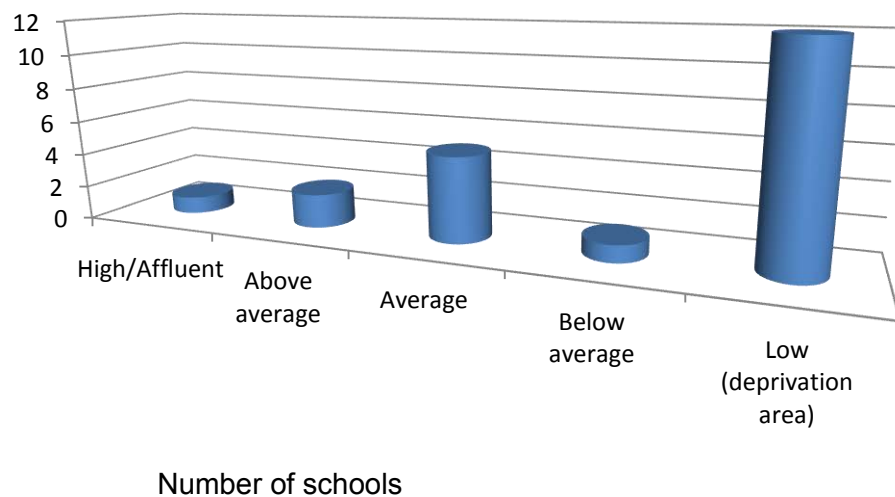
Yes	<b>14</b>
No	<b>5</b>
Currently working on gaining the award.	<b>0</b>
Missing Answers	<b>2</b>

#### Appendix two – Questionnaire Analysis

Table 4.1 senior leaders with the NPQH

From the responses to the questionnaire, one head teacher wrote '*not applicable as did not need it*' (This was placed in a simple tick box section and so indicates the lack of importance that the serving head teacher places, personally, on the NPQH award. Further comments on the NPQH theme are discussed within the questionnaire responses in Sections B and C. From the strong response to the posed question I felt that the place for the NPQH award had to be discussed in the senior leaders interviews to determine how the previous scheme supported their leadership pathway and what, if any, succession planning did this award support.

The next couple of questions, posed in section A of the questionnaire, were designed to determine the makeup of the Catholic schools within the West Midlands County. To show that the research reflects the diverse society that the faith schools serve the questions considered the size of the school and the socio-economic aspect. The results show that most Catholic primary schools are either one or two form in size and that most of the respondents were serving communities from low deprivation areas. This links with the original intention, in the nineteenth century, of the Catholic school system being set up to



serve the poorer end of the society. Table 4.2 and graph 4.4 indicate the size of the schools that responded to the questionnaire. Table 4.2 shows the composition of the responses verses the affiliation's school size in the Catholic Partnership.

Small Village School	0	0
One form entry Primary School	17	66
Two form entry Primary School	4	13
Three form entry Primary School	0	1
	21	80
	<b>Response</b>	<b>BCPP Schools</b>

Tables 4.2 The makeup of the responding Catholic primary schools within the West Midlands Primary Partnership.

#### Graph 4.4 School deprivation communities in the West Midlands

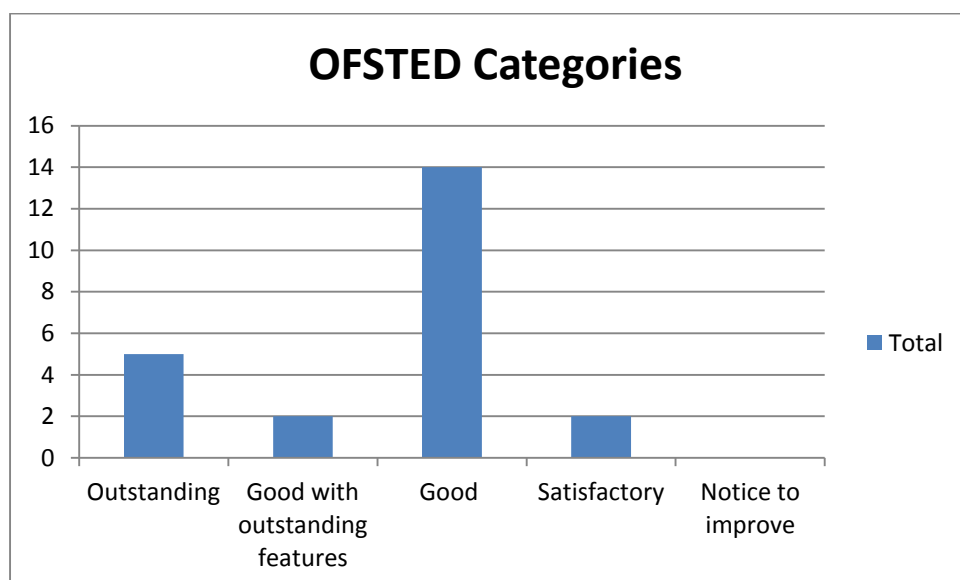
As Bottery (2004) and Oplatka and Tamir's (2009) research concluded, OFSTED appears to be one of the factors associated with the leadership crisis, as head teachers struggle with accountability and pupil progress; so the next two questions asked were about OFSTED directly. From the previous research (MacBeath 2006 and Harris 2007) through literature available on the leadership crisis of head teachers, it was observed that the pressures of 'stress', 'accountability' and the 'type of area the schools serve within the community' needed to be investigated further.

<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>6</b>

<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2006-2007</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 4.3 – Year of last school OFSTED inspection

In the original questionnaire, the response was required in a small box, but I changed this answer into a table so that I could see when the inspection teams had been last. None of the answers came from schools that had been the subject of an OFSTED inspection in this academic year. This may have been as the OFSTED inspections were changed in January 2012 and as 19/21 are 'good' or better many will have been low risk of a section five during this academic year.



Graph 4.5 OFSTED Inspection Results of Respondents

The responses given, from section A show that, from the questionnaire replies, the majority of Catholic head teachers are in the fifties or over age bracket. This is a direct link to the previous research by Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) into why new head teachers are becoming rare. They argue that "*shortages associated with retirement*" (p4) is not helped by the early retirement program that allowed for many head teachers to leave the profession at 55 years of age with a very handsome pension. This 'Teachers' Pensions Regulations for the Early Retirement of Teachers' policy was introduced by the Department for Education (1997) and was a national programme that gave people the self autonomy to decide when it was best to retire. If heads are following the path that Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) indicate is happening, then there is a leadership crisis and forward planning needs to be

considered to alleviate this. Succession planning maybe one of the solutions to the problem but also there needs to be a consideration regarding the perceived barriers to become a head at a younger age. Within the interview discussions this was a question that was probed into further.

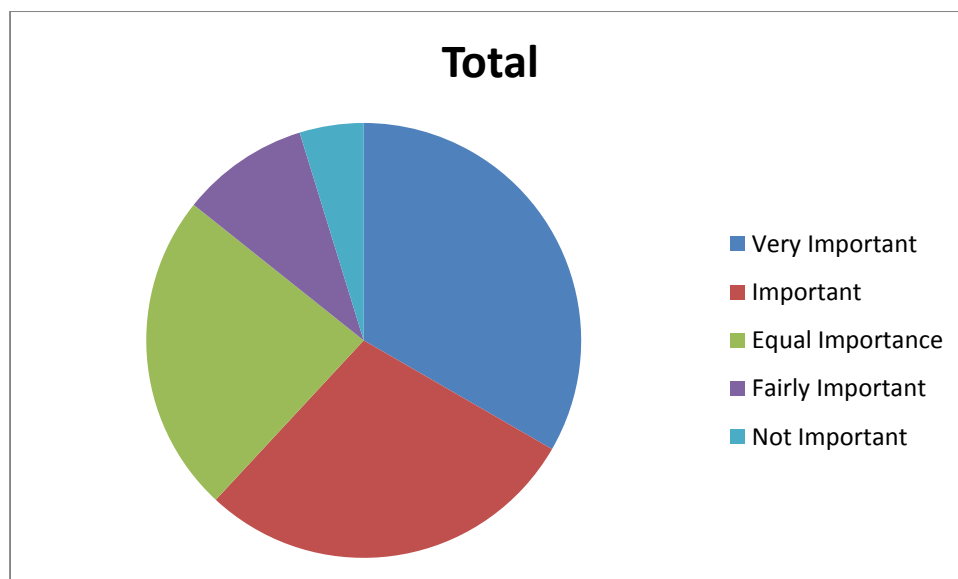
The other main area that needed to be investigated was the NPQH award. During 2012, the importance placed upon the certificate was downgraded from compulsory, for headship, to desired as a part of the job specification. This, though, comes at a time when the course content, of the new 2012 award, includes the three crucial areas of 'leading and improving teaching'; 'leading an effective school' and 'succeeding in headship' that have to be completed along with the selection of two further modules from curriculum, assessment, team leadership and ways to improve school performance. The course is required, by the National College, to be completed within eighteen months, and there is an expectation that candidates should apply for headship within one to two years.

With leadership accountability and workload areas discussed as barriers to taking on headship, should the NPQH be addressing these issues too? There has been a pre-NPQH certificate also commissioned, by the National College, from September 2012 which is designed for people in senior roles who have previously completed the leadership pathways award but are not quite ready to take on the whole gambit the main NPQH certificate requires. This year long course, interestingly, centres around dealing with accountability, but other aspects of headship are left out of the content. Due to the redesign and structure of the various NPQH awards available, I felt that through the interviews, the topic of the importance of the award should be considered and whether the course could be more reflective of the demands on the head teacher position in future course manufacturing.

In the second section, part B, the six questions, with the five Likert point scale, were organised around some of the themes discussed in the second chapter of the thesis. The concepts of delegation; shared leadership; empowerment and acting headship were preliminary themes generated from the formulating of the four thesis questions and the initial readings relating to them. From the questionnaire results, the first five questions all concluded that sharing leadership, strong career development programmes and delegations of power are important when preparing senior leaders for the head teacher position. The mean of the first four questions is '4.9' which equates to the respondents feeling that delegation, creative working environment, empowerment and trust are all 'very important' qualities in a school leader. Question five, on the theme of CPD (Career Professional Development) for specific aspects of school leadership, scored a slightly lower mean of '4.5'

as two of the twenty one respondents did not feel this aspect to be as important as some of the other aforementioned qualities.

One of the most noticeable differences between the research by Draper and McMichael (2003) and the results of the questionnaire was when the concept of acting headship was discussed. The question was *'Have you had experience of 'acting headship' before taking on the headship role?'* (Section B number 6) The opinions were highlighted by the number of choices on the 5 point scale for each question, where 1 equated to 'Not important'; 2 'Fairly important'; 3 of 'Equal importance'; 4 viewed as 'Important' and 5 'Very important'. Graph 4.6 shows the results of this question:



Graph 4.6 Responses on the theme of the importance of acting headship

The question had the most decisive answers. On the one extreme, seven responses felt that acting headship should be a pre-requisite to becoming a head teacher. At the other end of the spectrum, one answer felt that acting headship was not important. However, the story behind this one answer was from a head teacher who had been in post many years. Overall, the thirteen out of twenty one responses (the mean average indicating 2.9 out of a possible 5) show that the balance swings towards acting headship being an area that needs to be seriously considered as training for the heads role and that overall the feeling is that it should have 'equal importance' when schools create succession planning policies. The questionnaire response indicates that well over 60% felt acting head was important as a way to headship, whereas Draper and McMichael (2003) found that only 50% of their 64 acting heads moved up to the permanent position. In ten years it appears this area is increasingly important. In the fifteen interviews, conducted after the questionnaire, I felt it was important

to explore this aspect further and try to come up with reasons why acting headship was viewed as such an important stepping stone nowadays.

The ranking questions were designed as a way of gaining some initial thoughts towards thesis research questions two and three: 'What are the perceptions of incumbent head teachers on the leadership crisis?' and 'What are the perceptions of deputy heads and assistant heads on the leadership crisis?' The two aspects had not been discussed in the literature review, as previous research was limited on these topics from the senior leaders' viewpoints.

Research, though, which was available, was on 'hindering' and 'motivating' factors that the literature chapter highlighted as possible reasons for a leadership crisis. Harris (2007) and MacBeath (2006) were the stimuli that were used to create the ten hindering factors that were used within the questionnaire. The senior leaders were asked to rank the ten factors from one (the main factor) to ten (the least important factor) and all twenty one replies were completed fully.

From the results in chart seven, the three main reasons given by senior leaders, for lack of headship uptake are 'workload levels' (average score – 2.7); 'OFSTED and Local Authority initiatives' (average score – 3.7) and 'Family Commitments' (average score 3.8). These findings back up the research from Leithwood and Levin (2005), Fraser and Brock (2006) and Harris' (2007) that due to accountability heads are leaving the education sector due to the 'pressures' and 'stress' (Harris 2007 p105) through the *"relentless accountability placed on those in positions of authority"* (Harris 2007 p105). The 'highly prescriptive accountability' (Ball 2013 p173) include aspects that increase the workload levels (according to the researchers) is the various elements of paperwork required to satisfy government, OFSTED, local authorities, governors and parents.

Workload levels	1
OFSTED and LA initiatives	2
Family Commitments	3
Stress	4
Accountability to Stakeholders	5
Sense of isolation	5

Unrealistic Expectations	7
Disgruntled Parents	8
Religious Clergy	9
Salary	10

Table 4.4 Possible hindering factors to headship

In Table 4.4, the three areas which the senior leaders felt were less of a reason for not taking on the Catholic headship role were: 'Salary' (average score - 7.6); 'Religious Clergy' (average score - 6.9) and 'Disgruntled Parents' (average score - 5.6). Table 4.5 reiterated the areas viewed to be less of a motivating factor to becoming a head teacher as being 'Religious Clergy' (average score - 8.1); 'Salary' (average score - 8) and the NPQH award (average score - 6.6). The similarities between the two ranking questions (as seen in tables 4.4 and 4.5) are that the influence of working with the Religious Clergy and the Salary offered for headship appear to have no influence in a person's decision to apply to become a Catholic primary head teacher. Salary, being the last reason, is a real surprise, as most of the literature available appears to indicate that this is a major hindering factor. Fraser and Brock (2006) surveyed many teachers in Australia and found that *"insufficient remuneration, staff issues, demanding and disgruntled parents, and unrealistic expectations were disincentives to the job"* (p433). This conclusion was reiterated by Ololube (2005) who also found that a head teacher's pay was an area that needed to be closely considered when looking at a hindering factor especially when a person felt *"their inputs were greater than the outputs"* (p2). There may be some link to the gender balance of the respondents to the questionnaire, regarding the reason the salary was not considered an issue, but to determine what the reasons for the salary comments are, this key area was discussed further in the individual interviews.

The questionnaire appears to disagree entirely with both Ololube (2005) and Fraser and Broke (2006) since in Catholic school's money is not a major consideration to headship. Is this because people feel that they are following Jesus' path, and therefore the job is a vocation or calling from God? This anomaly with previous research formed the basis for one of the questions in the interviews with senior leaders.

The interesting response, though, from chart 4.5 is that the NPQH is viewed as having limited influence on a person's career path. Considering that the award has been around for over a decade and was compulsory for headship (from 2009 until 2012) this is an interesting finding. Training and support for head teachers' were areas considered further within the senior leaders interviews as a theme for possible recommendations for future best practice.



Good experience as a deputy	1
Acting headship	2
Job Fulfilment	3
Previous role models	4
Family Encouragement	5
Succession Planning initiatives	6
Coaching and mentoring	7
NPQH award	8
Salary	9
Religious Clergy	10

Table 4.5 Motivating factors to becoming a head teacher

The last ranking question in section B was formed using the areas that are described in the literature of Gunter (2001) and Rhodes and Brundrett (2006), to be the main motivating factors in people choosing to become head teachers. In the questionnaire, the ten options are formulated through the reoccurring themes mentioned in the previous research available in this area of leadership. Table 4.5 shows the replies from the twenty-one schools and the top result is 'good experience when in the deputy role' (average score – 3.5). This choice agreed with the argument Gunter (2001) formulated, which claimed that people aspire to become a head teacher through the experiences they had throughout their deputy role. So even after a decade has passed, this piece of research (from Gunter) is still the key factor to recruitment to becoming the head teacher. Therefore, succession planning should include specific elements to allow deputies and assistant heads to experience headship.

Table 4.5 also shows that the second highest score was 'acting headship' (average score- 3.6, which was only 0.1 average score difference from good experience as a deputy) and the third was 'job fulfilment' (average score- 3.7). From the comments reported in the analysis; one participant did comment though that *'job fulfilment is very rare these days'* (appendix two) which is a direct link to the hindering factors of workloads and impact of OFSTED. Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) research concluded that, *"those with influence over the circumstances of teachers' experience of work encourage the possibilities for fostering increased job commitment through their leadership actions"* (p282). It would appear from the previous research, therefore, that succession planning does work when opportunities for developing leadership skills are planned for. This leads to a sense of 'job fulfilment' and the reassurance that the deputies and assistant heads can take on the head teacher role. The

second highest score for 'acting headship' indicates that many senior leaders felt that this is the path to follow for succession planning. The interviews asked why people felt this is an important step, and if so how long should this period of preparation be for? This argument for deputies having experience of acting headship, though, disputes MacBeath (2009) research that the solution, in his opinion, to the leadership crisis is not acting headship but a "*coaching and mentoring*" (p3) system for senior leaders. Most head teachers, from the questionnaire responses, felt that acting headship is worth serious consideration as a solution to the crisis and should be incorporated into future practice/policy recommendations.

The final eight questions of the questionnaire were open ended, allowing for free text responses to specific areas related to the Catholic leadership crisis: succession planning; delegation; and training requirements. The first four questions were to be answered by the head teachers and the further four questions to be completed by the deputy or assistant head only.

The questions (numbered five to eight) were created to start to formulate possible reasons for the lack of applications for headship specifically. The questions were to consider the possible hindering factors: how present school heads can support the senior leaders to ensure the skills required have been experienced; styles of leadership; and their own opinions about succession planning.

#### 4.2 Introduction to the Interview Process

Following on from the responses to the questionnaire, I came up with a set of ten questions to interview senior leaders with. The questions ranged from the thoughts regarding leadership crisis; opportunities for career development, through to exactly how long acting headship should be. I also then added an extra probing question. It was included only if, throughout the interview, it had not naturally been mentioned.

The extra question had come from my personal observation, in which I recognised certain schools locally re-advertising, and the school having low numbers of practising Catholic pupils. I wondered if the second or third adverts were a direct result of the low Catholic numbers within the school. This recognition came from a 'Securing the Future - The Process: Advice & Guidance' consultation document which was issued in 2007 by the DES. The document was controversially received by the West Midlands diocese, as the Catholic Church looked at the numbers of non-Catholic pupils (within Catholic schools) and whether the school should remain under the Catholic umbrella. The consultation road shows and head teacher briefings indicated, unanimously, that closing schools were not an option where Catholic numbers are low. I wondered though if Catholic deputy heads were therefore

subconsciously not applying for these positions, in case the question emerges again, in the future. Job security could be playing a part in the picture when it comes to leadership positions in Catholic schools. During the interviews, it was not a theme mentioned but could be future research into the role of the deputy head.

#### 4.2.1 Findings from the Interview Question Responses – open ended questions

In the appendix section the questions asked at interview are evidenced (appendix 4) along with an example of a transcript of one of the interviews conducted (appendix 5-interview eight). This gives an indication as to the way the interviews were undertaken, and how the responses were transcribed. All interviews were taped using a Dictaphone and field notes taken at the same time. Appendix three shows the transcript for the eleventh interview.

From the responses to question one ‘Do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?’ Thirteen out of fifteen felt there is a leadership crisis, one felt that crisis was too strong a word but more ‘*a concern*’ (interview fifteen) and one felt ‘*that it’s a different quality that fills positions*’ (interview seven). The question was asked first as this was the crux of the research and as it was so fundamental was the organizing principle for the two overall, distinct trains of thought that emerged.

These two themes materialized as overriding with faith school leaders. One was around the role of the head teacher position itself with all the responsibilities and day to day management of leading a school. The other theme was about the Catholic expectations and responsibilities themselves and how being a leader in a faith community affects how the person acts and behaves, along with the extra expectations of regular attendance at Mass and Sacramental preparation that this role brings. From the first interview question responses, the overarching theme started to emerge of the contrast between being a head teacher (regardless of type of school it is) and what the day to day job meant in conjunction with the extra implications and expectations required to be a Catholic head teacher.

Section C of the questionnaire also was made up of open ended questions that had both the same overarching theme implicit in the answers resulting in the questionnaire and interview responses overlapped. It is from this point onwards that the presentation of findings combines both survey methods together.

### 4.3 Theme One – The Role of Head Teacher

The first theme that was discussed looked at the heads job itself. The role of the head teacher was seen as a 'hassle' (interview five – deputy head) as there is too much 'responsibility' (interviews one – head teacher; two – deputy head; nine and thirteen – assistant heads), 'expectations' (interviews two – deputy head; eight – deputy head and ten – head teacher) and 'accountability' (interviews three – head teacher; five – deputy head and ten – head teacher) placed on the shoulders of the head teacher and people do not want it. The feeling of enormous 'pressure' was mentioned by ten of the interviewee's, which was four of the five head teachers, two of the three deputies, all three assistant heads and one middle leader. These negative effects were caused by the government (interviews four and fourteen), the requirements of leading and maintaining 'good' schools (interview one, six and fifteen) and OFSTED itself (interviews ten and thirteen).

In the interviews, four people found the process itself of applying to become a head teacher off putting. One head teacher (interview four) felt that the *'two hour, half a day, show it on paper method, needs adjusting'*. This was discussed even further by another head, who felt that if there is a possible *'internal candidate'* (interview ten) this can stop people applying. This process was also mentioned by one of the assistant heads who gave a reason as to why people may not apply. She said that *'once you've committed yourself to the process you have to accept the job if offered. People are being choosier about where they apply'* (interview six). The middle leaders did not comment at all about the application process. The responses raise questions as to how to motivate people to apply for specific schools. If people are being selective with their job choices, then the challenge is how to market the schools in most need of head teachers?

The eighth interview question was created from the literature review when the basis for a person becoming a head teacher was found to be due to having had 'good experience as a deputy'. This theme was investigated further through discussions held during the interviews. The first reason of 'good experience as a deputy' was agreed upon by all ten interview participants. Four of the five head teachers then went on to give specific examples of how experiences have supported them in their own career paths. Interviewee number three liked when appointed as a deputy *'being there at every meeting with my head. She didn't hold the school to herself. She wasn't that precious... heads have to understand deputies must be pushed on'* (interview three). The theme of developing and influencing a career path specifically for the deputy was also discussed by interviewee number four. There was an agreement between head teachers that you need to *'give responsibility at appropriate times. You do need to have horrible bits to give you grounding for the future'* (interview four). This

idea of mentoring deputy heads is reiterated in the research by MacBeath (2009) who argued that when support is planned for and delivered successful succession planning was found to take place. Deputy and senior leaders' mentoring, along with bespoke training, is an area that will need to be developed in future education policy, as this is one solution to ensuring a constant supply of future school leaders.

Interview number seven elaborated to specifics that can show deputies how to achieve the headship position. This was discussed as demonstrating *'ways you can keep on top of the school; control the direction and dictate the mood'* (interview seven). Interview number ten actually went into specifics that helped to support them when taking on a head teacher role. The three aspects that were invaluable experience were *'being taught to always know your parents as well as their children; having the skills associated with performance management and being given a delegated budget... so a whole school one isn't so daunting'* (interview ten). Performance Management is part of a module to be completed within the NPQH programme, but the other two aspects mentioned are not. If these areas are seen as important by serving heads, then some consideration should be given to them somewhere within preparation for headship training.

The most noticeable difference that came from the head teachers' discussions was also from interviewee number seven. The head felt that ultimately, it was their personal responsibility to give the role a positive image. There was a feeling, from the discussion, that all too often *'heads moan about aspects of the job'* (interview seven). This negativity was felt to then permeate and leave deputies with the wrong image of the job. The interviewee believed that to alleviate the leadership crisis, *'we need to convey a different image about the great aspects of the job'* (interview seven). From all the fifteen interviews this is a different direction to the other fourteen as the concept of heads praising the job has not been discussed before and serious consideration should be given to the image of headship.

The ten senior or middle leaders' responses to question eight were rather limited on the rewards and demands of the senior leaders. Only one of the interviewees talked directly about their experience as a deputy. It was felt that, in their experience, a senior leader's individual involvement was determined by the head teacher's personality themselves. Interviewee number six discussed how hard it can be to work with people when *'you clash... then it can be hard to gain experience unless you move.'* The solution to this, from the interviewee's point of view, is to develop a *'negotiator style who listens to both sides of the argument'* (interviewee six). The idea of a negotiating styles of school leadership maybe something to investigate further in a longitudinal study.

The middle leaders were probed further by being asked *'Why do you think people become head teachers?'* The responses were the same as previous senior personnel had mentioned such as *'career aspiration'* (interviews twelve, thirteen, fourteen and fifteen) and *'next logical step'* (interview fourteen). However, what was profound was how the middle leaders felt regarding people who have become leaders. Interview thirteen commented, *'some people have been persuaded but shouldn't have.'* This was further elaborated on *'you really have to want to be a head yourself or the school suffers.'* If middle leaders see staff becoming head teachers because they are *'persuaded to'* (interview twelve) rather than *'want to'* (interview thirteen) then questions need to be raised about the quality of the people applying to the headship positions.

One specific response to question eight, by one middle leader, discussed the *'deputy heads job role. This has shifted towards excessive paperwork and this is putting people off... the main school roles are too data driven'* (interview eleven). What the answer indicates is that the expectations and pressures are being felt by all the school's leadership teams, and that 80% of the interviewees felt that this is having a detrimental effect on leadership. Clearly, from the responses, younger staff are not wanting to add to their workloads. The head teacher (interview number four) summed up the general feeling that was gained from the one to one interviews: *'Deputy headship, people see that as a good place to get to these days, they see headship as a real difficulty... so less and less want to become heads!'* With a leadership crisis there seems to be a need for motivating the deputies and the only way this appears to be achievable is through less paperwork and bureaucracy.

Interestingly, though, the middle leaders did not agree with interview number four, as it was felt that nowadays, even the deputy head role has its concerns. There was a feeling that people do not even want to take on this position either. *'They are struggling to get both heads and deputies. Just from being here and seeing people come round for the deputy position there was hardly any takers. So I'd say there is an issue there as well'* (interview twelve).

The aspect of *'reducing stress'*, as a way of making the position of head teacher more attractive, was an area of C3, in the questionnaire, that was a common theme within the twenty one responses. Stress and the consequences of workload pressures have been a major aspect of the work conducted by the teaching unions. It was through the teaching unions continued support that planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) agenda, introduced in 2005, has remained consistently part of the class teachers' timetable for the past nine years. However, the proposed directed head teacher time is very indiscriminative and not prescribed in the same manner. The NASUWT, in 2010, conducted a professional

*“workload audit in which 64% of respondents stated that they have not achieved a reasonable work/life balance” (p7).* The teaching union found that with such a high proportion that ‘occupational stress’ was very high. They found, from their own research, that *“stress and workload are two recurring reasons cited by those leaving the profession. Indeed, these two factors, together with Government initiatives, form the top three interrelated factors” (p7).* This is a clear indication that work life balance is attributing to issues with school leadership and solutions will need to be found to alleviate this key area.

The responses to the questionnaires (see appendix two) linked with the NASUWT findings. There were four direct comments related to stress. Three of the comments stated they wanted ‘minimal interference’ (questionnaire three), ‘less intrusive method of inspection’ (questionnaire ten) and ‘less paperwork’ (questionnaire twelve). The fourth reply, from questionnaire eighteen, though, suggested a way forward: *‘To reduce stress there needs to be ‘time out’ for 2-6 weeks every five years to strategy build’.* This idea would allow for succession planning opportunities. Whilst the head teacher is seconded elsewhere, the senior leaders of the school could experience headship first hand. This may encourage some of the incumbent deputies to take on the role permanently.

Workload levels was the theme of a more recent survey (in 2011) of fifteen thousand teachers. The NASUWT (2011) reported that the biggest concern that teachers have is workload levels. The issue attracted *“three quarters (75%) of the vote and was the top concern to teacher morale” (p17).* The thesis questionnaire; the literature from Harris (2007) and research from Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) also found that workload levels are the biggest hindering factor to headship. It was from these various pieces of research that I wanted to ask questions, in the interviews, to specifically find out what exactly is causing these working pressures, and by doing so start to gauge how to solve the problem.

Workload levels were discussed in a variety of ways, from the head teacher’s viewpoints, when they were interviewed. Two of the five heads (Interviewees One and Three) stated that all paperwork is a major factor in workload levels. Both concluded that workload relates to the extra expectations of governor meetings and night time meetings, and the paperwork related to these meetings. Interview number three also argued that the makeup of the governing body can exacerbate this issue *‘it’s the extras such as the governor meetings that contribute to workload levels. If you have horrible governors it’s tough’.* No specifics were related to expand on how awkward governing bodies can make the head teacher role harder but the feeling was *‘if you’re lumbered with someone awful then heads can’t do their job properly’ (interview three).* This is obviously the opinion of just one head teacher, but accountability to others kept being mentioned, throughout the interviews conducted.

Accountability and the pressures this generates is increasingly becoming an issue that needs to be addressed. With all the expectations being placed upon head teachers, this appears to be having a direct effect on the leadership crisis.

There was a counter argument, though, from two of the other three head teachers. One (interview seven) felt that workload levels were helped when delegation was allowed to happen. The consensus was that a head teacher *'does not need to involve themselves in every facet of what is going on. It's a need to know basis'*. The other head, interview number ten, felt that workloads are *'not constant'*. There are periods of time when paperwork builds up, especially when there are obligatory requirements such as testing, reports, school census returns and performance management but *'you have to be organized and do mandatory things immediately. You manage your diary and try to keep up to date'* (interview ten).

The common theme that linked interview four, seven and ten was delegation. The last interviewed head teacher (number four) also discussed this area as he argued that *'workload in all areas of the school has increased'* and that ultimately it comes down to the *'understanding that you have to mould the staff and let something's go to them'*. Delegation, as discussed in the literature review, is not really a consideration for a solution to the leadership crisis, as it is more a management style. However, as part of a module of the NPQH this would support the way new heads would develop their workforce to grow in a succession planning policy. Indeed, in other parts of the world whole modules are given over to delegation. This is because it is viewed as a skill that needs to be learnt by new heads. One such scheme is run by UNESCO (2012) called *'Better Schools: Resource Materials for School Heads in Africa'* and module two is all on what delegation is, how to use it successfully in running a school and how to overcome the barriers to delegation. If other countries value the importance of delegation, then it should be considered in all headship programmes. It may be one way to enhance succession planning but only a longitudinal study would prove this fully.

One hundred percent of head teachers, interviewed, believed that workload levels are of major factor in hindering the uptake of school headship. However, interviewee number six, an assistant head, argued that workload across all areas has increased drastically and is not just the concession of the head teacher. The three deputies, who were interviewed all discussed having high work levels, through practical examples, of *'CAF – the Common Assessment Framework meetings'* (interview two) which are sessions where professionals meet to consider family support; *'being a SENCO'* (interview eight) and *'extra pressures due to loads of daily things'* (interview five).



What was different between the head and deputy interviews were two factors. Firstly, the deputies viewed the higher workload levels as linked to their role in a faith school and especially the extra Catholic responsibilities, which are not so prevalent in the state sector. Interview five commented *'In our scenario, a Catholic School, we have a lot more commitments in regards to Holy Communion, Confirmation and things like that... so in some respects it may be a workload issue they think of as a Catholic itself'*. Interviewee two commented on the 'worry' that not completing activities means that *'you feel to blame'*, which from the interviews kept being mentioned as 'Catholic guilt'. This is an interesting phrase, which I did not explore but seemed to imply that you did the extra meetings because there was a feeling that in some way the Catholic religion expected you to and that it relates to emotional labour. This 'guilt' is totally unquantifiable in any research, but the reality, from the deputy viewpoint, was simply *'undisturbed time is nothing as everything is disturbed time in leadership'* (interview two).

The second issue, that the deputies and the assistant heads commented upon, was how observing the job of a head teacher was actually putting them off headship altogether. Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) and Bottery (2004) discussed the 'negative viewpoint' that deputy's see of headship as a hindering factor. The interview responses appear to back up these findings. Interview eight categorised the workload levels as *'enough as a deputy without doing a heads too!'* Assistant head, interview six, agreed and commented *'workload levels is the paperwork heads do. It's ridiculous!'*

However, upon reflection, the deputy felt that no matter what the workload, ultimately *'it's the responsibility and wanting to do the job'* (interview eight) that is the crux of the matter. The comments link to research by Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) which indicated the extent of the problem and found that *"43% of incumbent deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders do not aspire to be a head teacher"* (p382). The research, along with the interview findings, show evidence that many deputies are indeed happy in their own role and have little or no intention of progressing their career further. This in itself creates a bottleneck and impacts on the leadership crisis because there is a lack of qualified personnel to progress to the next stage and makes succession planning (capacity building) very difficult. From interview eight's response, the cause is down to confidence and the only way to solve the problem is to give people confidence through trialling the job, through such schemes as acting headship.

The findings, in this thesis, indicate that the largest hindering factor to becoming a head teacher is the workload levels that the job entails. All senior staff accept that there are responsibilities of extra work as you progress up the career ladder, however the amount

heads have to do is putting potential candidates off. How this is to be addressed needs to be researched further and legislation will be the only true way that levels can be monitored. Ultimately, though, the way head teachers themselves work can be better balanced so that deputies see that the paperwork is season specific and not really as bad as it can be perceived.

When considering family commitments, MacBeath (2006) in his research, gave a list of three key areas, which were felt needed to be addressed in order to solve the current leadership crisis. The first was 'stress'; the second 'accountability' and the third was workload levels and family commitments. When it came to the individual interviews, interestingly, only five out of the fifteen senior staff had any specific comment about family life being affected by becoming a head teacher. Three out of the five were heads themselves. The deputies did not have any remark to make, which goes against the research suggesting that gender and family life are really key factors in the lack of uptake for the headship position. Coleman (2002) argued that women may be being passed over in order for others to reach headship. The responses from the interviews appear to indicate that workloads are the real clincher for not moving up the career ladder and the way the extra work can impact on family life.

However, the three heads who responded tended to disagree that the job takes away from family time. Interviewee number seven believed that if you are flexible with your diary then *'school doesn't get in the way of family. I make the time up at home or at school if I do something'*. Interviewee number four felt that flexibility in diaries was also key and that if you *'create an ethos then if you have to shoot off you can'*. Both of these heads felt able to create an atmosphere where you could combine family life successfully with the head teacher role. Interviewee number one also believed that there is a *'juggling act'* but that sometimes you can feel resentful when *'the family say they're going out for lunch and I have to plough through the work on a Saturday'*. All the five heads though, did strongly agree that they did not take on the job expecting it to be a *'Monday to Friday job'* (interview one) either, but it appeared that in the interviews all of them had got a balance that suited them.

It was two of the assistant heads who felt that viewing the hours that head teachers do has the potential to stop people applying for the position. Interviewee number six felt that having two children meant they only got to determine 'M' at *'weekends. I think people don't apply for headships as people worry they will have more work and less time for families.'* The other comment was *'full time is the only option for me but I sometimes worry I don't spend enough time with my children'* (interview thirteen). The fact that these comments were not mentioned or discussed by any deputies or middle leaders is an interesting one. The remaining staff, who are not head teachers, did not feel it necessary to talk about family life and so the

conclusion must be that people accept that home life can be affected but recognise that this is the same for all working parents.

When asked specifically *'What, in your opinion, is putting people off applying to be a head teacher and how can we encourage younger people to take on this role?'* (Interview question four) the main response from fourteen of the fifteen interviewees (94%) was around the issue of accountability. Accountability was found by Harris (2007) to be the main reason heads are leaving the education sector and through the comments (by all aspects of school leaders) there is an agreement with this finding. In a 2012 survey conducted by the NASUWT teaching union, 15 000 teachers of all levels were asked what exactly caused excessive 'workload pressures'. The findings, which have to be taken from the viewpoint that this is a union report, appear to indicate that:

*"75% of teachers feel workload issues is the biggest cause for concern for getting in the way of teaching jobs... and that 36% felt OFSTED was the excessive driving force" (NASUWT 2011 p10-11).*

The findings, though, do link with the accountability issues that were discussed in the interviews. Interviewee number five felt that as a deputy head the pressures associated with OFSTED makes them feel *'I'm not trusted to do the job'*. One of the assistant heads went further and explained that OFSTED adds extra pressure to schools *'especially if you have previously gained Satisfactory. OFSTED adds to the impact as there is no middle ground'* (interview 6). The most important, if not telling, comment came from one head teacher who felt that OFSTED *'rigors and rigmarole'* was the main reason for the leadership crisis as, in their opinion, *'the deputies don't want the added pressure'* (interview seven). These comments could be explained by the changes in the OFSTED process that have occurred in the past decade. OFSTED inspection has gone from six weeks' notice down to the lunchtime of the day before and in some cases no-notice inspections. All of this adds to the 'pressure' that is felt by the staff interviewed.

The impact of OFSTED was felt most acutely by the middle leaders and their comments are indicative of the major issues related to hindering factors to career progression. *'Schools don't run like a business but that's what you're supposed to run it as,'* (interview 11); *'OFSTED is a big issue and a huge deterrent. They place unrealistic challenges upon heads... the threat is constant so when they come and you get a bad result it's demoralising'* (interview 12) and *'OFSTED! We don't hear anything other than OFSTED and as a primary assistant head my life is dominated by OFSTED. The new regime from September 2013 is horrific. The inspectors dig so hard you feel inadequate even if the school comes out okay,'* (interview 13). The impact inspection is having on middle and senior leaders was summed up by the deputy head (interview fifteen) who had only recently been appointed to the

position. The comment was *'when you see the reality of the job you decide to give up aspirations to go higher... I can give you names/emails of people who have become entirely disillusioned by it all.'*

In the questionnaire (C5) the reoccurring theme was also OFSTED, and that accountability to them was a *'huge responsibility and that DHT suited them personally'* (questionnaire eleven). Previous research by MacBeath (2006) and Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) indicated that there are a higher proportion of deputy heads that are comfortable in that position and that this could be a stumbling block for the middle leaders who want to progress their own careers.

If accountability and workload levels are directly linked with the expectations placed on school leaders to be a 'good' school (as discussed by Ball 2013) then there is an issue as to how schools can support their leaders. Obviously every school has governing bodies, but how much support can the volunteers really give the head teacher with the accountability requirements when ultimately a head teacher is accountable to its governing body and with OFSTED the governors are accountable too. The fact that only one of the five head teachers mentioned OFSTED directly does make me think that maybe this is just one aspect for not applying for headship felt by the middle and senior leaders. There has to be questions asked as to whether there is a culture of fear being felt by these leaders, and if so, what can be done to counteract this? Head teachers' themselves felt that hindering factors were more likely to be the 'ultimate responsibility' (interview one), *'buck stopping with you'* (interview four) and *'ultimate responsibility for children's education'* (interview nine) has more basis in the argument. Again perceptions of the job against the realities need to be addressed.

OFSTED was found by the National College (2006b) to be *"clearly acting as a deterrent to deputies, assistant heads and others with the potential for headship (p4)*. Fink (2010) also stated that as recent as 2010 *"62.5 % of deputies said current inspection arrangements made them 'less willing' to apply for headship" (p38)*. This direct response to the impact that OFSTED has on head teachers appear, from the research of the last five years, to be having a noticeable effect upon the leadership crisis.

The questionnaires indicated that the Catholic school leadership teams felt that OFSTED and the inspection framework was, in their opinion, the second major hindering factor when it came to people applying to become a head teacher. During the interview sessions, this theme was explored further to determine what the story was behind these statistics.

The first thing to note was that three deputies and one of the assistant heads who were interviewed did not mention OFSTED during question eight (on why people become a head

teacher). This seems to go against the previous research, which appeared to indicate that senior leaders were being 'put off' headship due to the impact OFSTED has upon schools.

The senior leaders who were interviewed had previously mentioned OFSTED in other questions and therefore when this theme was posed, many concentrated instead upon the workload levels in greater depth. Two assistant head discussed OFSTED (interviewee nine and thirteen). The person argued that the impact *'the new regime of OFSTED has can affect if you have a young family'* (interview 9). This does link with The National College (2006b) research that OFSTED can be seen as a deterrent but from one senior leaders' view it is the family life impact that inspection and accountability has that is a more dominant area of consideration.

OFSTED was mentioned by three of the five heads who were interviewed. Interview number seven felt that by adopting the 'light touch monitoring' model that OFSTED adopted in the previous framework then workload levels should decrease. It was felt that rigorous monitoring should occur but if a teacher was good or better then a 'light touch' approach would suffice. Interview one discussed the impact OFSTED has by *'waltzing in and they can leave a real mess to sort.'* What was strongly questioned was the harm that could be achieved by having a two day inspection if the OFSTED team was complacent. The interviewee discussed the legacy that OFSTED can cause as a hindering factor and this is worth considering when looking specifically at whether this links with schools that re-advertise the heads position. In another piece of research, this possible link could be investigated further.

One suggested solution to experiencing the realities of the head teacher position was through the concept of shadowing. From the interview responses (question three) there was much support for work shadowing from all thirteen out of fifteen answers. This equates to 87% and shows that across the leadership teams this aspect needs to be a serious aspect of future headship requirements. The feeling was, though, that the nine days on the new NPQH programme is *'not long enough; shadowing a head should be for a longer period of time'* (interview one- head teacher). One assistant head felt that *'work shadowing should be putting people in the job for a couple of days a week'* (interview six). The practicalities of this, though, would be hard to do within a small school but with detailed planning - a school placement swap could be feasible. No matter how the placement is created, the general feeling was that shadowing existing head teachers is the way forward; that it should be in a different place from where you presently work and be *'on a regular basis for at least six weeks'* (interviewee four – head teacher). Interview thirteen felt that there should be 'six

*months secondment as this would show the realities of school leadership as a job share head.'*

In the questionnaire, responding to C2, shadowing was also strongly encouraged. 'Opportunities to lead' was mentioned in ten out of nineteen responses. The thoughts ranged from allowing the deputy to becoming acting head for one day a week to the deputy head being regularly seconded to different types of school. The common consensus was that the deputy needs to experience the ultimate responsibility of running a school, if the leadership crisis is ever to be resolved. Eight of the nineteen responses felt that the way forward was for deputies to shadow or change position with another deputy head. This was felt to be imperative in order to ensure future head teachers. Presently, this is not a system that is regularly used unless a school is in crisis. It seems that this solution may need to be further researched to determine if this is indeed the key to securing the future of Catholic leaders.

In the questionnaire responses (see appendix three for evidence of number eleven) acting headship was found to be the second major motivating factor (out of ten) in applying for headship. As acting headship had been researched over three years, as having a fundamental impact within Scotland's head teacher training programme (Crawford 2012), I felt that a specific question on the theme would generate responses on its viewed impact in England, and that any responses may indicate why it came so high on the questionnaire rating within the Catholic West Midlands. This would allow an unpicking of why acting headship was viewed as such an important element in possibly solving the leadership crisis both through the research conducted by Crawford (2012) and in this thesis.

All 100% of the participants saw acting headship as a way to stem the decline in the uptake of the head teacher position. The fifth question given to the middle leaders was different, to the heads and deputies, to determine if they could come up with '*possible strategies to encourage people into headship?*' Regardless of the position in school, the responses were all the same. Four of the five head teachers felt that acting headship was a good way of prospective candidates being '*given a feel of budgets, governors and parents*' (interview ten) and also being shown the realities of the job '*by needing to put your foot in otherwise it's a big shock*' (interview one). Interviewee four felt that this should be part of all leadership requirements as the head teacher felt that '*acting anything is good, so you can gain experience*'.

There was, though, caution mentioned with regard to acting headship. Head teacher number seven surmised about the impact on schools if all '*fifty four deputies in local Birmingham Catholic schools acted up at the same time*'. Although in reality this would never happen the head was trying to give a picture of the difficulties that arranging such a long length of

secondment may have on schools if positions were swapped to gain experience within another school. The head teacher felt that the answer was to have a *'Catholic element to the new NPQH where practice headship is an element rather than acting headship'* (interview seven). In 2013 this NPQH aspect was included as an optional module three extra under the title 'Diverse Context'. As to whether this will have any impact on the faith school leadership issues will only be seen in the future.

The four deputies agreed with the head teachers that acting headship is *'a fantastic idea'* (interview five). Two of the four have had experience of being an acting head but had received different experiences. Both long serving deputies felt that acting headship was an invaluable way to practice running a school. Interview number two believed it had *'encouraged me to address parents in a formal way and I need to do more of that'*. Whereas, interviewee number eight felt that the diocese needed to support more. *'If they do support you then a year should be taken'*. This need for support was also mentioned in interview number four who felt that *'the Catholic Partnership or diocese must help'* (head teacher). The warning was reiterated that without support and guidance acting headship has the potential to do more harm than good as *'without guidance you could make a real mess of things'* (interview number four). This was reiterated by interview fifteen who felt that although *'acting head is one solution there needs to be more support in these roles.'*

All of the fifteen interviewed believed that acting headship should be for a duration of no longer than a year. The assistant heads felt that acting headship is a *'way forward'* (interview six) and *'a good idea'* (interview nine) as a way of encouraging people to have a go and experience the head teacher role. The worry, with this group of school leaders, is that often assistant heads have been in the school for *'a long time and so acting headship can sometimes be difficult if it's the same school'* (interview number nine). Interviewee thirteen also felt that acting headship needs to be part of *'a structured programme that people work through.'* The middle leaders also considered that *'being given support would be a good journey to headship'* (interview eleven) and *'acting headship just makes sense'* (interview fourteen).

The assistant heads felt that *'acting headship'* (interview six and nine) was the only opportunity that they felt should be given to encourage people into a permanent position of head teacher. Interview six even gave an indication that there is a hierarchy of assistant head, then deputy, and finally head teacher, which should be consistent in all succession planning documents. It was felt that *'you should know the next step, although some do go straight into headship after NPQH I can't see how an assistant head has the true skills a deputy has'* (interview six). With the importance again given to acting headship there needs

to be some legislation about it from the people delivering the NPQH programme. Interviewee fifteen summed the importance of the role by commenting *'greater exposure for the heads role over a period of time allows people to experience the realities.'*

Acting headship, therefore, seems to have agreement in both the survey questionnaire and interviews as one possible aspect that should be included in any succession planning used to solve the leadership crisis. There needs to be a sustained and supported course within the NPQH that helps deputies and assistant heads with some of the everyday requirements of the job. With such unanimous support for acting headship, it must be considered seriously in any future training.

With the second interview question 'How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?' it was felt, by interviewee's one and six that by showing that there is *'a life outside school'* the worry about people's work life balance may disappear. This links with the notion that the head teacher (as a role) model could indicate that the job allows for a work life balance. The DfE 'Pay and Conditions Document' 2010 state that although *"not covered by the 1265 annual working limit must ensure head teachers are not required to work unreasonable hours"* (p176). There are no directives related to time limits on leaders and this consistently kept being mentioned throughout the various interviews. Although it was a specific question (number six) in the interview, the fact it was mentioned in nearly all the answers (and also scored so highly in the questionnaire) highlights that this must be a key point for consideration as a major factor in the leadership crisis.

Work life balance was the area where the head teachers did have an opinion as to why it may put people off applying for headship but where the other senior leadership members did not appear to determine the area as an issue. The feeling was from 3/5 head teachers that some of the Catholic expectations of Mass and attendance at Sacramental Preparations has resulted in *'it not being a nine to five job, which includes weekends and people don't want it'* (interview one). The other two heads discussed the moving 'goal posts' so that the job had become a *'big ask if you have young children'* (interview three) and that as many deputies in the Catholic primary schools of the English West Midlands 'have young families' (interview ten) then this factor has to be addressed before people consider taking the next career step. As part of the 2012 Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document there is a paragraph on directed head teacher time (paragraph 57.2) but from the five head teachers interviewed none acknowledged access to this. The solution maybe again lies with the governing body to make directed time a requirement of the job. However, unless such a decree comes from the English Government this is unlikely to happen.



#### 4.4 Theme Two – Catholic Headship

The second main theme from interview question one ‘Why do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?’ was around Catholicism itself. Eight of the responses mentioned very specific reasons why there is a leadership crisis in faith schools. Five interviewees mentioned pressures of being ‘practising Catholics’ (interviews three, four, six, ten and thirteen). Interviewee nine felt that this was mainly down to ‘Sacramental Preparations’, whereas interviewees three and ten felt that there is an expectation that not only should the head teacher be practising their faith but should also have a role too. This could be through being part of the parish groups, being on other school’s governing body, reading at church, part of the church folk group or giving out the Eucharist. All fifteen of the people I interviewed were indeed partaking in at least one of these extra roles on a regular basis.

There is a strong thread of argument that the core issue is quite simply the lack of practising Catholics is having a direct impact on the leadership crisis. Interviewee ten believed there is a ‘feeling that you have to be a perfect Catholic’. This was elaborated on by agreeing that whilst practising should remain a core requirement ‘failing marriage’ should not. Interview thirteen summed up the thoughts, from an assistant head point of view, by saying *‘there is a problem with Catholic schools having leaders... people don’t want the responsibility and so without people being encouraged into the senior role there will be a leadership crisis and if you have a hiccup in your faith (such as divorce) this stops you anyway.’*

However, from the Diocesan Education Service (2012) it is quite clear that changing the criteria is not negotiable:

*“The head teacher, deputy head teacher, RE subject leader and Chaplain must be practising Catholics... they are expected to model the teachings of Christ in the Beatitudes as well as teach them through the curriculum. They are expected to uphold the core values in the way they conduct themselves” (p5-7)*

What is interesting is that in Catholic education non-denominational personnel are permitted to apply for the role of assistant head without being a practising Catholic. This is as opposed to for higher senior leaders (deputy and head) who have to be observing Catholics and prove this through securing a priest’s reference. Even though there are fundamental positions for people who are the main leaders of the Catholic schools there are senior leader positions that can be aspired to. Catholic schools may need to re-evaluate their fundamental values (around practising Catholic expectations) if they need to secure the voluntary aided sector for the next generation of children.

Interestingly, though, one head teacher did not feel that there is a leadership crisis *'as every role gets filled. However if you look at certain areas that have to do four adverts ... then a dilution of quality fills the role'* (Interview seven). Although this is one opinion, from the small scale research undertaken, it is still a valid argument and would be worthy of further research to consider its credibility. The question is an intriguing one, as the head teacher believed that the ultimate reason was down to the low Catholic numbers and how the church needs to maintain a presence within these areas. This challenge links to the 2007 *'Securing the Future'* document and therefore indicates that head teachers are considering whether to apply for these positions, as I thought based on the questionnaire responses. Interview number nine also felt that *'a difficult inner city area with low numbers'* was also having an impact on the leadership crisis on the assistant head teachers. Interview fifteen felt the word *'crisis'* was *'too strong a word. Let's say there is a concern.'* The reason the choice of words being that *'Catholic deputies are not stepping up to running a school ... so if a school is in special measures non Catholic deputies are drafted in'* (interview fifteen). These three perspectives give further credibility to another reason possibly being down to low Catholic numbers and therefore people being choosy about where to apply for headship, especially when a school is in difficulty.

From the responses to the fifteen interviews, the requirements upon being a Catholic head teacher mean the candidate has to consider how they support the church; the numbers of Catholic children within the school and how as a head supports the church's mission whilst also thinking about their accountability to all the various stakeholders. This is indeed a huge undertaking and linked directly to second interview regarding encouraging others into a leadership role.

With the pressures of being a Catholic head linking with personal faith issues the second question from the questionnaire *'How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?'* became a way to explore possible solutions. Teaching staff need encouragement and the schools need to have succession planning and future leaders at the heart from the literature that I have read regarding succession planning. Interview number three felt that succession planning should start *'after the NQT year'*. Whether starting as early as the second year of their teaching career is the right direction to take would come down to an individuals' circumstance. *'Teacher supply line'* (MacBeath 2006 p189-191) argues too that the leadership crisis can be solved if schools begin succession planning from the beginning of a teacher's career. Interviewee four's comments seem to back up this argument. Interview eleven and fourteen (both of whom are middle leaders) also felt *'CPD is key but I think it should be distributed through a career and not all at once (eleven)'* and *'not loads of roles all at once but in small steps., so they can become experts in those roles and then take on*

*senior roles' (fourteen)*. Whilst this concept did not get mentioned in any other of the twelve interviews, all fifteen felt that training is the route to take. Perhaps the solution is to map out teacher careers from an early point. A longitudinal study of this idea would be required to discover if this 'teacher supply line' and early career mapping would be a possible solution to the future Catholic leadership crisis.

From the responses given during the fifteen interviews there were three possible directions that could be drawn upon to encourage people into leadership positions. The first was through specific courses, the second through work shadowing, and the third through mentoring from the present school leaders.

Two of the fifteen interviewees discussed specific national courses that should be encouraged within a Catholic school. NPQH was viewed as 'helpful for looking at leadership styles' (interview two); whereas 'middle leadership programmes' (interview three) was viewed as instrumental in succession planning 'post NQT' in order to gain maximum potential from a very early stage. The NPQH changed in September 2012. Unlike the old programme, which concluded with a residential and then final assessment, the new programme has two assignments, two moderation sessions and a final assessment (comprising undertake a case study test assessment that will cover justifying school financial management; demonstrate how to lead teacher appraisal and undertake an interview with a presentation). Before the final assessment, candidates must undertake three essential modules 'Leading and improving teaching; Leading an effective school and Succeeding in Headship' and then choose two further options from a choice of eight ranging from curriculum options to assessment activities to leadership change.

The research participant, who was an assistant head, gave suggestions for the content; some of these courses should include as a way to enhance a person's career. 'M' felt that in all middle and senior leader courses there needs to be an emphasis on '*knowing more about budgets, how to handle one and how to spend wisely*' (interview six). In the present version of the NPQH, introduced in September 2012, the budget module (a core component in the previous programme) has been removed. It is now a small aspect of the final assessment test. Budget management, as a module, is not a component required in the new National Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) course either. It is, conversely, part of the essential module 'leading teaching' within the National Qualification for Middle Leaders (NPQML).

In order to try to deal with the issues specifically relating to running a faith school, in 2012, the National College joined up with the Catholic and Church of England Board to develop a

pre-NPQH course '*Moving Forwards*' with content based on the themes of mission, vision, values and the distinctiveness of church schools, together with sessions on accountability, governance and leadership. Included is also a visit to a church school, specifically from a different faith sector. This course again centres on the idea that there is a vocation to Catholic headship, but does not deal with the day to day running of a school that assistant and deputy heads require assistance with. This course is run by the Diocesan Commission.

Interviewee six was adamant, though, that the middle leadership course, presently being offered by the diocese, was excellent as '*it really encourages people to take on a leadership role through taking staff meetings etc.*' Even if the ultimate goal of headship was not forefront in the course content, the skilling up of future leaders is at the heart of the courses on offer. The course, the pre-NPQH, is designed to encourage people into the head teacher role by a softly, softly approach. Statistics are not available to indicate whether this is having any impact but the uptake of this course is encouraging. The course for 2014 was oversubscribed.

From sixteen positive responses, in the questionnaire section C1, there were similar comments regarding the middle leaders being trained in readiness for leadership roles. The word 'role' was the most common word mentioned in six of the sixteen responses. This 'role' was either the development of the teaching and learning responsibility (TLR's) that school middle leaders had been given or through 'coaching' and 'collaboration' activities where the deputy head is given opportunities to lead the school often through the choice of the head. One comment was 'I would like to go to four, then three days a week to give the deputy a chance to try the job' (questionnaire fourteen) which is a clear link with both Rhodes and Brundrett's (2009) "*in-house leadership learning*" (p384) and MacBeath's (2009) argument that when support is planned for and delivered (within the school environment) successful succession planning and retention takes place.

Other areas were discussed for a head teacher programme from individual leadership perspectives, but all are viewed as relevant topics. Head teachers felt that '*finances and parents*' (interview seven); the role of the SENCO (interview eight) and '*governor meetings and finances*' (interview ten) were areas that more support was needed when moving into headship. Deputies discussed '*exclusions*' (interview two) and how to '*monitor teachers and develop observation techniques*' (interview eight) as areas they felt they had some experience of but would like further training. Two of the assistant heads (interview six and thirteen) were in agreement with the head teachers and wanted support with '*budgets*' (six) and '*how to run the finances and remain in budget*' (thirteen). Assistant head interviewee thirteen, also felt that more work was needed around '*governors... as they have so much*

*power in schools.*' The other assistant head felt that a fundamental aspect must be *'to support the application process'* (interview nine). This was also mentioned by interviewee number two, a deputy head, who felt that training provision for *'applications, interviews and how to make an impact in interviews'* was something that has limited time on courses, but it was felt it should be an integral part and reiterated by middle leader, interview eleven, who felt that *'interviewing a potential head'* would help give others suggestions about the process itself.

Therefore, from both the interviews and the questionnaire responses, there is clear indication that programmes for middle leaders are supporting the development of staff but questions still need to be asked regarding whether they need to be compulsory as a way of encouraging people to move further up with their career.

'Moulding' (interview four), 'taking people out of their comfort zone' (interview ten) and 'talent spotting' (interview thirteen) were suggested starting points for the third possible way to encourage people into senior leaders roles. The 'nurturing' mentioned in five out of fifteen interviews (four, six, eight, ten and fifteen) was often linked to the Catholic value of being a role model and leading by setting an example, in the way that Jesus did. Interviewee number eight suggested that giving people the 'self-belief' would encourage them to move to senior leadership roles. Interviewee nine believed that this should be through mentoring deputies preparing to become the head teacher 'to give them an understanding of the roles and responsibilities.' This would be given at the point when the new head is appointed, which is usually at least half a term before they take up the position. This is presently not offered and by giving support from the moment of accepting the position could indeed give people the incentive to apply. Interviewee fifteen, though, felt that it is important to have some sort of *'shadowing... but there is no real substitute for experience.'*

'Coaching and mentoring' was also mentioned five times within the nineteen responses to C2 in the questionnaire. In all five discussions, though, the comments linked with ensuring the coaching and mentoring was of a 'good' quality. Only one of the respondents elaborated to give specific examples of what 'good quality' coaching or mentoring should entail, but the thoughts could be used as the basis for improving leadership courses. Questionnaire eleven's key point highlighted that the deputy should always be seconded for a month at a time and be able to *'collaborate on financial control and be part of the governing body. Deputies should be allowed off site once a month to view other schools' methods of leadership'*. This concept of 'learning on the job' is the key to true succession planning and would enhance any future training, according to MacBeath (2009) who argued that when support is *"planned for and delivered (within the school environment) successful succession*

*planning and retention was found to take place” (p3).* Succession planning, through rigorous training and planning links with Rothwell’s (2010) research to indicate that it is an important way forward in dealing with the present and even future leadership problem. His argument that succession planning as *“a means of identifying critical management positions, starting at project manager and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization” (p6)* is being endorsed through both the questionnaire and interviewee’s responses.

In the interview response to question four (what is putting people off applying for headship) the issue of salary first came up. Interestingly, all five interviewed head teachers did not mention the pay aspect of headship at all. This goes against research conducted by Fraser and Brock (2006) and also Fink (2010), which indicated that there was a strong *“Salary differences between teaching and administrative roles are becoming less of a motivator. In Canada sixty per cent saw inadequate salary as an inhibitor... vice principals felt salary was insufficient to compensate for increased pressure, accountability and loss of family time” (p30-31).* From the previously conducted research, with salary mentioned as such a high factor in stopping people progressing into headship, it was important to determine if this was an issue within the Primary Catholic sector. Salary was then included in the questionnaire as one of the ten potential hindrances to taking up headship.

From the questionnaire responses, salary came in as tenth as a hindering factor to headship. It was not deemed a significant reason for not consider a head teacher position. Interestingly, within question C4, two responses however did mention ‘higher salaries’ as being a consideration. This goes against the responses in section B, of the questionnaire, where the overall majority felt that salary was not much of a consideration. Two out of twenty one though is a 9% average, and therefore salary does not appear to be a major consideration when applying for headship positions.

In the interviews, conversely, three of the other senior leaders felt that pay is a slight factor when applying for a head teacher role. All the comments were the same that *‘the responsibility for this job is not worth the money or the hassle’ (interviews two; five and nine).* None of the middle leaders commented upon pay in response to question four but they did discuss it when it came to question seven specifically on the theme of salary.

Question seven of the interview was on the theme of salary and was asked as a separate question due to the findings of the questionnaire. The question asked was *‘From the questionnaire responses salary is not viewed as a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic School, why do you think this is?’* From the responses, there appeared not to be any correlation between the pay of a Catholic head and the lack of uptake for school leadership. Of the fifteen senior leaders who were interviewed, all agreed that often money

was not the issue when considering headship but all of them agreed that encouraging a child's spiritual development was more important. How much money somebody earned was not a consideration when applying for a leadership position, but running a Catholic School was an intrinsic part of their faith and personal belief. This was highlighted through the five serving heads describing their positions as *'being there to serve' (interview one)*; *'a vocation' (interview three)*; *'for the love of the job and for the Catholic faith' (interview four)* and *'to be a missionary to the children in my school' (interview ten)*. Interviewee number seven felt that ultimately money is not an issue at all. *'I think it's because we're not badly paid to be honest' (interview seven)*.

In the individual interviews, faith continued as a theme throughout the responses from both the deputies and assistant heads. Faith is at the core of Catholic leadership. The comments included an explanation of *'a Catholic school is about mission... it's God's duty to serve the community' (deputy head- interview two)*; *'there is a strong feeling of wanting to lead and share the faith' (deputy head – interview eight)*; *'salary isn't a consideration as the heads see the role as a vocation' (assistant head – interview thirteen)* and the ultimate comment from another assistant head was that a Catholic school head *'thinks about how to support the future generation of our country and our faith' (interview six)*.

The middle leaders felt that *'there's not much salary incentive' (interview eleven)* but that often headship is *'what people strive towards... it's the children who count' (interview twelve)*. This idea that the Catholic head position is not about the money was also reiterated by interview fourteen who summed up the middle leader viewpoint by the comment *'for those who are so passionate about their job the salary isn't important; it doesn't matter.'*

The unanimous agreement was that salary is not of real consideration when people apply to become a Catholic head teacher. The findings were collaborated between the interview and the questionnaire responses. If therefore, money is not a hindering factor why is there a leadership crisis in the Catholic sector at all?

The answer may lie ultimately in the individual's faith. Servant leadership, linked to the faith of school leaders, has its foundations that personal faith impacts on everyday aspects. Greenleaf 1977 summarises this as: *"faith resting on one or more of the prophets of old having given the 'word' for all time being heard in the contemporary voice"* (p23). If a person, therefore, feels in some way inadequate in their faith, they may be reluctant to apply for senior leadership positions. In Catholic schools, only the head and deputy are required to be practising Catholics. In other faith schools there is no such requirement. As the Catholic non-negotiable fundamental of following Jesus being at the heart of leadership and ultimately as less people attend Mass (only one in five according to British Religion in Number 2014 ) the

question that is raised is could this be the real reason there is a leadership crisis in Catholic schools? Is the low attendance at Mass now affecting the school leadership to the point that without intervention it has the potential to get worse? This could be only be answered with a longitudinal study in Catholic education.

Job fulfilment and becoming a Catholic head were felt to lead from one into the other. Personality was also a key part of job fulfilment and the idea was that roles were set by the head teacher's personalities. Interviewee eight described how job satisfaction can ultimately be achieved through *'gaining positive feedback from staff and parents. The feedback comes in that they trust you and then the children like you, that's job fulfilment.'* On the flip side, interviewee eight also described how a school can stifle job satisfaction when there *'are lots of negatives, people all wanting to leave... is this the head making the school shift in the wrong direction?'* (Interview eight). This was viewed by interviewee eight as being *'down to the ethos of the school in which people are employed.'* Ethos within a Catholic school ultimately comes down faith.

Question nine was the only one specifically questioning what the leaders felt the Catholic Church could do to ensure a constant supply of Catholic heads. Surprisingly, this was the question that many of the senior leaders struggled to answer. The five head teachers' comments ranged from *'I don't know really'* (interview one) to *'I'm not sure what they could do, in all honesty'* (interview three). Nevertheless, four of the five head teacher's did give their personal opinion as to what being a school leader is of a Catholic school and the worries that they can foresee for the future of Catholic education as a whole.

One theme that emerged was around the expectations of the Catholic faith upon its teacher clientele. Interview's one and seven discussed the issue of personal faith and the impact this has now and for future years. Both worried about the fact that:

*'there is a real level of disinterest... even as a Newly Qualified Teacher. At Mass recently, twenty NQT's were not answering the responses and even talking throughout... in fifteen years or so there will be not be strong Catholic understanding the faith'* (interview seven).

Interviewee one commented upon how there were practising Catholic teachers who had chosen not to teach in faith schools. The reason for this appears to be work life balance. *'I've got friends who teach in the state sector and the reason they did that was they haven't got the wider life of the school commitment'* (interview one). So from this comment, there needs to be a wider debate as to how to encourage quality people into the Catholic sector who are practising their faith weekly in church but are not in the voluntary aided sector. This may indeed be the way the church can support succession planning.



The one agreement that was consistently mentioned, throughout many of the interview responses, was that Catholic heads need to be practising and should always be a good role model. This is in line with the non-negotiable aspects of Catholic school leadership and was strongly felt to be the right path for the faith and the pupil's within the school. *'The head must be a practising Catholic. I think it goes without saying... the Catholic ethos must remain really important'* (Interview one).

In this question, the image of a Catholic head teacher was again discussed and how important encouraging images should be initiated. Interviewee number four felt that the Catholic Church should do more to present headship with *'more visible positivity... to celebrate its leaders'*. The head teacher strongly felt that if the Catholic Church revelled in its school superiors' performance and inform others *'how you can make a difference then I think we'd have more people... Do people find out how good we are? No!'* (Interview four). This linked with interviewees seven and ten who felt that the Catholic Priest needed to be more visual in schools. *'The priests need to be the persona of the religion on a daily basis'* (interview seven). Interviewee ten felt that the link between priest and head teacher can be *'so that they can be supported. The Catholic Church was supposed to give me a mentor. I never heard from them'* (interview ten). So the general feeling was the way to motivate people to move towards headship was to improve the image of head teacher in a positive way and have more links between the priest and the school so that the leaders are strengthened in their role.

The interviews provided by the deputy heads were similar in their response to the head teachers. Interviewee two worried about how difficult family situations can stop succession planning. Interviewee two commented that *'really good assistant heads, practising Catholics, who are no longer married are penalised... so they don't apply'*. Deputy head, interviewee five, hinted also at the lack of practising Catholics and the impact this will have in the future, *'Do the middle leaders regularly attend Mass? Do priests help school leaders identify future leaders and support them?'* The respondent felt that the shortage of school leaders should be tackled by the *'Archbishop through letting the message be known that people are needed in school'* (interview five). Exactly how this could be implemented could be a future tactical discussion between school leaders and priests themselves.

The responses from the assistant heads was different to the other senior leaders, as they felt that the church was supporting their career progress, be it through courses such as *'pre-NPQH and moving on'* (interview six) or *'training and mentorship'* (interview nine). However, the response again was linked to the issues around attending Mass and how this is fundamentally the point that the leadership crisis stems from. *'The only way round it is to ask*

*for deputies and head teachers to not be practising Catholics. That's the only way round it and it's not going to happen... As numbers drop at church less people will apply'* (interview six). With the consistent message being that the school leader issue is down to lack of practising Catholics and the message that the church needs to be more proactive in its encouragement then until an action plan is formulated these issues will continue to get worse.

The middle leaders felt that the diocese themselves should be *'at the forefront of designing a succession planning programme'* (interview twelve). In this programme the recommendations were for *'showing the realities of the extra work involved'* (interview eleven), *'spotting potential leaders and starting training even in the second year of teaching'* (interview thirteen) and *'have a diocesan lead to coordinate work shadowing of heads in a role created for future succession planning process'* (interview fifteen). To employ a specific succession planner in the Catholic Diocese is an idea that may support future work in alleviating a school leadership crisis.

During interview question ten, there were some senior leaders digressed and went on to the subject of the number of Catholic children in faith school. Seven of the fifteen individuals discussed whether they felt Catholic numbers affect the recruitment of Catholic leaders. This linked to the discussed from the questionnaire responses.

The Catholic Church published a document entitled *'Diocesan Policy and Strategy for Schools and Academies'* (2012) regarding one of the fundamental issues around the church's position regarding school leadership. Grace (2002) who gave a chronological history of the origins Catholic Education (see Chapter 2) indicated that the church's purpose has always been to *"maintain integrity of Catholic Education through (i) Doctrine and (ii) religious management"* (p8). The 2012 document states that *"The head teacher, deputy head teacher, Head of RE and Chaplain must be practising Catholics"* (p5) and this aspect of school leadership is non-negotiable. This fundamental facet, which has always been a stipulated part of Catholic leadership's contracts, is the area that the questionnaire respondents felt may need to be modernised. Questionnaires four and twenty-one want the church to *'recognise that head teachers being a practising Catholic limits people due to personal circumstances'* and *'more tolerance about lifestyle choices need to be considered'*.

The other aspect of the questionnaire response (to C4) regarded the perception of whether the school is just Catholic in name. This is where the make-up of different ethnic or other religious groups, within the school, have an overall majority. This equates to certain areas of the West Midlands having higher proportions of other faiths that gain entry into Catholic schools because baptised pupils are limited within that area. There are pockets of strong

Catholic numbers within a school, but this is limited to the suburbs and not found in the Inner cities. Questionnaire eleven felt that deputies' perceptions of lower number of Catholic pupils (within Catholic schools) causes *'problems getting a Catholic head'* (appendix three).

In the interviews of senior leaders, I decided to explore this area in a little more detail. All seven (of the fifteen who discussed this theme) felt that a Catholic school is a Catholic school, regardless of how many Catholics are in it. It was felt that it's a school *'ethos'* (interview four) that makes it a Catholic school. One head teacher even went as far as quoting the church leadership who themselves have stated *'Archbishop Vincent Nichols said in a speech that even if there is one Catholic in the school, then the school is a Catholic school'* (interview four). The consensus was that people apply to become head teachers of a Catholic school regardless of the number of Catholic children in it. As interview number three said, *'children are children and God loves everyone.'* Recruitment to headship, therefore, is not affected by the makeup of the diversity within a Catholic school, and so this area can clearly be ruled out as a reason for a leadership problem.

#### 4.5 Summary of both the Questionnaire and Interview Findings

From the questionnaire findings, it does appear that the average age of the Catholic head teachers in the English West Midlands are between fifty and sixty-five years of age and that most take thirteen years to progress to the role. There was a consensus from both types of survey that there is indeed a leadership crisis in Catholic education. It was twofold in its reasoning. Firstly, senior people were observing the position of the head teacher (with the roles and responsibilities of the job) and this was putting them off the position. Secondly, that there are Catholic expectations as a leader that can be hard to achieve. Some felt the expectancies of being a practising Catholic, and being a role model at all times, possibly put people off the position. The main solution to the leadership crisis is for the next generation of leaders to be coached and supported throughout their career and especially overseen in the early stages of headship.

The theme of acting headship, in the questionnaires, kept being mentioned as a solution to the leadership crisis, and this raises the question as to why it is not part of any statutory qualification. The fifteen interviews needed to all discuss this aspect, but I felt it was an important theme for the deputies, assistant heads and middle leaders to gauge in order to determine whether they have or would be willing to undertake such a position. The main area that did come out of the interview was the importance of acting headship. There was a strong feeling both in the questionnaire and interview findings that this is an area that really needs to be incorporated into any national qualification for headship. From the survey findings, a possible solution to encourage people into Catholic leadership, at all levels, was

seen as work shadowing opportunities. Acting headship is a specific leader position for up to a year, whereas work shadowing is observing and supporting a higher role in a different school. This area was seen as crucial to securing school leaders of the future.

From the questionnaires, the three main areas that are hindering the uptake of headship are 'Workload Levels'; 'OFSTED/Local Authority Initiatives' and 'Family Commitments'. The surprising aspect was regarding salary. From the responses, the salary as a Catholic head teacher was not viewed as an important factor. Previous research by Ololube (2005) Fraser and Broke (2006) and Bush (2011) has shown that this is often the case outside Faith schools so why is this area different in Catholic primary education? The interviews discussed salary and the main facet was that the five head teachers did not see the money as important as their calling and that overall, the consensus (with the middle and senior leaders) was that although *'the salary doesn't match the workload increase the heads see their role as a vocation'* (interview 13).

The motivating factors, from both the questionnaires and the interviews, were viewed as 'Good Experience as a Deputy', 'Acting Headship' and 'Job Fulfilment'. All of these motivators seem to indicate that succession planning starts with the head teacher motivating and coaching the other senior leaders of his/her school. Through empowerment and trust, deputies, assistant heads and middle leaders all feel able to gain the experience they need to progress further in their career. This leads to strategies needing to be in place for this process to happen.

Finally, the response to the last question in the questionnaire (from response twenty-one) summed up the whole reason that it is important to solve the leadership crisis for Catholic schools:

*'We need people who are passionate about education and who have faith to make our Catholic schools stand out from the rest. Catholic teachers in Birmingham should aspire to become Catholic heads'.*

The challenge is to persuade these passionate teachers to become the inspirational head teachers that our Catholic pupils deserve to be served by and through policy recommendations consider further how Catholic school leaders can develop the missionary ethos that was the original remit in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

In conclusion, the survey findings from both the questionnaires and interviews both indicate that the main barriers to headship are the accountability to all, including OFSTED and the continuous increase in the workload levels. The suggested main solution was succession planning through acting head opportunities. Deputy headship is viewed as a more realistic

position than headship. What was surprising was that pay is not viewed as an issue of a head teacher, and that ultimately it is through serving God that people feel running a Catholic school was their calling.

## Chapter 5

## Discussion of Findings

The thesis survey method of producing a questionnaire, analyzing the information, creating ten interview questions, interviewing fifteen senior staff and then reviewing the responses took over a year and a half to complete. While conducting the research, I used the '*Constant Comparative Method*' (Thomas 2009 p198). This method allows the researcher to "*go through the data again and again, comparing each element to end up with themes*" (p198). The purpose of continual recycling of the data was to start to formulate hypotheses and to look for possible solutions to the leadership crisis.

The survey research was conducted to give answers to the thesis research questions of:

1. What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands?
2. What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams?
3. What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?
4. What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the leadership crisis?

## 5.2 The Leadership Crisis

The literature review chapter produced theories as to why there is a leadership crisis. Harris (2007) believed that the two causes for the educational leadership crisis are retirement and accountability (p105).

Harris (2007) argued that head teachers "*through reaching retirement in large numbers leaves a significant vacuum in leadership expertise*" (p105). There has also been specific information available regarding the predicted retirement of present serving head teachers, claiming that from the end of 2014 the retirement rate will steadily increase as 57% are over the age of 50 years (The National College 2010b). Other research conducted by West-Burnham (1997) and Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) reiterated the argument that the average head teacher is within ten years of retirement.

Retirement was not a theme that was discussed specifically in either the questionnaire or individual senior staff interviews. However, the questionnaire, though, did ask for the age of the respondent as this was an indication as to whether the literature available, on the discussion of the retirement age of key staff, was accurate.

The questionnaire found that 42% (9/21) of respondents were indeed in the age range of fifty to sixty years and that 38% (8/21) were in the forty to fifty age bracket. Four of the respondents were between thirty and forty (20%). The questionnaire was filled in by the head teacher, and a further seven senior leadership teams completed the relevant aspect of section C. The literature of Rhodes et al. (2009) and West-Burnham (1997) highlights that the increasing age of head teachers is having an impact within the education sector and that without proper succession planning policies, recruitment to headship positions could become critical. What my thesis shows is that 12/21 (58%) of presently serving heads are between thirty and fifty years old, and from the interviews findings (and the NAHT (2011) research) senior leaders are increasingly not applying for the headship roles; indeed they are decreasing year on year.

Schools need to start to wake up to the impending, deepening Catholic leadership crisis and start to plan strategies to deal with the crisis. There needs to be strategic, forward planning between the Catholic Diocese and leadership groups to encourage an ethos of expectation to become part of the senior leadership team. This would mean targeted training sessions; mentoring activities and work shadowing activities becoming standard practice within schools (as mentioned in chapter four regarding analysis of question eight in the interview process). The notion of leadership training would thereby replace teacher training; starting from the second year of a professional teaching career.

I would argue the crisis in education is much deeper than just in Catholic school leadership though, and it in fact runs from the initial teacher training. Statistics from the Teaching Agency (2012) indicate that primary teacher trainees recruitment numbers for 2012-13 were 20,760 (p 2) across Initial Teacher Training Institutions (ITT). The target was for 20,840; the equivalent of 80 people difference. The retention level is 80-85%. On the surface these statistics are not too problematic, but if this shortfall continues over a decade then potentially there will not be the personnel to replace the staff retiring. Therefore, I conclude that there appears to be a pronounced teacher recruitment problem, and this will inevitably add to the pressures of a leadership crisis. It will be with interest that educationalists will watch the development in school based teacher training (from September 2014) and if this is indeed the way future teachers are trained, the targeted leadership training could indeed become a reality if all Catholic agencies start to collaborate to make education planning a critical issue.

When interviewing the senior school staff, one of the head teachers alluded to a general recruitment problem, within the Catholic sector. The head teacher (interviewee number seven) had been involved in a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) day and had been surprised by the poor standard of behaviour that had been witnessed. The 'disinterest' that is alluded

to was the importance of the Catholic education system and the leadership that comes with the faith system. What was witnessed was apathy to the whole Catholic system and this was a cause for concern regarding future school leadership. The head teacher's observations were seen *'at the Cathedral and it's the first time I've picked up that there was a level of disinterest about the make-up of the Catholic schooling. What worried me about the NQT's was there is a danger of fifteen or twenty years' time that legacy being broken. People won't know why they are in the institutions that they are ... Concerned enough to determine Father J recently as I am worried about Catholic concession, I mean succession planning'* (interviewee seven).

West-Burnham (1997), Harris (2007), Stanford (2007) and the National Union of Teachers' (2014) all argued that recruitment and accountability were themes that are the main culprits for the leadership crisis. When conducting my survey research accountability was the issue that dominated the findings (chapter four). What was unique, in comparison to other research, was that accountability split into two distinct areas. The first aspect of accountability was to do with the everyday roles and responsibilities as a head teacher, which would be relevant to all sectors of school leadership. Head teachers are accountable to OFSTED, the local education authority, parents and their pupil's, on a daily basis. This 'highly prescriptive accountability' (Ball 2013 p173) is prevalent for all heads regardless of whether they are in mainstream, voluntary aided, academy or free schools.

The second aspect was the Catholic school head's faith responsibilities and the commitment that being a leader of a faith school brings with it. This finding was surprising, as all fifteen school leaders all commented upon the expectations placed upon them every day in a faith community. Although these aspects were intertwined in the leadership of a faith school, the Catholic expectations added an extra dimension to the role that may also be exacerbating the headship crisis. Although the article by Stanford (Independent 2007) mentioned the problems associated with being a head of a Catholic school being caused by trying to find *"suitable Catholic candidates as many are more reluctant than in the past to take on the "faith leader" role that goes with headship in Catholic schools,"* the findings from the questionnaires and interviews do not appear to agree with the article. Alongside the stakeholders (OFSTED, LEA, parents and pupils) there is also the Governing Body. In a Catholic school the foundation governors are all appointed by the Catholic bishops and so the head teacher is also accountable to the clergy to maintain the Catholic identity of the school. Faith is an integral part of running a Catholic school and further research into the impact of church doctrine and expectations related to the religious extras (that come with running a faith school) would be needed to truly reveal the impact religious expectation has upon a Catholic school leader.



### 5.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities as a head teacher

The survey research was concentrated around various previous literature; one being from the National College, originating in 2006 and then modified and amended in April 2010, that concluded that perceptions and observations of head teacher roles and responsibilities appear to be impacting on the uptake of the head teacher position, to the point that *“43 per cent of deputies said they had no desire to move up to the next rung on the career ladder”* (p4). The other was from Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) who also argued in their research that *“negative perceptions of headship”* (p4) is a major aspect that needed to be considered when trying to understand the possible causes of a leadership crisis.

The National College (2010b) concluded that the negative images, of school headship, came under four specific areas:

1. *Overwhelming workload*
2. *Accountability (OFSTED, local authority, parents)*
3. *High level of responsibility*
4. *Stress* (p4).

The themes found in the two pieces of research were also reiterated by further work from Harris' (2007) who discussed 'accountability,' 'pressures' and 'stress' (p105) as having a negative effect on school leadership recruitment. The three pieces of inquiry were used as a starting point when creating the questionnaire. The thesis questionnaire findings, in chapter four, reiterate previous research findings. The conclusions, where analyzing my collected data, were 'workload levels' (first hindering factor); 'OFSTED' (second hindering factor) and 'Family Commitments' (third hindering factor).

With such overwhelming evidence spanning many pieces of research, including my own, the question of how to tackle the roles and responsibilities of headship needs to be investigated further. A solution needs to be found to balance the expectations placed upon the shoulders of a head teacher and realities of the job. When I conducted the individual interviews the four specific areas (from The National College list 2010b) were consistently commented upon, with 'pressure' caused by consistently high accountability mentioned by ten of the interviewees, four of the five head teachers, two of the three deputies, all three assistant heads and one middle leader. This aspect was constantly reinforced as the main reason for a leadership crisis. The solution, from the interviewees themselves, was for less bureaucracy and more autonomy to be given back to head teachers. Accountability is an inevitable and indeed expected part of everyday employment but the findings, from my fieldwork, indicate that fewer Government initiatives may alleviate the educational leadership crisis. With the current teaching unions (NUT and NASUWT) in the United Kingdom presently arguing that there is too much emphasis on paperwork and OFSTED inspection, a further longitudinal

research on the theme of reducing accountability would indicate if this indeed is the answer and whether other organizations could adopt the same practice.

With such clear, sustained and previous research evidence (spanning the past seventeen years) the conclusion can categorically be that there is a major issue regarding accountability and high levels of workload within the school leadership position. Whilst there is acceptance that there needs to be some monitoring of how schools are run, the continued interrogation and attack at the teaching profession is having a fundamental effect on recruiting head teachers. In order for improvement to occur, in the recruitment to the headship role, consideration has to occur on how to cut the accountability and paperwork so that stress and workload levels improve. This would then directly result in the leadership crisis easing.

### 5.2.2 Commitment to be a faith school leader

When starting out on the theme of leadership crisis, it did not occur to me that aspects of the Catholic religion would also be viewed as a hindering factor. As a Catholic head teacher, with a strong personal faith, I rarely questioned how the expectations placed upon me (from the Catholic Church) linked to accountability. Could this critical point, in itself, be one of the main underlying causes for the predicament when finding future leaders for Catholic primary education?

From the research that was discussed in the literature review chapter, there was little indication that this area had previously been discussed as a hindering factor. The picture of the noticeable decline in the Catholic school leaders came from the annual census review by Howson and Sprigade (2011), who found that *"in 2008/9 Roman Catholic schools re-advertised 61% of the time as opposed to 49% in 2008/9" (2011 p19).*

Durow and Brock (2004) surveyed twenty serving heads (in America) and found that the parish priest was ultimately the reason for a head teacher retaining or resigning their position. The research concluded that *"Priests were often mentioned as the central figure in the conflict"* (p200) and that the expectations placed upon the head teachers, by the Clergy, often meant that people left the profession. Another piece of research by Dorman and D'Arbon (2004), also considered the views of *"3000 potential applicants"* (p1) for headship positions in the Catholic sector of Australia. They concluded that there are two factors that are hindering headship, *"The places are now taken by lay persons and the second is the apparent reluctance of Catholic teachers to apply for leadership positions"* (p2-3). Dorman and D'Arbon's viewpoint is reiterating the fact that the main reason that headship is in

decline in Australia is due to the clergy no longer running Catholic schools and also people not wanting to do the job.

From my own survey research, both through the questionnaires and the individual interviews, this perception of clergy impacting on headship or indeed being in the head teacher position was dismissed completely as a reason for lack of Catholic headship uptake. The questionnaire asked about the religious clergy in two different ways. In Section B (the ranking order questions) the first question asked respondents to discuss inhibiting factors for headship, the average score of 6.9 meant the response came ninth out of ten choices. When asked the second question about areas that were viewed to be less of a motivating factor 'religious clergy' came last, with an average score of 8.1. This indicates that presently, in 2015, priests do not in any way influence or dissuade people applying or becoming head teachers. From the questionnaire responses, the conclusions indicate that the influence the parish priest or nun has on the education system has diminished considerably since the turn of this century. This maybe down to the decline in clergy at the same time as there is a decline in head teachers within the Catholic sector. What impact, if any, this has on the Catholic education will only be seen in the decades to come.

An aspect that is consistently reoccurring, though, is the way Catholic deputies and Catholic assistant heads are discussed as being viewed as being reluctant to take on the leadership roles within the Catholic primary schools. Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill (2009) gave statistics of *"43% of incumbent deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders"* (p382) not wanting to move higher up the career ladder. The findings, from my thesis questionnaires and interviews, indicate a different slant that needs to be addressed. Whereas there was an acceptance by some of the interviewees that deputies can choose to remain in that position, the majority of the others felt that personal faith of the Catholic head was an issue that needed to be explored in more depth. There is an expectation that the Catholic head teacher is a role model, and this was seen as a possible hindering factor in itself.

The Catholic Church has fundamental issues around the church's position regarding school leadership - all Catholic contracts state head teachers and deputy heads must be fully practicing within the church. This aspect, which has always been a non-negotiable aspect, is the area that the questionnaire respondents feel may be a hindering factor. Questionnaires four and twenty one were particularly vocal calling for *'recognition that head teacher's 'must be a Catholic' limits people due to personal circumstances'* and that there needs to be *'more tolerant about lifestyle choices'* which links with the BRIN (2014) statistics that *"only one-fifth of Catholics now attend Mass."* With attendance at Mass and the high expectations of how a Catholic leader should live their life; there appears to be connections with declining

headship. Further research into these associations have to be conducted to prove or disprove this theory. Solving the decline in participation in Mass may have a knock on effect in people's choice of teaching career development.

The interviewees allowed for a deeper consideration of the Catholic responsibilities within the head teacher role. From the thesis conclusions, indications are that this is the second fundamental reason for a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools. Six out of ten responses mentioned very specific faith challenges. Five interviewees referred to pressures of being '*practising Catholics*' (interviews three, four, six, ten and thirteen). Interviewee nine felt that this was mainly due to the extra time spent at meetings and Masses for sacramental preparations; whereas interviewee's three and ten felt that there is an expectation that not only should the head teacher be practicing their faith, but should also have a role in another school or the church to which they attend. Interviewee ten believed there is a '*feeling that you have to be a perfect Catholic*'. This was elaborated on to agreeing that whilst practicing should remain a core requirement 'issues relating to marriage' should not.

As society becomes more secular, the church may need to modernize to allow for some changes in its expectations of its school leaders as the discussions and findings of this one thesis indicate that although deputies are indeed not always moving up the career ladder, the influence of the way Catholic heads are expected to live is having a fundamental effect on the future of Catholic leadership. Without change in the direction of the church, on issues related to family breakup and expectations on being a 'super human' role model, then this aspect could exasperate the leadership crisis further in the coming years. Assistant heads do not have to be a practicing Catholic, and yet if there is time and money invested into them through succession planning, there should be some consideration for their future career path in headship. Without discussion about this area people willing to become leaders of Catholic schools will end up in the secular system.

### 5.3 The factors to encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams

Promotion, and the ways to encourage or discourage, was the second research question because without people moving up the career ladder there inevitably leads to a leadership crisis. From previous research by Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) staff will often remain at a school, "*if those with influence over the circumstances of teachers' experience of work encourage the possibilities for fostering increased job commitment through their leadership actions*" (p282). Promotion links directly with succession planning. Succession planning is where employers 'talent spots' future leaders and give them opportunities to advance their career.

Succession planning, as was emphasized within the literature review, is a relevant aspect of all areas of employment. As Rothwell (2010) comments *"few businesses want to invest substantial time, money and effort to recruit, select, orient and develop their most productive people but it's a worthwhile exercise"* (p298). These days, no one is indispensable and there has to be mechanisms in place to deal with changeover of personnel. The thesis wanted to analyze the realities of succession planning as a tool to improve the leadership crisis, and whether schools really had any such plans in place.

One of the main themes that emerged from the questionnaires and the interviews was that succession planning is happening in the education system, and that there is a strong 'grow your own' approach. Coaching and mentoring was consistently discussed as a relevant part of encouraging promotion. These findings link to the research by MacBeath (2009) who argued that creating a *'coaching and mentoring'* (p3) system for senior leaders would alleviate any leadership crisis in education.

In the questionnaire, section C2 asked for opportunities that were believed necessary to empower people to take up headship. There were two main aspects that were discussed in the most detail. The first was being given chances to lead throughout all aspects of middle and senior leadership; the other response was to look deeper into coaching and mentoring. The five responses gave other possible areas that are also worth considering. Questionnaire eleven was one such response which felt that the deputy should regularly be seconded for a month at a time to *'collaborate and to view other schools' methods of leadership'*. This concept of 'learning on the job' is the key to true succession planning and would enhance any future school leadership development course. The 'job swap' would rely on head teacher's trust, as a month out of one school can be a big commitment to any school's academic year. If, as a Catholic community, we wish to truly solve our leadership crisis then serious consideration must be given to mentoring our deputy heads and creating a programme of job swaps within the annual cycle of performance management.

Talent management has emerged as a theme to solve the leadership crisis within the last few years. This is the idea that serving head teachers considers the skills of their workforce and then actively encourages the development of their employees according to their strengths. Barber, Whelan and Clark (2010) identified three approaches that schools need to adopt in order for true talent management to work. If these three areas are consistently adopted then succession planning will be evident throughout all education units, and therefore halt any further leadership crisis. The research was conducted through completion of a survey of nearly two thousand leaders across eight countries and seventy interviews with education experts.

The three aspects that Barber et al. (2010) discuss is '*self-identification*' (p9), '*leadership interest*'(p9) and '*being proactive*' (p9). '*Self-identification*' (p9) which is where there is a mutual agreement that a person has leadership capacity and where they are '*coached*' (p9) to develop areas within the school they are in. The second stage shapes the coaching further to allow *the "potential leader to take appropriate courses to build interest in leadership"* (p9). This second stage is managed by the head teacher to develop the appropriate skills required for school leadership. The final approach is '*proactive*' (p9). This is where the head teacher allows the trainee to take over an area of responsibility and then supports and directs as necessary. With these three stages, created from discussions with so many educational professionals worldwide, serious consideration needs to be given to the value of talent management as a strategy for dealing with the leadership crisis.

The National College in 2012 founded a site dedicated to talent management within its succession planning area. There are many pieces of current research being conducted to consider how talent management can alleviate the leadership crisis. The central and reoccurring theme that is emerging is that talent management (especially where staff are encouraged to take on leadership roles from an early stage) is one solution to the leadership crisis and that further studies need to happen to show if this will have a long term effect. As succession planning, as the research has found, is happening then future research on talent management is very timely. The questionnaires and interviews all agreed that a 'grow your own' approach is inherent within Catholic education. It is therefore imperative that more work on the theme of talent management is included in any future leadership training sessions to alleviate a further leadership crisis.

#### 5.4 The factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship

With succession planning and talent management being overarching themes for encouraging staff members to consider promotion, the third thesis research question needed to focus down on which areas were seen as constraints to this role development.

Throughout the literature of Harris (2007) and MacBeath (2006) there were ten consistent ideas, which were the stimuli, which were used as the questionnaire base. The research helped create the ten possible reasons as to what could be putting people off leadership positions. These ten ideas were used as the starting point for the basis of the questionnaire where senior leaders were asked to rank the ten factors from one (the main factor) to ten (the least important factor).

The first three areas, from the questionnaires, indicate what is preventing people from becoming Head Teachers reaffirms previous research findings from such literature as Harris (2007) in that 'Workload levels' (average score 2.7); 'OFSTED and Local Authority

initiatives' (average score 3.7) and 'Family Commitments ' (average score 3.8) are stopping people from seeking headship.

In the thesis, though, the main difference was in the Catholic head teacher's approach to salary. 'Fraser and Brock (2006) when surveying principals in Australia found "*insufficient remuneration*" (p433) as a key reason for not moving up the career path. In the questionnaire the theme of salary (average score 7.6) came tenth as a consideration for taking on headship. This goes against previous research on Catholic leaders. From all five serving heads, not one mentioned the pay aspect as having any influence on their decision to become a head teacher. This endorses the thesis questionnaire findings. In order to reaffirm this discovery, I asked specifically about salary when interviewing the other ten senior leaders. Equally relevant, though, three of the senior leaders felt that pay is a factor when they start to consider the head teacher role. Some of the comments included '*the responsibility is not worth the money or the hassle*' (interviews two; five and nine). Two of the interviewees are serving deputy heads. Therefore, it would appear that whilst salary is not a factor when you take on the position of a Catholic head teacher, it is a consideration for some Catholic deputies. Ultimately, seven out of ten interviewees (both middle and senior leaders) felt that pay was not a factor in the leadership crisis, and this reason has consistently been rejected. This reiterates the point that servant leadership is strongly linked to the ethos and personal belief of the Catholic school leader.

Ololube (2005) concluded that job satisfaction and salary were linked. His interviews with seventy principals, in Nigeria, found that "*A fair day's work for a fair day's pay*" (p7) was paramount to ensure that staff were not "de-motivated" (p2). From the questionnaire and interviews that have been conducted for this thesis, this notion of salary has been discredited as being an issue towards any perceived leadership crisis. Job satisfaction was not connected, by any of the fifteen interviewees, to monetary gain. There is a strong feeling that in Catholic education imparting their faith to others is more important than financial gain. Further research on the link between Catholic heads job satisfaction and the link with salary development (as a solution to the future of encouraging future school leaders) would have to take the form of a longitudinal study.

Greenleaf (1977) discussed servant leadership as "*faith resting on the prophets of old having given the 'word' for all time being heard in the contemporary voice by leaders*" (p23) as impacting on the religious faith of the school leaders' impacting on everyday aspects of life. Greenleaf (1977) argued that servant Leadership is where an individual's faith influences their choice on leading an organization. With servant leadership being integral in the role of a Catholic head teacher there is a clear indication that salary is not as important as the school

leader passing on the faith to the future generations. Salary, as one interviewed head, *'is good enough really'* (appendix 5-interview eight).

#### 5.5 The strategies that can support school headship and alleviate the leadership crisis.

When considering strategies to support school headship, and consequently alleviate the leadership crisis the researcher has to move strategic vagueness to intentional clarity. The thesis data analysis chapter gave insights into what aspects the Catholic primary senior leaders' felt could potentially help to solve the crisis. It is important to use the findings to execute a strategy so there is a clear direction for the diocese and government to follow. These directives need to be considered and implemented by these stakeholders, in order for the headship predicament to noticeably ease over the next few years.

MacBeath (2006) gave a list of five main symptoms that, according to his research, need to be addressed to solve the current leadership crisis. The first 'stress' and second 'accountability' appears to agree with West-Burnham (1997) and Harris (2007) as the main factor. The third is workload levels and family commitments, fourth is salary and finally the social factor regarding 'teacher supply line' (MacBeath 2006 p 189-191).

In the thesis responses from both the questionnaires and the individual interviews, the results connect the research to the main symptoms MacBeath indicated, that workload levels are indeed the biggest reason stopping people from becoming head teachers. This area has moved from the third contributing factor in MacBeath's (2006) list to the top reason given in the thesis questionnaire responses. This indicates that since the various pieces of research have been conducted, by MacBeath and Harris, the paperwork has dramatically increased in the seven years. The Guardian's education editor, Rebecca Smithers, (2006) claims that from the GTC research there is *"a leadership crisis due to excessive paperwork."* The BBC (2014) also recently commented on the latest data available from the DfE and found that *"45% of classroom teachers who think the amount of time spent on "unnecessary or bureaucratic" tasks have increased, with only 5% saying it has reduced."* When it came to discussing the reason for the *"increase the teachers reported, was preparing for an OFSTED inspection. Head teachers also identified changing government policies and guidelines as generating "unnecessary" bureaucracy."* These statistics indicate that the extra pressure on teachers and school leaders, that OFSTED and government add is an area that both the questionnaire and interviews all adhered to. It was felt that *'the threat of OFSTED is off putting and when you get them and then the result afterward is demoralizing, you look at what a head teacher has to do and it gives you no encouragement to strive for that,'* (interview twelve). The impact of OFSTED inspections on a head teacher, under the new



regime of 2015, requires a long term study in order to review its bearing on any future leadership crisis.

Accountability and family commitments were in the same positions (two and three) as in MacBeath's list, and with the pressures of the job itself, it indicates that these three aspects are indeed the root causes for the leadership crisis. Salary was last out of ten options and is felt to not really be a factor in a Catholic school. This is due to the respondents discussing in the interviews that the job was a vocation and part of the evangelical aspect of their servant leadership.

Workload levels are one of five reoccurring major themes from recent research (MacBeath 2006; Harris 2007) that along with the thesis findings gives clarity as to the central reasons that indicates that there is a leadership crisis in Catholic Education. This is exacerbated by the further pressure and expectations specific to running a faith school and the expectations placed upon the individual relating to sacramental preparation, Section 48 RE Inspections and attendance at Catholic celebrations at the weekend.

As to the practicalities to solve the problem workload levels there is dedicated head teacher time allocated in the 'Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2012' (paragraph 57.2 p107). This suggested time is delegated back to the individual school so that this is negotiated between a head and the Chair of Governors to "*discharge their leadership and management responsibilities*" (p107). It is precisely due to dedicated head teacher time not being legislated for that all the interviewees (five heads) did not take this time. The solution to decreasing workload levels is to make it compulsory practice for dedicated headship time to become part of the working week. If the government and the diocese implement these changes and allow head teachers to work away from the school building for half a day a week (in the similar practice that occurs for teachers PPA time) then there will be a shift in culture towards becoming a head teacher. Whether it will solve the leadership crisis fully would need a longitudinal study, but it would improve morale and this in turn may make people think more positively about applying for headship. Workload levels, with the accountability and added pressures to family life, are making headship less attractive as a career move; creating legislation to give dedicated head teacher time is a practical solution to the problem.

Stress, as a hindering factor to headship, was fourth in the responses to the questionnaire. There was a feeling that there is stress in every job and that in teaching this was in no way different. Stress is an area that many of the teaching unions, within the United Kingdom, feel is at epidemic proportions and is stopping people from furthering their careers. There were only four comments related to stress within the questionnaires; three of which were solely

about the connection between head teachers' having their workloads reduced and stress levels decreasing. The fourth reply from questionnaire eighteen, though, suggested a different approach. The response was to create *'time out' for 2-6 weeks every five years to strategy build'* as a solution. This sabbatical would be in addition to a person having their summer holiday and could reinvigorate the teaching profession thereby giving people the incentive to gain promotion. This solution would need further study and longitudinal research but is an area that has not been endorsed as a solution before and so needs to be given careful consideration.

'Time out' as a solution to the leadership crisis needs careful consideration in relation to the positives and negatives for the school. The topic of giving every head teacher an opportunity to develop their skills every few years, is open for debate in terms of the benefits it would bring. There will be knock on effects for other key staff to take on aspects of the head teacher's job that they may need training for. Conversely, the opportunities for progression of a school would be endless. Any changes in documentation and National Curriculum guidelines could be prepared for, planned and delivered with enthusiasm. The schemes would be adapted to suit the school rather than the 'adjust quickly' culture that is in place at present. The schools would then have opportunities for people to experience short bursts of school senior and middle leadership, safe in the knowledge that it's a trial. This, though, could be the motivation people need to further develop their career. Federations and groupings of schools, working together, would be able to support this scheme further and may be alleviate any further leadership problems through structured school to school support. Further research into this would be a longitudinal study, looking into the progress this may bring.

As a strategy to solve the leadership crisis, this 'time out' is a credible option. It would need dedicated planning and serious risk assessment, but would allow head teachers' an opportunity to strategically lead as opposed to daily manage the school. The time away from school would develop the skills of other members of staff and allow people to step up for a short space of time; giving people the confidence to take on the roles and responsibilities. Whether this is a solution to succession planning would need some trials in volunteer schools but as a strategy it is worth a valuable consideration.

The one area that is seen as a major way forward for the suggested 'teacher supply line' (MacBeath 2006) from both the questionnaire and interview responses was acting headship. This was the clear fundamental strategy that was felt to be the way to support school headship, and thereby directly alleviate the leadership crisis. In the questionnaire (section C8) a quarter of all responses felt that acting headship was very important and should be a

part of any future NPQH programme. Seven responses felt that acting headship should be an obligation to becoming a head teacher. Acting headship is a very emotive area and the thesis findings, along with the research conducted by Draper and McMichael (2002 and 2003) and Crawford (2012) is indicating that a possible way forward to alleviate a future leadership crisis is to have an acting headship programme within all education boroughs. What the survey research found was that all areas of senior leaders felt that this should be a requirement for becoming a head teacher and with such strong views need to be seriously considered as such. In the interviews the feeling was reinforced adamantly that acting headship should be for no longer than a year and must be part of the deputy's job description. *'Acting headship could be the answer as it would give deputies confidence. It needs to be a structured programme to work though and if built into a job description may alleviate any future leadership problems,'* (interviewee thirteen). This is a change in direction and if was included in such a role could stop the incumbent deputy from remaining in the post for a long time. This would be monitored through future longitudinal research.

To link acting headship with dedicated head teacher time would be a practical solution to the leadership crisis main issue of workload levels. If there is a legislation passed to enforce governing bodies to give heads time out of school each week, then the deputy could experience running a school. This inevitably gives them the leadership skills required to run a school confidently. This acting up system would allow for a coaching approach whereby the head teacher could be contacted for advice and discussion but the deputy would gain skills only experienced when responsibly for the school stops with them. This change management needs to come from the government and then be adopted by the school's governing body, as dedicated head teacher time needs to become part of the working conditions within the head teacher's job description.

If acting headship is the organizational strategy to solve the leadership crisis, as recommended by the many schools involved in the thesis questionnaire process and Crawford's (2012) research, then this has to become part of the recruitment process for headship. Acting headship as an aspect of the NPQH course would seem a very credible option, especially as it is an aspect of the expectations within the Scottish Education system. The 2013 NPQH course does have one module where there is an expectation that a candidate experiences school shadowing for up to half a term on a leadership project. What better project could there be than to experience the role first hand for a sustained period of time though a secondment or a managed move? In order for acting headship to be beneficial to all parties the school and acting head teacher would have to be supported. This year long project could have coaching from other school leaders and use the expertise of the National College itself. Another way forward would be to have a succession planning policy statutory

within all schools that encourages serving heads to participate in talent spotting from the beginning of a teacher's career. The questionnaires and interviews overwhelmingly discussed succession-planning initiatives in their schools but exactly what impact these policies have would be another longitudinal study project.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The leadership predicament is going to get worse before it gets better (Evans 2014) and the main solutions to this problem relate to identification, development, recruitment and succession planning of future leaders (according to the findings from this thesis) are: acting headship; reducing workload levels through legislating for dedicated head teacher time; planning five yearly 'time out' opportunities to allow for strategic development; and finally for talent management to become part of a succession planning policy made mandatory in all schools.

Within a Catholic setting, the diocese also needs to issue guidelines on what their expectations are for head teachers' attending Sacramental meetings and preparation for Section 48 inspections. Fraser and Brock (2006) called this dedication "*vocation, a commitment to Catholic education, commitment to teaching and learning and commitment to the mission of the church*" (p425). All this extra work, from the interview and questionnaire response, is definitely stopping people applying for the head teacher position. With clear limits on head teacher hours, especially within a faith school, people would be more inclined to take on the senior leadership roles. The interviews from the deputies and assistant heads all indicated that the long hours and extra responsibilities were hindering factors to headship. It is important that the diocese and the present serving head teachers work together to generate ideas for an ethos of talent spotting and embedding leadership training from an early stage in a teacher's career. This will start to create expectation of moving up the ladder from the teacher's beginning and will alleviate some of the perceptions of the role of head teacher – including time restraints and accountability pressures.

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter will sum up the significant original empirical and theoretical contributions to knowledge that this study has made. This statement will be linked to the wider framework in which the research is situated (see chapter 3.3) including the four research questions that are the foundation for this study on leadership within the Catholic primary sector of the English West Midlands.

The research questions are categorized under the second type of Habermas (1971) typology of ‘practical interest’ focusing on the people leading Catholic schools and relationships between the factors encouraging and discouraging senior leaders from taking on the headship position. The research questions are exploring the understanding required to alleviate problems related to identification, development, recruitment and succession planning of future leaders through an Interpretivist approach.

## 6.2 What is the reality regarding the leadership crisis within the primary Catholic sector within the West Midlands?

The findings of this study suggest that there are many facets preventing people from taking up the role of head teacher within Catholic primary schools. These range from issues around lack of aspiration to move into the headship position, recruitment, workload levels linked with the pressures associated with school inspection, and the expectations regarding being a faith school leader specifically. This study supports the notion that there is a leadership crisis and the findings from the research indicate that it is across all schools, but even more prominent within the Catholic primary sector.

In recent years, education statistics (Howson 2010, 2011, 2012) indicate that recruitment to school leadership is having a profound effect especially within the Catholic sector. One aspect of the leadership problem has been found to relate to middle and senior leaders where Rhodes and Brundrett 2009 found in their research that “*43% of incumbent deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders*” (p382) viewed the role of a head teacher as one that is not being aspired to. This corresponds with the views expressed by seven out of fifteen of my interviewees who mentioned a lack of desire for the role in their discussions. One head teacher (interview four) commented specifically that ‘*Deputy headship is seen by people to be a good place to get to these days... there are less and less people these days who want to become a head from my discussions with my members of senior and middle leadership*

*teams.*' Therefore, on balance, my participants support the point from earlier research that headship is no longer a strong aspiration but rather aiming for a deputy head position is high enough up the career chain.

In three interviews, the actual process for applying for the head teacher position has been identified as dissuading people. The process, within Catholic primary education, is often a *'visit to a school which is an informal interview, observation, presentation and finally an interview. If there's an internal candidate it can put you off' (interview ten)*. This procedure is felt to be too long and needs to be simplified. A recommendation would be to have a local diocesan central pool where prospective future head teachers all complete the same interview system, and when a school needs a new leader, the diocese matches the credentials with the candidate. The governing body can then select potential candidates to have an informal day with the children and staff to cross reference their school's needs. This would be a radical change to the current system of application to headship but could be closely linked to the pool system that is currently set up for appointment of newly qualified teachers. This would allow for true diocesan succession planning policies to be created and implemented.

The main reason for lack of headship uptake, from this study, has been shown to be high workload levels and the accountability related to pupil achievement. This 'highly prescriptive accountability' (Ball 2013 p173) is having a profound effect on the staff morale within schools as although the head teacher is responsible for reporting the information, the schools performance is directly linked to the staff throughout the school. Each person is responsible for insuring that their class achieve the set targets. The only solution is to change the culture of teaching so the fear of failure is diminished and successes fully embraced by all stakeholders. This is an area that needs to be quickly addressed to stop the 58% re-advertisement rate (Stanford 2007).

OFSTED, as researched by Fink (2010), is having a serious negative effect on the education profession. In all the fifteen interviews every person mentioned OFSTED at some point and never with positive language. The paperwork overload, exacerbated by OFSTED, is 'putting so much pressure on schools. It is having a huge impact as there is no middle ground anymore... the deputies don't want to go higher as they don't want the added pressure' (interview 6 and 7). This links with the NASUWT (2011) national survey of 8000 teachers and school leaders which found that 69% *"routinely gather and collate data specifically for inspection and 53% regularly develop school policies for inspection"* (p4). These findings had greatly increased from *"27% in 2007"* (p6) which is a staggering 42% increase in paperwork for inspection in a four year period. This dramatic increase illustrates that OFSTED is

increasing the accountability within schools, and is having a profound detrimental effect on the future of the teaching profession. Far-reaching reforms need to be commissioned so leader workload and personal accountability to OFSTED are balanced, which in turn allows people to be creative and less data driven. Until people feel empowered, headship as a career option is unfavourable for deputies and assistant heads. More research into this area would support legislation changes, but a starting point would be to create a taskforce with OFSTED and school leaders united to create immediate solutions to tackling workload levels. By linking together stability within schools and people being supported to complete their job satisfactorily then 'highly prescriptive accountability' (Ball 2013 p173) will be reduced towards a central aim of helping all children to achieve their potential, and not being about how a child equates to a percentage and therefore has to be consistently targeted to achieve the correct 'statistic'.

The expectation on the roles and responsibilities of a head has to be addressed, as the excessive workload and accountability is having a fundamental effect on all areas of the teaching community. With all the paperwork and continual high profile expectations, created by OFSTED and the Government, indication is that this is putting people off developing their career as commented upon by Fink 2010. Support needs to come from the education authorities so that people see school leadership as an aspiration. Once the positive image is restored, then the leadership crisis will be eased. This notion came from interviewee seven who commented, that all too often *'heads moan about aspects of the job.'* This negativity was felt to then permeate and leave deputies with the wrong image of the job. The interviewee believed that to alleviate the leadership crisis *'we need to convey a different image about the great aspects of the job.'* The fifteen interviews felt a different direction regarding heads praising the job had not been discussed before and serious consideration should be given to the image of headship as a way to make the headship position an attractive proposition.

The reality is that there is a problem with identifying and developing future leaders in the Catholic sector, and this study has shown that succession planning and future recruitment needs to be carefully planned for in order to maintain our Catholic school system. In the CES (2014) document where 69% of primary teachers are now Catholic (p4) within the Catholic sector and considering BRIN (2014) statistics where *"only one-fifth of Catholics now attend Mass,"* this equates to potentially around only 14% of the school staff regularly attending the church's sacraments. This has the potential to further exacerbate Catholic leadership issues as a non-negotiable is that heads and deputies must be practising Catholics. The Catholic schools and the church need to draw up more robust programmes to encourage younger

people into determining the value of attending church and look at people's personal circumstances on a case by case basis.

6.3 What factors encourage and discourage promotion in leadership teams? What are the factors that are inhibiting senior leaders from taking on headship?

Research questions two and three started off being investigated separately as I originally sent the questionnaires out to the head teachers. The replies came back with the senior and middle leaders' responses attached, so although I initially envisaged separate information from the generated responses the research questions merged together. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the various factors that inhibit or motivate people to become a head teacher. The charts were created from the previous research by Gunter (2001) and Rhodes and Brundrett (2006). The inclusion of the religious clergy to the factors list was due to Durow and Brock (2004) research that found conflict between clergy and staff as a fundamental issue within school leadership.

Workload levels	<b>1</b>
OFSTED and LA initiatives	<b>2</b>
Family Commitments	<b>3</b>
Stress	<b>4</b>
Accountability to Stakeholders	<b>5</b>
Sense of isolation	<b>5</b>
Unrealistic Expectations	<b>7</b>
Disgruntled Parents	<b>8</b>
Religious Clergy	<b>9</b>
Salary	<b>10</b>

Table 4.4 Possible hindering factors to headship

Good experience as a deputy	<b>1</b>
Acting headship	<b>2</b>
Job Fulfilment	<b>3</b>
Previous role models	<b>4</b>



Family Encouragement	5
Succession Planning initiatives	6
Coaching and mentoring	7
NPQH award	8
Salary	9
Religious Clergy	10

Table 4.5 Motivating factors to becoming a head teacher

This research (2009-2015) has shown that the three biggest factors, viewed as hindering the uptake of school leadership, identifies almost the same issues as the research indicated over the past ten years. In this thesis, the three most prominent themes that have emerged are high workload levels, OFSTED and LA initiatives and family commitments. The difference is that stress came out as fourth in this study and not first as found by MacBeath in 2006.

MacBeath (2006) ascertained stress, in research, to be the main hindering factor stopping people moving towards headship, second 'accountability' and third workload levels (including the impact on family commitments). The findings link directly with Harris (2007) who found accountability as the main factor in her research. Throughout the questionnaires and interviews (in this study) stress has been constantly linked with accountability and the impact school inspection has on school leaders. Stress is viewed as part of the job as discussed by interviewee fifteen who is a serving deputy head. *'You have to have high stress thresholds as the role is demanding whatever your position (interview fifteen).'*

Stress, therefore, is perceived as an aspect of every body's position whereas the workload levels have dramatically increased. This study has highlighted that ring fencing dedicated head teacher time within the teacher's pay and conditions document needs serious consideration. Workload levels encompass all the meetings and the public functions heads are required to attend, all the governor preparation, all the teaching staff observations and all the day to day management of a school that are central to the role of head teacher. This entire work links to the expectations required to lead a 'good or outstanding school' which is the OFSTED expectation. The interviews mentioned sabbaticals, time outs and half day a week working from home. As a way to improve the attractiveness of the headship position these suggestions are invaluable as they give insights into solutions to help ease the pressures placed upon a head teacher. Dedicated time out would support heads but also give deputies and other school leaders' opportunities to 'act up' thereby giving invaluable experience of the next step on the career ladder.

This study has found variances with previous research specifically around the two themes of Catholic leaders' salary and the role the religious clergy play within a Catholic school setting. Both have previously been high issues regarding potential reasons for senior and middle leaders not furthering their career towards headship. From the findings (as seen in tables 4.4 and 4.5) the evidence from the questionnaires and interviews indicate that these aspects are not considered when looking to further a person's career.

Salary, as a motivating factor, when considering headship, came ninth in the questionnaire. As a theme it also came last (tenth) when taking it into account as being a hindering factor. Ololube (2005), Fraser and Brock (2006), MacBeath (2006), Harris (2007) and Fink (2010) all found in their research that salary was a prominent issue but this thesis has shown through question seven *'Salary is not viewed as a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic school. Why do you think this is?'* that Catholic teachers feel headship is a *'vocation' (interview three)*, *'a way of imparting of religion' (interview thirteen)* and finally *'we're not badly paid to be honest' (interview seven)*. There is a strong undercurrent, from the findings, that agree with research conducted by Grace (2012) who found that Catholic schools are *"valued for the spiritual, social and educational formation they bring for their children and youth"* (p501). The concept of imparting faith to children overrides the need for high pay. The distinct Catholic ethos, created around following the teachings of Jesus Christ, permeates from the school leadership down throughout the staff and as a result money is not viewed as a major aspect in the head teacher position.

Durow and Brock (2004) surveyed twenty serving heads and concluded that the parish priest was ultimately the reason for retaining or resigning a head teacher position. They found that *"Priests were often mentioned as the central figure in the conflict. The Principals' comments descriptive of governance conflicts included inability to work with an autocratic pastor... which resulted in non-renewal of contracts"* (p200). Throughout the whole questionnaire and interview survey process, the parish priest was not considered to be either a hindering or motivating factor for people moving towards or away from headship. This study indicates that the Priest has a very important role *'if they are part of the community. The priest needs to be accessible then it would encourage more Catholic children into teaching. Leadership is hard without church support as there will be very limited succession planning without them'* (interview eight – appendix five). The priest, therefore, is a valued member of the school community and to move forward with Catholic leadership their input is required and encouraged.

There major undertone within both the questionnaire and the interviews was the theme of job expectations specifically that come with the position of being a leader within a faith school. There are no specific requirements within the job description that indicates that a head teacher is required to attend all religious services or after school events. However, there is an informal code by which a Catholic head is expected to be present. This continual availability of the Catholic head teacher was not asked in any direct way but was a thread that was interwoven into the responses.

This factor appears to be strongly exacerbating the leadership problem within Catholic education. The strong expectations placed upon head teachers, to be exemplars within the Catholic community, are having a profound effect on the uptake of headship. This is through the requirement that senior leaders follow the non-negotiables of the church's requirements by being a practising Catholic as well as understanding that there is an expectation that as a Catholic head the job is a vocation that takes first position in everyday life.

Statistics from Moorhead's (2014) writing in *The Tablet* (the Catholic online news weekly) indicate that in faith schools *"61 per cent of primary Catholic head teacher positions needing to be re-advertise in 2011, the last year for which figures are available"* there is a clear indication that senior leaders *"need to be a faith leader themselves. Often they need extra support to be able to fulfil that role."* The finding of this thesis link with this theory; extra support is needed to support Catholic heads as in the questionnaire (C3) the comment that shows how much being personally 'second place' to the church's expectations are clearly identified. The comment, by response six, identified the need for:

*"more realistic expectations placed upon heads. I attend all school events and there is an expectation to support others. Whilst this is rewarding, they are in addition to my working day. Where does the role I want to play within my own parish and family? Second place is the answer! (Questionnaire response six)."*

The answer clearly adheres to support mechanisms being introduced across the diocese so Catholic heads are not always required to attend every event. This needs to come from the Catholic diocese formally so every person knows the requirement of the position.

Furthermore, to gain the *"extra support to be able to fulfil the role," (Moorhead 2014)* although Catholic heads do have termly meetings of the Birmingham Primary Catholic Partnership there appears to be strong support from serving heads for a more formal network of support led by the arch diocese of Birmingham. The questionnaires findings show that this could be through 'federations,' 'support groups,' 'collaboration,' 'shadowing' and 'individual support when a school is vulnerable.' This is a group solution to alleviating some

of the pressures associated with the 'faith expectations' of being a role model within the Catholic community.

Ultimately, the most important aspect for motivating a person to take a head teacher position is the experience that has been had as a deputy head. This came out as the main attributing factor for career development. The importance of the experiences that are given to a deputy head reiterates research from twenty years ago by Jayne (1996) who evaluated the training of deputy head teachers and the tasks they were given. Jayne (1996) strongly believed that *"delegation through sharing responsibilities promoted effectiveness... and share the art of headship"* (p318) was a key aspect required for addressing leadership problems. This thesis has indicated that in order to encourage people to progress people need to experience 'effective delegation' (interview three), 'experience through work shadowing' (interview five), 'a nurturing of people and support for self belief that you can do the job' (interview eight) and 'not being given loads of roles all at once but support through small steps' (interview fourteen). This is achieved through talent spotting from the beginning of the teacher's career and supported acting headship as part of a national programme.

#### 6.4 What strategies can support school headship and alleviate the current issues within leadership?

The most fundamental and important finding from this study was around the importance of acting headship. Across all the survey research, acting headship was felt to be a requirement for becoming a head teacher and that this should be included in a job description for becoming a deputy (as commented upon by interview thirteen). This would allow people to have opportunities planned to allow them to lead a school with appropriate support and guidance. More work would need to go into the organization of such an expectation but where opportunities lie; they need to be taken. A recommendation from the thesis findings is the NPQH award should have acting headship at the core of its programme. This change is one that only government legislation can achieve but with this small scale research indicating its importance, it must be given serious consideration. 'Acting up' needs to be a requirement of the headship position so people know exactly what the job entails. In the questionnaire, twenty out of twenty-one heads, along with the five head teachers' interviewed, believed that this is a crucial strategy to alleviate the leadership crisis. No other research has identified this solution before. This thesis has credibly furthered knowledge and understanding of this contemporary issue with evidence from practitioners on which to base policy recommendations.

The leadership crisis encompasses an education recruitment crisis. There are fewer people becoming teachers and the inevitable conclusion is that the leadership crisis will get worse if long-term solution steps are not put in place to improve the situation. The suggested methods are to look at the personnel within the education communities and to 'grow' our own school leaders by giving them chances to lead, under the guidance of the present school heads. The main consideration must be to place acting headship within the job specification for deputy heads and the NPQH programme

The second strategy to support school leadership also includes another change in government legislation. The response by head teacher (interview four) highlighted the discrepancy between head teacher time expectations and the remainder of the teaching staff. This study has indicated that making ring fenced time mandatory within teacher's pay and conditions document for heads needs serious implementation. In harmony with present PPA guidelines for teachers, head teachers should be entitled to a half day a week dedicated head teacher non-contact time. This half day away from the school environment would alleviate the workload levels, and thereby allow for stress to decrease and family life to increase in a positive way. By advocating that head teachers can complete work at home would allow more time for them to complete relevant paperwork without disruption whilst also giving the deputy or assistant head opportunities to lead a school for a monitored period of time each week. This may give the senior leaders' the incentive to take the next step on their career ladder, as a result.

Coaching and mentoring is seen, by the present group of head teachers', as a serious third option for succession planning for the future needs of education school leadership. Talent management ideas need to be given serious consideration; whether the school is of Catholic origin or not. The three areas of growing your own leaders, that Barber et al. (2010) comment upon, links with the coaching approaches that my questionnaires responses felt were needed.

Talent management appears to be one way that can be used to address the education leadership crisis; indeed any company leadership crisis. This is a relatively new concept but is becoming increasingly mentioned in research and succession planning literature. Talent management allows leaders to spot potential and develop skills needed to become an organization's manager. This is an area that is becoming the forefront as a strategy to alleviate the leadership crisis in Catholic education. This needs to be part of a leadership training schedule that is initiated from the second year of teaching and has the core aim of producing senior leaders of the future.

A sabbatical does not really get much consideration in the teaching profession. There are the occasional advertisements for such opportunities but it is a rare thing in education. One of the suggested solutions to the leadership crisis is to build into a five year cycle a 'two to six' week sabbatical that is part of the strategic leadership development. The thesis has found that this solution is a positive way forward to not only alleviating stress but also giving people the incentive to further their career and thereby lessen the leadership crisis. Any opportunities to let the senior leaders formally experience running a school allows a person to understand the role of the job and thereby permits the person an insight into what the position entails. This thereby gives a true reflection of the role and gives the senior leaders' knowledge of the expectations and requirements needed to fulfil the position.

When I started this thesis, the main type of Catholic school was the Voluntary Aided School that linked with the diocese and the local authority. In chapter one the different models of school leadership were discussed as a way that schools could link together to support the leadership crisis. As the research progressed, the question changed as to whether these styles (federations, co-headship or academisation) have actually helped headship? Many of the voluntary aided school have evolved in the last five years and have become part of multi academy trusts. When I started this process, there were no academy Catholic primary schools in Birmingham, but now in 2016, there are nine. There are other schools that are in the process of consultation in order to move towards becoming academies, as this has been viewed as the next mechanism to support the Catholic education of the future. Furthermore, two schools have federated but none presently are being run with co-headship partnerships. Instead, there has been a move towards executive head teachers, who have had proven experience of running a 'good or outstanding' school and who can impart their experience on another school who may be in a category.

The purpose of Catholic academy schools is to maintain and improve the school results and to work strategically to alleviate leadership issues. Further research on whether academies (in multi trusts) can halt a leadership crisis would need a longitudinal study but any development of present middle and senior leaders (as a group) will help to advance staff members credentials and hopefully motivate them to move up the career ladder successfully. The use of Catholic multi academy chains has allowed for joining up of ideas within school along finance, policies and leadership. Academy chains train staff together and this crucial support is the first step in supporting and developing future leaders. The true impact of academisation to alleviate leadership issues will only be seen in future years, as studies will need to be continual over many years.

The first strategy relates directly to the church community, in the case of Catholic schools, which has to start considering modern society in order to allow for acceptance that head teachers' cannot continually be role models. Discussions and negotiations on this topic need to be addressed to alleviate all the different issues around school leadership from identification, development and succession of potential future heads. With family life being at the core of the church's teachings, addressing the extra hour's head teachers have to do, as part of the sacramental preparation and RE section 48 inspection expectations, must be dealt with through creation of an agreed policy so all governing bodies can permit delegation of responsibilities to middle and senior leaders. Section 48 is the second specific inspection that faith schools have to undertake. The two day inspection usually takes place the term after the original OFSTED inspection.

The process is similar to an OFSTED inspection in that heads have to show pupil progress in RE lessons (over a period of time) and demonstrate the spiritual life of the school through Mass and Assemblies. Class teachers are all observed teaching RE, and recommendations are drawn up for further development. A separate section 48 report is produced and is a requirement of a faith school's website. The culture of the Catholic head teacher being at every function and school meeting has to stop, as these additional responsibilities are obstructing and indeed dissuading people from applying to faith school leadership positions as they are directly impacting on the work life balance of the faith school head.

The second strategy is for job advertisements to be au fait with head teacher salary, within a Catholic school. Especially as many Catholic heads did not view salary as such an important subject as considered by heads in maintained schools. Catholic heads see imparting faith is of paramount importance and the job adverts need to be address this aspect in future. More emphasis needs to be placed on the catholic life of the school so the potential candidate can relate to the ethos as opposed to the salary being of high prominence in the advert. Harris (2007) indicated that the fourth hindering issue related to taking up headship is salary. Ololube (2005), Fraser and Brock (2006), MacBeath (2006) and Fink (2010) all found in their research that salary was an issue that prevented senior leaders from moving to the head teacher role. Throughout this study within the Catholic school system, this was not an influential factor that is stopping people becoming a head teacher. In fact as seen in Table 4.4, it was the tenth potential hindering factor, with an average score of 7.6 out of 10. Salary, being the last reason, was a real surprise as previous research has indicated that this is a major hindering factor. Servant leadership was reiterated throughout the interviews where imparting the faith to the future generation was seen as more important than money as was

mentioned in interview one 'I certainly didn't look at the salary when I applied here. As a head of a Catholic school you're there to serve really and be able to spread the mission.'

The national head teacher salary must be universal for all across the country, but there needs to be a change in the advertisements for the job within the Catholic sector. More description of the way the individual school's ethos and mission is should form part of the advert when recruiting for a new senior leader. In the interviews twelve of the fifteen felt that salary is not key but that 'Catholic children are my priority, and I want to be a missionary to them in my school and so salary is not an issue' (interview ten). As a strategy designing adverts to attract future leaders that considers the missionary aspect of the Catholic school, rather than the money available, is a potential way to encourage people to apply and as a result could stop the re-advertisement rate of "*58 per cent in the Catholic sector*" (Stanford 2007) being so high. Alternatively, a diocesan Catholic pool system would support this process and link potential heads with appropriate skills required.

#### 6.5 Recommendations

Ultimately, to alleviate the Catholic head crisis, there needs to be some consideration given to the modern day positions many of our Catholic staff find themselves in; so that we can have future leaders regardless of what their home life is like. This needs to be on a case by case basis, so that the non-negotiables are not compromised, but middle and senior leaders feel that they have a voice. This could be through creating a board, at the diocesan level, just to consider evidence of how a person could be suited to the roles and responsibilities of Catholic headship whilst considering personal circumstances. This should be confidential, but if people want to be a head teacher then as long as the person has a strong moral faith and attends church regularly, following as many of the commandments as is possible, then this should suffice in the first instance. Servant leadership is a very personal journey and feeling inadequate to pursue the role of head teacher, due to life circumstances, needs support as this was summed up in interview thirteen with the comment 'if you've got a hiccup in your faith (such as divorce) this stops your progression anyway.'

The board could also be responsible for the application process with the recruitment of a head teacher to the Catholic primary sector. With the procedure often viewed, by the interviewed leaders, as 'long winded' my recommendation is that there needs to be a creation of a head teacher pool where all potential candidates have a universal interview and the diocese support governing bodies with matching skills with potential schools.

Further research that could be undertaken now would be a longitudinal study investigating the link between OFSTED inspection regimes and the leadership crisis. When considering



accountability and stress, there was a subtle undercurrent, within the literature of people such as Fink (2010), around the pressures that inspection of a school can bring and I feel further study could hone in on this area in relation to a leadership crisis. As a school leader who has recently participated in an OFSTED inspection, the workload and stress does dramatically increase in the build up to inspection and I feel there is some scope in this subject area. The subject of OFSTED and the impact on school leaders is an area of personal interest and I would like to do further research into this topic especially the impact inspection has on the whole senior leadership team and whether this is increasingly becoming the main reason for putting people off headship, as commented upon by interviewee twelve, *'OFSTED is big issue and a huge deterrent.'* This was further elaborated upon as the leader felt that 'unrealistic challenges that are put onto head teachers' and there is no stopping with the accountability regime. With the NASUWT (2011) statistics clearly highlighting that there has been a 42% increase in the paperwork associated with OFSTED, within the past four years, then clearly action must be immediate to stem the epidemic that accountability is being created within the school system; principally through the requirements of OFSTED expectations and the burden this is having on the person who is head of the school. With other people observing the expectations placed upon the shoulders of one person, is it any wonder that senior leaders are not prepared to take the risk? Solutions regarding head teacher hours, work-life balance and accountability needs immediate addressing by government legislation and this would then directly affect the uptake of a head teacher positions.

Another recommendation has to be consideration for acting headship role as a precursor to a head teacher position. All 100% of the of the individual interviewees saw acting headship as a way to stem the decrease in the enthusiasm for taking on the role of the head teacher position and it was perceived as the second main motivating factor from the questionnaire responses. With so many responses indicating that serving heads feel this is an important aspect of school leadership, further research into the impact this would have on the recruitment and retention of head teachers is needed. This research would take a few years to evaluate, but if, as appears from the questionnaire responses, this aspect is invaluable to solving the leadership crisis as people would know what the job entails.

My recommendation is that acting headship is added to any national programme for training to be a head teacher, as was summed up by interview eleven who said *'you need a good model and continuous support through acting headship. It's the way forward but with careful planning.'* The present 2016 NPQH programme has just a short time allocated to work shadowing. My recommendation is that in order to start the course, participants should have (or had) experience of being an acting head for a minimum of a term but a 'maximum of a

year so you get the whole school year cycle' (interview three). By knowing exactly what the realities of the head teacher position are, and what exactly the expectations and pressures are, people will be more equipped to undertake the role. If there is any doubt that the job is not right for them, this will have been addressed in the acting role before starting the course.

The final recommendation is to talent spot from post NQT year. Canavan (2001) is instrumental in discussing the importance of talent spotting as a core element of a Catholic school ethos, but I feel that it goes beyond just Catholic education and that to alleviate leadership problems as Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) argued schools need to indeed create a 'talent pool growth' (p394) of younger staff will allow for stronger opportunities for succession planning to occur. This was reinforced through the responses often of the interviewees who felt this was the best way to encourage people into senior leaders' roles. Interview three felt that the way to achieve talent spotting for future leadership positions should start *'as soon as possible with staff joining middle leadership programmes planned for after the NQT year.'* This innovative approach to mapping out careers from the beginning would encourage staff to think about progression immediately and aspire to move up the career ladder. To achieve this, there needs to be a national programme from the second year of teaching. This design would need to be created along similar lines as the Teach First and NPQML programmes, but with subject leadership at its core.

In summary, the main suggestions for leadership are that accountability (especially in relation to OFSTED regimes) is researched further to look at the impact the system is having on school leaders. Acting headship is clearly a solution to the leadership crisis and future career development (of senior leaders) should incorporate this aspect in its programme structure. Schools should look at ways to develop their own staff, and consider how to develop their leadership skills, from as early as their second year as a substantive teacher. Finally, to alleviate the Catholic head teacher problem, the church has to look at modernizing its views in order that the expectations placed upon a person's life circumstances are considered on a case by case basis, and look at ways to encourage people to apply for the role through adverts relying less on salary and more on missionary opportunities. By creating a diocesan pool of future leaders, people can be supported and monitored to ensure that skills are created and developed so they can lead a Catholic school confident in their abilities.

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## Appendix One

### **Questionnaire on Leadership within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands.**

The attached questionnaire is part of a doctoral thesis on leadership of a Catholic School. In 2006 the National College of School Leadership 'Recruiting Head Teachers and Senior Leaders' document surveyed teaching staff and found that "43% of deputy heads and 70%

*of middle leaders do not aspire to be a head teacher*". I (Rachel Gould) am interested in finding out what (if any) are the reasons for the lack of uptake of headship especially within the local Catholic Primary sector.

The questionnaire should take fifteen minutes and is specifically for heads, deputies and assistant heads.

The research has the authorization of Paul Walmsley, Head of the Primary Catholic Partnership. The information will be confidential and the findings will be anonymous. The information generated will be used in the data analysis section of my thesis. The research findings will be collated into a report that will be presented at a head teacher briefing in late 2013, when the thesis is complete.

The thesis is part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership course at The Education Department, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston and the supervisor contact is Doctor Thomas Bisschoff

Please return the questionnaires by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Mrs. Rachel Gould.

Head Teacher

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

**IF YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO BE PART OF A FOCUS GROUP TO DISCUSS AND IDENTIFY FACTORS THAT INHIBIT PEOPLE FROM BECOMING CATHOLIC PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS PLEASE EMAIL ME ON [Redacted]**

Instructions for completing the questionnaire

Please read each question carefully and circle the response that best represents your answer. In Section C some questions are specific to identifying factors about headship.

## SECTION A

1. Your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

2. How old are you?

22-30      31-40      41-50      51-60      61+

3. What is your present school position?

Head Teacher	1
Acting Head Teacher	2
Deputy Head Teacher	3
Acting Deputy Head Teacher	4
Assistant Head	5
Acting Assistant Head	6

4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

--

5. How many years have you been in your present post?

--

6. What degree(s) do you hold?

Cert Ed	
B.Ed	
BA (QTS)	
B.Sc (QTS)	

PGCE	
M.Ed/MA	
PHD/EdD	
Other (please specify)...	

7. Do you have the NPQH award?

Yes	
No	
Currently working on gaining the award.	

8. Which one of the following best describes the type of school at which you are currently teaching?

Small Village School	
One form entry Primary School	
Two form entry Primary School	
Three form entry Primary School	

9. What is the predominate socio-economic status of your catchment area?

High/Affluent	
Above average	
Average	
Below average	
Low (deprivation area)	

10. When was the last OFSTED?

--

11. What was the outcome of the last OFSTED?

Outstanding	
Good	

Satisfactory	
Notice to improve	

## Section B

### Example.

Provide your opinion by highlighting the number of your choice on the 5 point scale for each question where:

- 1 = Not important
- 2 = Fairly important
- 3 = Equal importance
- 4 = Important
- 5 = Very important

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT THE SCHOOL LEADER:

1. Delegates and shares leadership roles in school?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Creates a working environment where all leaders have a say?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Empowers others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Trusts others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Assist in choosing CPD to allow for leadership roles to be developed?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Has had experience of 'acting headship' before taking on the headship role?



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Please rank the following (one the most important to ten the least important):**

1. What factors hinder people from taking on headship roles?

Stress	
Accountability to stakeholders	
Workload levels	
Family Commitments	
Salary	
OFSTED and LA initiatives	
Religious Clergy	
Unrealistic expectations	
Disgruntled parents	
Sense of isolation	

2. What motivates people to become a head teacher?

Succession Planning initiatives	
NPQH Award	
Religious Clergy	
Family Encouragement	
Role model of previous Headteacher	
Job Fulfillment	
Acting Headship	

Coaching and Mentoring	
Salary	
Good experience when in the deputy role	

## SECTION C

1. Is there any succession planning in place at your school (if so what exactly)?


2. What delegation and training opportunities are needed to empower people to take up headship?


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3. What can make the role of Catholic Primary Headteacher more attractive to the Deputy Heads and Assistant Heads of our schools?

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4. What could be done to solve the Catholic Primary Headteacher leadership crisis?

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**DEPUTY HEAD/ASSISTANT HEAD ONLY**

5. What would put you off from applying for headship?

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6. How do you want your Headteacher to empower you? (Please state any delegated or training areas that you may have found helped you with understanding headship).

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---

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7. Which leadership style, in your opinion, is best suited to leading a Catholic Primary School?


8. How can succession planning help with ensuring a continued supply of people to lead a Catholic Primary School?


**THANK YOU FOR FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**

## Appendix Two

### SECTION A – Results (December 2011)

#### 1. Gender

Male	9
Female	12

#### 2. Age of the person

22-30              31-40 **4**              41-50 **8**              51-60 **9**              61+

3. What is your present school position?

Head Teacher	<b>21</b>
Acting Head Teacher	
Deputy Head Teacher	<b>4</b>
Acting Deputy Head Teacher	
Assistant Head	<b>3</b>
Acting Assistant Head	

Seven schools SLT's sent the questionnaire filled in as one. The HT, DHT and AHT filled them in together. The HT age was the one used for response to question two.

4. Teaching experience range

The experience ranged from 13yrs to 38 yrs.

5. Years in the present leadership post ranged from:

1 year for a newly appointed assistant head to a maximum of 16 years as the headteacher of their current school.

From the replies the people are in their current post for:

1-5 years = **11**

6-10 years= **5**

11-15 years= **3**

16+ years= **1**

6. What degree(s) do you hold?

Cert Ed	<b>5</b>
B.Ed (Hons)	<b>13</b>
BA (QTS)	<b>1</b>
B.Sc (QTS)	
PGCE	<b>4</b>

M.Ed/MA	<b>2</b>
PHD/EdD	
Other (please specify)...	
B.Sc (Hons)	<b>1</b>
BA (Hons)	<b>1</b>
BEng (Hons)	<b>1</b>

**Seven schools ticked more than one box for qualifications (as was for the whole SMT).**

7. Do you have the NPQH award?

Yes	<b>16</b>
No	<b>10</b>
Currently working on gaining the award.	

**One HT wrote 'not applicable as did not need it' (questionnaire 8).**

8. Which one of the following best describes the type of school at which you are currently teaching?

Small Village School	
One form entry Primary School	<b>17</b>
Two form entry Primary School	<b>4</b>
Three form entry Primary School	

**One HT wrote that 'from September 2012 will be one and a half form so take your pick' (questionnaire 11).**

9. What is the predominate socio-economic status of your catchment area?

High/Affluent	<b>1</b>
Above average	<b>2</b>
Average	<b>5</b>
Below average	<b>1</b>
Low (deprivation area)	<b>12</b>

10. When was the last OFSTED?

**2011-2012**

**2010-2011 6**

**2009-2010 6**

**2008-2009 6**

**2007-2008 2**

**2006-2007 1**

**I changed this answer into a chart so that I could see when the inspection teams had been last. None of the answers came from schools that had been the subject of an OFSTED inspection in this academic year.**

11. What was the outcome of the last OFSTED?

Outstanding	<b>5</b>
Good	<b>14</b>
Satisfactory	<b>2</b>
Notice to improve	

**\* The school that was last inspected in 2006 was one of the outstanding schools (questionnaire 17).**

**\* Questionnaire numbers 3 and 11 were 'good with outstanding features'.**

## Section B

**Example.**

**Provide your opinion by highlighting the number of your choice on the 5 point scale for each question where:**

**6 = Not important  
7 = Fairly important  
8 = Equal importance**



9 = Important  
10 = Very important

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT THE SCHOOL LEADER:

1. Delegates and shares leadership roles in school?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	2	19

2. Creates a working environment where all leaders have a say?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	1	20

3. Empowers others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	1	20

4. Trusts others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	2	20

5. Assist in choosing CPD to allow for leadership roles to be developed?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	2	6	13

6. Has had experience of 'acting headship' before taking on the headship role?

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	5	6	7

Please rank the following (one the most important to ten the least important):

1. What factors hinder people from taking on headship roles?

Replies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Stress	3		1	5	3	1	8	2	9	2	6	2	2	9
Accountability to stakeholders	9	1	4	3	2		2	5	7	5	2	10	4	10
Workload levels	2	2	6	4	1		5	1	1	3	5	3	1	4
Family Commitments	1		8	8	6		4	2	2	6	3	1	3	3
Salary	7		10	9	4		10	3	10	9	10	9	9	8
OFSTED and LA initiatives	8	3	3	2	9		7	2	4	1	1	8	6	1
Religious Clergy	10		2	10	8		9	5	8	10	9	7	10	5
Unrealistic expectations	6		5	1	7	2	6	2	5	8	8	4	7	6
Disgruntled parents	4		7	6	5		3	7	6	7	7	6	8	2
Sense of isolation	5		9	7	10		1	2	3	4	4	5	5	7
Replies	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Score	Position					

Stress	2	1	8	2	2	5	9	82	4
Accountability to stakeholders	6	7	3	1	6	6	5	98	5=
Workload levels	4	2	2	3	4	1	3	57	1
Family Commitments	7	5	1	7	7	4	2	80	3
Salary	9	8	9	10	9	7	10	160	10
OFSTED and LA initiatives	1	6	7	5	1	3	1	78	2
Religious Clergy	10	10	10	8	10	10	4	145	9
Unrealistic expectations	8	3	5	4	8	2	6	105	7
Disgruntled parents	5	9	6	9	5	9	7	118	8
Sense of isolation	3	4	4	6	3	8	8	98	5=

First is 'workload levels'.

Second is 'OFSTED and LA initiatives'.

Third is 'Family Commitments'.

2. What motivates people to become a head teacher?

Replies 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Succession Planning initiatives	9	3	7	5	8		6	3	6	5	6	3
---------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	--	---	---	---	---	---	---

NPQH Award	6		9	8	6		8	6	9	10	7	4
Religious Clergy	10	4	10	9	9		7	8	5	6	9	10
Family Encouragement	1		6	2	5		9	4	7	4	3	2
Role model of previous Headteacher	2	1	5	3	4	3	1	2	1	3	8	5
Job Fulfillment	3	2	1	1	3	2	4	1	2	7	1	6
Acting Headship	4	5	4	4	2	1	2	7	8	1	4	7
Coaching and Mentoring	8		3	7	7		6	3	3	8	5	8
Salary	7	7	8	10	10	5	10	4	10	9	10	9
Good experience when in the deputy role	5	6	2	6	1	4	3	2	4	2	2	1

**Questionnaire 3 commented that “Job fulfillment is rarely realized these days”.**

### Replies

**13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 Score Pos**

Succession Planning initiatives	4	2	3	5	3	5	3	6	6	98	<b>6</b>
NPQH Award	7	8	4	7	9	10	4	9	8	139	<b>8</b>
Religious Clergy	10	10	10	8	10	9	10	10	9	171	<b>10</b>
Family Encouragement	8	9	5	4	5	6	5	7	5	97	<b>5</b>
Role model of previous Headteacher	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	82	<b>4</b>
Job Fulfillment	6	3	8	3	6	1	8	3	7	78	<b>3</b>
Acting Headship	5	4	1	n/a	4	7	1	4	1	76	<b>2</b>
Coaching and Mentoring	2	5	6	6	7	4	6	8	4	106	<b>7</b>
Salary	9	6	7	9	8	8	7	5	10	168	<b>9</b>
Good experience when in the deputy role	1	7	9	1	1	3	9	2	3	74	<b>1</b>

**First is ‘good experience when in the deputy role’.**

**Second is ‘acting headship’ (even though ‘number 16’ HT felt that this role was not applicable).**

**Third is ‘job fulfillment’.**

### SECTION C

1. Is there any succession planning in place at your school (if so what exactly)?

1. Yes – HT has clear picture of staff's strengths and what roles they need to play to move to senior leadership.
2. Went on a Catholic Middle Leaders course.
3. No
4. Left Blank
5. Not at present
6. Just created an AHT to prevent huge gap if HT or DHT move on. Middle leaders step up to phase leaders through CPD.
7. Discussion of career plans at PM. Coaching and mentoring opportunities, with chances to lead.
8. Yes a new SMT with new DH and 3 new AHT.
9. Not specifically to fill HT role but my deputy has been seconded out and one SLT member has been acting DH for nine months.
10. Yes but difficult when AHT does not want to be HT but middle leaders do.
11. Not specific. Unlikely anyone at school would like to be a HT. The DHT does not want to be; one other states she would like to be a DHT but in the local area due to family commitments. It makes the options fairly limited!
12. Yes, DHT doing NPQH. Middle leaders on National College courses and TA's doing GTP.
13. Yes... list of all the middle leaders courses from National College.
14. Extended leadership team so have two DHT and two TLR's. Having had two HT roles would like to go to four, then three days to give DHT chance to try the job.
15. Succession planning is on CPD this year. There is a likely need within five years. 2 members of staff doing middle leaders courses.
16. SLT is organized so that all decisions are made together, giving DH experience of what is expected. CPD is organized to prepare group for challenges that lie ahead.
17. Yes Co Headship in place for two years with AHT. Currently working in collaboration with 4 other schools and helping train middle leaders for leadership roles. Another senior leader in trialing DHT.
18. 3 staff on NCSL courses and are being coached in leadership roles. They are given opportunities to lead INSET in school.
19. PM have addressed CPD for middle leaders to develop the TLR role.
20. Through CPD, both my DHT and AHT are moving towards another level in their career. Headship and 'teaching teachers' as we want to become a teaching school.
21. AHT doing NPQH. New middle managers coached for leadership roles.

**HT – Headteacher**

**DHT – Deputy Head Teacher**

**AHT – Assistant Head Teacher**

**PM – Performance Management**

**TLR – Teaching and Learning Responsibility Points.**

2. What delegation and training opportunities are needed to empower people to take up headship?

1. Opportunities to lead on old and new initiatives. Good coaching and mentoring sessions.
2. Opportunities to run the school for a week while HT on residential or when HT is seconded for a term.
3. They must be given more delegation in all aspects of leadership and understand the job if they are empowered to do it properly.
4. –
5. Strategic opportunities for DH and AHT to exchange roles in other schools to gain further experience, wider understanding of the role in both positive and negative form. Suggest further funding be made available for this process.

6. The associate HT course run by the NCSL and LA was excellent. I got to shadow a HT in a VERY different school and I would recommend it to all.
7. Chance to try acting Headship. Leadership courses at different levels and job swaps between schools.
8. SLT to all take leadership pathways and middle leadership courses.
9. Work alongside a HT at a school where things run 'smoothly'. Use their skills and experience running another school through the associate HT programme.
10. Lots of opportunity to take responsibility and have leading experiences as possible.
11. Once become a DHT should visit other schools to determine differing HT leadership styles. Once become a DHT should be seconded for a month to shadow another HT who has been trained in working with newly appointed DHT. This MUST be different from their own school. Training with others schools to collaborate on finance controls, governing bodies etc. Prospective HT should be allowed off site once a month to view other schools methods of leadership.
12. More responsibility from HT to DHT. Perhaps be allowed to be acting HT one day a week. More training outside NPQH. Opportunities to spend time in other schools.
13. Coaching and mentoring. Opportunities to get a 'taste' of headship through secondment and visits to other schools. Career mapping through HT coaching sessions.
14. DSC gives opportunities for leaders to get together who have potential to be a HT. Working in collaboration/federation gives access to other skills and a wider leadership team.
15. DHT needs to be out of class more so can see everyday actions of HT. This way the DHT can be allocated meaty areas to deal with.
16. Experience different schools and see how HT deals with different situations. HT needs a clear and explicit vision that involves everyone. Consideration of budget and governors.
17. –
18. Good CPD from external advisors. Good quality coaching to develop leadership skills.
19. DHT to be properly given strong areas to be responsible for, within the school.
20. Leading new initiatives within the school. Mentoring, coaching and line managing others. Good quality and purposeful training.
21. Opportunity to develop their role within school. Time release if possible; to develop their role without fear of failure. Shadowing other SMT.

### CPD – Career Path Development (training)

3. What can make the role of Catholic Primary Headteacher more attractive to the Deputy Heads and Assistant Heads of our schools?

1. Coaching and mentoring from other HT for new HT for first three years.
2. Support from diocese for new HT if need is required. Learning mentor from another HT in a similar school.
3. To be left to get on with the job with minimal interference from outside agencies. HT is expert on their school but outside agencies believe one size fits all. HT needs confidence inducing people around them if their job is to be inspiring to others.
4. Current support from BCPP and Diocese.
5. Realistic understanding of the role. Allowing and trusting HT to lead a school from LA, DSC and unions.
6. More realistic expectations on heads. I attend all school events and there is an expectation to support others. Whilst this is rewarding, they are in addition to my working day. Where does the role I want to play with my own parish and family? Second place is the answer!
7. Leadership courses at different levels. Sharing of staff between schools e.g. job swaps.
8. Support from all staff and the governing body.

9. Time to shadow the role. Time to talk to the DHT and AHT so they know how their roles are different and yet how they merge together as the SMT.
10. Current HT to stop moaning so much!!! **Less stressful and intrusive method of inspection.**
11. **Knowing there is support from other HT especially when a school is regarded as vulnerable.** This should be part of official collaboration. We have BCPP but rigorous, hands on support for each other in difficult times are limited or non-existent.
12. **Supportive network of heads locally.** Clear expectations from GB. **Less stress and less paperwork.** Greater public acclaim about the role of a HT.
13. Meet and spend time with HT who love and enjoy their job! Opportunities to get different HT perspective on the job (positive and negative). **Specific support for the HT role.**
14. Have a go themselves. HT steps back and let others make decisions. HT to have a secondment or time out every five years. It refreshes you.
15. Change OFSTED – biggest fear factor in headship. Clear support for HT facing difficult situations. Unions only want phone conversations rather than face to face when with a HT and not an ordinary teacher.
16. **It can be 'lonely'.** **It needs a support network to make people think they're not alone.**
17. Facilitating a co-headship. Network which supports DHT information sharing and job shadowing.
18. **It's lonely and we need support from other colleagues.** Concrete advice and support (not challenge) from above is necessary. **The BCPP gives us regular support which allows for offloading.** **To reduce stress there needs to be 'time out' for 2-6 weeks every five years to strategy build.**
19. **Support for heads.**
20. To see their HT enjoying their job and getting satisfaction from it. Progression of the school in partnership with HT, staff and all stakeholders.
21. HT to be positive about their role. **Emphasize the HT is not alone.** **Governors to help , support and encourage.**

### BCPP – Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership

### GB – Governing Body

4. What could be done to solve the Catholic Primary Headteacher leadership crisis?

1. **Support groups; heads acting as coaches for each other.** **Better salaries.**
2. More detail on what the role of HT entails –perhaps people don't understand the role as HT tend to work differently.
3. **Outside agencies listening to HT and ensure that they don't have to justify everything they do.**
4. Think crisis is for HT of ALL schools. **Additional requirement that HT must be practicing Catholic limits people due to personal circumstances. It needs to be recognized that this idea is a problem.**
5. Getting the ball rolling so that DH and AHT exchange roles in other schools.
6. Job Shares.
7. **Leadership courses from an early stage focusing on Catholic leadership courses.** Opportunities to job shadow or swap. Seminars lead by HT for people interested in finding out about leadership of Catholic schools.
8. Reduce workload and **radically increase salaries.**
9. Look at HT assistance so that pay structure of 2 schools links. Allow HT to run two schools and then DHT to run day to day. Give HT new title like 'School Overall Leader'.
10. I honestly do not know!
11. Not convinced there is one. **Problems are when Catholic schools are perceived to be only Catholic in name. Where there are limited Catholic children then there is problems getting a Catholic head.** Also issues in state schools as 60% are over 55+.
12. Demands on HT. **OFSTED and their role needs to be supportive than critical.** Good HT

- as mentors for DHT. Address work life balance issues.
13. Change the existing structures in schools to allow DHT to lead teaching, learning and behaviour. Then existing HT to take responsibility of everything else but across more than one school. The answer is federations.
  14. Involve existing HT in HT discussions as they can often offer solutions.
  15. Reduce the fear factor by giving more support for HT facing difficult issues either with a staff member or standards (or both).
  16. Support Networks.
  17. Co – Headship and networks to support DHT.
  18. Unfortunately it is more Catholics which are needed so there are quantities of candidates with the right qualities. Also better support for those ready by the diocese. Acting headship or also shadowing other HT so seeing good as well as difficulties of the job.
  19. More support for people becoming HT.
  20. –
  21. I think the crisis has been resolved to some extent. There have been a number of young, new HT's been appointed recently, More tolerance from church about life-style choices.

### DEPUTY HEAD/ASSISTANT HEAD ONLY

5. What would put you off from applying for headship?

1. Family Commitments. Stress.
2. Need to do NPQH. Accountability to OFSTED and overall responsibility.
- 7 -
- 9 When the previous inspection was. Too many older staff as like to determine a balance of ages. Internal Candidate.
- 11 HUGE responsibility of being accountable for everything: finance, staffing, OFSTED, parents, standards, governors. Personally happy as DHT and don't want to change role.
- 15 Nothing. I'll apply when I want to as there are no barriers to me personally.
- 21 Not having the NPQH qualification. Being in Y6 I would find it difficult to find the time to do this qualification.

6. How do you want your Headteacher to empower you? (Please state any delegated or training areas that you may have found helped you with understanding headship).

1. Performance management training. Asking me what I feel needs/wants to develop leadership wise in the academic year.
2. My HT does empower me. NPQH is next.
- 7 -
- 9 Knowledge of legal procedures. Being an acting HT is the best thing to do. DHT should be encouraged to do this.
- 11 Opportunities to attend training pertinent for the role. Complete authority when HT out.
- 15 -
- 21 Given several opportunities already and am involved with the leadership of the school. Having key subjects allows for an active role in pupil progress, target setting and innovations.

7. Which leadership style, in your opinion, is best suited to leading a Catholic Primary School?

1.	Different situations require different styles.
2.	Delegating of responsibility to SMT but still one clear leader to all staff.
7	Someone who sees the job as a vocation, not a career. Someone who is child centered not egocentric. Leader of a community team rather than 'the boss'. Collaborator rather than someone who works in isolation. Reflective rather than reactive.
9	Distributed so you can enable others to take ownership and rise to the challenge.
11	Distributive leadership.
15	Since all Catholic schools have own contexts and require different focuses, it would not be sensible to suggest a particular leadership style. Much better to be skilled in a variety.
21	A firm but compassionate style. Have high expectations of staff and pupils, yet understand the circumstances. You need to never give up on anyone within the school community.

8. How can succession planning help with ensuring a continued supply of people to lead a Catholic Primary School?

1.	It can help because it allows serving HT to consider leadership potential and plan for future training and development needs.
2.	It encourages young people for the future.
7	Ensures schools can continue to thrive despite losing people for promotion. Always another tier of people coming through. Equips people with skills to take on leadership. Develops links between schools and network of support. In modeling succession planning you develops your future leaders through nurture and they'll continue for the future leaders.
11	It can serve to give people a taste of what the role is like years in advance of when an opportunity to take on the role arises. Prospective candidates can look at areas they need to develop in order to hit the floor running when they take on HT role.
15	Appropriate succession planning will create a bank of qualified and competent personnel to move into senior roles. It's also about recognizing the people who also are not suitable!
21	It is really important that the Catholic life of our school continues. We need people who are passionate about education and faith to make Catholic schools stand out from the rest/ Catholic teachers in Birmingham should aspire to become Catholic heads.

**THANK YOU FOR FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**



## Appendix 3

**Questionnaire on Leadership within the Primary Catholic Sector within the West Midlands.**

The attached questionnaire is part of a doctoral thesis on leadership of a Catholic School. In 2006 the National College of School Leadership 'Recruiting Head Teachers and Senior Leaders' document surveyed teaching staff and found that *"43% of deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders do not aspire to be a head teacher"*. I (Rachel Gould) am interested in finding out what (if any) are the reasons for the lack of uptake of headship especially within the local Catholic Primary sector.

The questionnaire should take fifteen minutes and is specifically for heads, deputies and assistant heads.

The research has the authorization of Paul Walmsley, Head of the Primary Catholic Partnership. The information will be confidential and the findings will be anonymous. The information generated will be used in the data analysis section of my thesis. The research findings will be collated into a report that will be presented at a head teacher briefing in late 2013, when the thesis is complete.

The thesis is part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership course at The Education Department, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston and the supervisor contact is Doctor Thomas Bisschoff

[REDACTED]

Please return the questionnaires by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Mrs. Rachel Gould.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Instructions for completing the questionnaire

Please read each question carefully and circle the response that best represents your answer. In Section C some questions are specific to identifying factors about headship.

**SECTION A**

1. Your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

2. How old are you?

22-30      31-40      41-50      51-60      61+

3. What is your present school position?

Head Teacher	1
Acting Head Teacher	2
Deputy Head Teacher	3
Acting Deputy Head Teacher	4
Assistant Head	5
Acting Assistant Head	6

4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

25 years
----------

5. How many years have you been in your present post?

5 years
---------

6. What degree(s) do you hold?

Cert Ed	
B.Ed	X
BA (QTS)	
B.Sc (QTS)	
PGCE	
M.Ed/MA	
PHD/EdD	
Other (please specify)...	

7. Do you have the NPQH award?

Yes	X
No	
Currently working on gaining the award.	

8. Which one of the following best describes the type of school at which you are currently teaching?

Small Village School	
One form entry Primary School	X
Two form entry Primary School	
Three form entry Primary School	

9. What is the predominate socio-economic status of your catchment area?

High/Affluent	
Above average	
Average	
Below average	
Low (deprivation area)	X

10. When was the last OFSTED?

2008-2009

11. What was the outcome of the last OFSTED?

Outstanding	
Good	X
Satisfactory	
Notice to improve	

**Section B****Example.**

Provide your opinion by highlighting the number of your choice on the 5 point scale for each question where:

- 11 = Not important
- 12 = Fairly important
- 13 = Equal importance
- 14 = Important
- 15 = Very important

**HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT THE SCHOOL LEADER:**

1. Delegates and shares leadership roles in school?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Creates a working environment where all leaders have a say?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Empowers others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Trusts others to lead?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Assist in choosing CPD to allow for leadership roles to be developed?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Has had experience of 'acting headship' before taking on the headship role?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Please rank the following (one the most important to ten the least important):**

1.What factors hinder people from taking on headship roles?

Stress	6
Accountability to stakeholders	2
Workload levels	5
Family Commitments	3
Salary	10
OFSTED and LA initiatives	1
Religious Clergy	9
Unrealistic expectations	8
Disgruntled parents	7
Sense of isolation	4

## 2. What motivates people to become a head teacher?

Succession Planning initiatives	6
NPQH Award	7
Religious Clergy	9
Family Encouragement	3
Role model of previous Headteacher	8
Job Fulfillment	1
Acting Headship	4
Coaching and Mentoring	5
Salary	10
Good experience when in the deputy role	2

**SECTION C**

## 1. Is there any succession planning in place at your school (if so what exactly)?

There is nothing specific at school. Unlike anyone else at my school my assistant head want to be a head teacher but the deputy doesn't want to. There is another member of the middle leaders who would like to be a deputy but in the area local to the school - as she has family commitments. It makes the options fairly limited for getting people to take over from me! The only choice the assistant head has is to move school if he has any chance of being a deputy.

## 2. What delegation and training opportunities are needed to empower people to take up headship?

Once a person becomes a deputy head, I feel it's important to visit other schools to determine differing head teacher leadership styles. I think that within the first six months of becoming a deputy you should be seconded to shadow the work of another head teacher who has been trained in working with newly appointed deputies. This MUST be different from your own school to gain a different perspective. I think it's important to gain training with other schools to collaborate

on finance controls, governing bodies etc.

Alternatively, prospective head teachers should be allowed off site to visit other schools and see different methods and styles of leadership.

Shadowing other positions could empower people to take on the head teacher position.

3. What can make the role of Catholic Primary Headteacher more attractive to the Deputy Heads and Assistant Heads of our schools?

Having moved the school from 'satisfactory' to 'good' there should be support from other head teachers when a school is regarded as vulnerable. This should be part of official collaboration. We have the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership but rigorous, hands on support for each other in difficult times is limited or non-existent.

4. What could be done to solve the Catholic Primary Headteacher leadership crisis?

I'm not sure there is one really. There are mainly problems with recruitment when a school is perceived to be only Catholic in name. Where the school has limited Catholic children then there can be problems in recruiting a head. Also when I go to heads meetings, so many are older than me and I believe there are around 60% of 55 years olds who are heads. This won't help with recruitment to headship but there are people who want to do the job so I'm not sure there is a leadership crisis.

#### **DEPUTY HEAD/ASSISTANT HEAD ONLY**

5. What would put you off from applying for headship?

The HUGE responsibility of being accountable for everything within the school. Such worries include finance, staffing, OFSTED, parents, standards and governors. Personally I am happy as the deputy and I have no intention to change my role. I do not want to become a head. I have access to many of the areas already and am happy to remain in a teaching capacity.

6. How do you want your Headteacher to empower you? (Please state any delegated or training areas that you may have found helped you with understanding headship).

My head leaves me in charge when she goes out and then I have complete authority. I think being given opportunities to attend any leadership training is pertinent for my role.

7. Which leadership style, in your opinion, is best suited to leading a Catholic Primary School?

The only style is distributive leadership.

8. How can succession planning help with ensuring a continued supply of people to lead a Catholic Primary School?

Succession planning can serve to give people a taste of what a role is like years in advance of when an opportunity arises. Prospective candidates can look at areas they need to develop in order to hit the floor running when they do take up the head teacher role.

**THANK YOU FOR FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**



## Appendix Four

## Interview Questions

1. Why do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?
2. How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?
3. How could the NPQH award be improved to show the realities of headship?
4. What, in your opinion, is putting people off applying to be a head teacher and how can we encourage younger people to take on this role?
5. In the questionnaire responses, acting headship was seen as a way forward with the leadership crisis. What is your opinion of acting headship and how could this be encouraged?
6. In the questionnaire 'workload levels', 'OFSTED' and 'family Commitments' were the main factors for hindering taking up headship. Why are these issues seen as the reasons for not apply for headship, do you think? What contributes to workload levels?
7. Salary is not viewed as a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic school. Why do you think this is?
8. The reasons for a person becoming a head teacher were found to be 'good experience as a deputy', 'acting headship experience' and 'job fulfilment'. How can we ensure leaders have these experiences? How long should acting headship be (if it is considered)?
9. What can the Catholic Church do, in relation to succession planning, to ensure a constant supply of Catholic Heads? Or is this the Head Teacher's responsibility?
10. What opportunities should senior/middle leaders be given to ensure they become Catholic Heads?

## Appendix Five

## Interview Number Eight – 'J' Deputy Head teacher

## 1. Why do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?

Erm, I think its people's perceptions of the role. Deputy role is busy anyway and depending on how well you work as a team with your head teacher, how much you see the role and your expectations ,you think do I want more of this or is it harder? For me it's the responsibility of the whole thing. Erm, making all those decisions and the buck stops with you is what puts me off. As a head it can be a lonely job and I don't want that. Mostly it comes down to the personalities you've worked with. Also looking around at the different styles of head teachers and thinking 'am I like that person'. There are about three categories of head teachers and they're all got different ways of running their schools and expectations of staff. So they're lot of factors and really it comes down to who you've worked with and whether they've motivated you.

## 2. How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?

I think it's a question of nurturing people and giving them support. They've got to want to take on more responsibility and take on more in the school. Some may want to stop below a deputy and because they enjoy the teaching aspect are happy with a TLR and so on. It's the next step. It depends if you want to stay as a coordinator and then more the next step to deputy. It's an even

bigger step and massive decision to then become the head. I think it depends on the personality of yourself and the self-belief that you could do the job.

3. How could the NPQH award be improved to show the realities of headship?

I did once go for and I didn't apply correctly and so now I think I don't see the point in doing it if my end goal isn't to become a head teacher. I did a master's degree which I found discussing the different roles and expectations enjoyable. I then did a PGCE in the SENCO role too.

*(Do you think then the NPQH should be equivalent to a master's degree then?)*

I think initially the NPQH came out and loads of people completed it successfully. Then very few went on to headship. Was it jumping through hoops and then was it a worthwhile experience? It has changed again then to shadowing. The feeling was that modules would be better for headship. I learnt more about standards and expectations from doing a masters' which has helped my role as a deputy. If the NPQH gave you teacher standards, monitoring, observation techniques as core modules then it would be a worthwhile.

4. What, in your opinion, is putting people off applying to be a head teacher and how can we encourage younger people to take on this role?

I think you have to be very self-confident in your style of how to lead. The buck stops with you and from discussions with other deputies if you get on with your head and 'allowed' (if that's the right word) to be an integral part of a trusted relationship erm that's what many of us like. Some then think erm I

can do that better so then if you have the self-confidence you should consider moving up. If you have any niggles but from my point of view I don't have the confidence. It can be nurtured a bit more, you have to really want to do it. Nobody can force you to do it.

5. In the questionnaire responses, acting headship was seen as a way forward with the leadership crisis. What is your opinion of acting headship and how could this be encouraged?

Sometimes I get emails from the diocese and I hit delete because again if you were thinking of getting a headship that is a way forward. As long as while you're acting you get appropriate support. I would say ideally to get a whole year under your belt so gives the depth and breadth of the academic year.

6. In the questionnaire 'workload levels', 'OFSTED' and 'family Commitments' were the main factors for hindering taking up headship. Why are these issues seen as the reasons for not apply for headship, do you think? What contributes to workload levels?

I think the workload as a deputy is enough without doing a head's too! Some deputies have a class, some are a SENCO and some schools' depend on assistant head. It depends also on the size and the leadership structure. If you think the workload is huge do you then think 'how on earth can I fit in running a school?' Others will say it's not quite such as huge. You are the head teacher and it's rare they teach or have additional roles. You are the leader so therefore you delegate responsibilities. Many aspects of the school life has to be down to the head. So actually I don't think it's the workload. For me it's the responsibility and wanting to do the job. I don't want to do it as I don't think it's for me. There are young teachers who are working their way up and their path is set. I think it's quite rare. Some deputies apply for many headships and then are overlooked so don't bother. Overall it's about wanting to do the job and you can't be forced into it.

7. Salary is not viewed as a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic school. Why do you think this is?

What I understand is there is flexibility by governors that if they're keen on somebody they can make the job more worthwhile and maybe in Catholic schools it's not the be all and end all to money. In the Catholic sector there is a strong feeling of wanting to lead and share the faith. You need a good salary and it's not so important.

8. The reasons for a person becoming a head teacher were found to be 'good experience as a deputy', 'acting headship experience' and 'job fulfilment'. How can we ensure leaders have these experiences? How long should acting headship be (if it is considered)?

Erm, that's a good question. I think again it's fulfilment is a lot to do with relationships. It's important that you believe in your faith and that you want to do the best for the children and the parents and your staff, really. I don't know how you can change. If you have positive feedback from staff and deal with staff and parents well. So the feedback comes in that they trust you and then the children like you, that's job fulfilment. It's the reactions from others. If you get a lot of negatives, a person wanting to leave the school, is it you as the head that's making the school shift in the wrong direction?

Job fulfilment is positive relationships with all and children following their own individual path.

9. What can the Catholic Church do, in relation to succession planning, to ensure a constant supply of Catholic Heads? Or is this the Head teacher's responsibility?

Having been in a parish where there doesn't seem to be or appears to be little outward support, so the priest doesn't call to determine the children unless it's Mass. That again, that feeling that you're valued. So if the parish priest doesn't appear to value you or not appear to want to make any relationship with the children or parents then it's very difficult. Having said that some priests don't find it easy to form relationships with children. However if they are part of the community this can change. The priest need to be accessible then it would encourage more Catholic children into teaching. Leadership is hard without church support as there will be very limited succession planning without them

10. What opportunities should senior/middle leaders be given to ensure they become Catholic Heads?

Opportunities? Erm I hope as part of their role they get chances to take responsibilities for subject areas and take staff meetings. I hope others seek their advice so they're positive role models. It's the SMT who need to facilitate that through nurturing and giving training. Part of performance management, especially having high expectations of TLR's so they feel they can take a risk. Again, it's senior leaders who need to know their staff's career path, so if they want to stay in the classroom, they can. Who wants to move on can be supported. If they've been in KS1 they try KS2. Trying roles, like leading from the middle courses but I'm not sure of it's value. You give a presentation but it's don't worry if you haven't done this or that. It's the wrong message as people have to take responsibility to do the extra work. Something again inside you says 'I want to do it and I will do it well'.

*Thank you very much for taking part in the interview.*

## Appendix Six

### Interview Questions (Round Two)

After the questionnaire there were some areas that needed further discussion. The following questions are to gain your feelings about some themes that have emerged.

1. Do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?
2. How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?
3. Do you feel the NPQH award needs improving to show the realities of headship?
4. What, in your opinion, is putting people off applying to be a headteacher and how can we encourage younger people to take on this role?

5. In the questionnaire responses, there was a range of strategies discussed as a way forward to help with the leadership crisis. Can you give any strategies that you think would help the situation?

*Probe - What is your opinion of acting headship and how could this be encouraged?*

6. In the questionnaire factors for hindering the taking up headship were discussed. What in your opinion hinder the take up for headship?

*Probe - What contributes to workload levels?*

7. What do you feel is not a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic school. Why do you think this is?

*Probe – Does salary influence decisions for promotion in a catholic school?*

8. Why do you think people become head teachers? How can we ensure leaders have these experiences?
9. What can the Catholic Church do, in relation to succession planning, to ensure a constant supply of Catholic Heads? Or is this the Head Teacher's responsibility?
10. What opportunities should senior/middle leaders be given to ensure they become Catholic Heads?

## Appendix Seven

### Interview Review



- *After Viva (February 2014) there was a change of some questions for interviews 11-15. The changes are in italics.*

1. Why do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?

- It's a big commitment, not just in the day but also at the weekend and people having that work life balance and er having the **ultimate responsibility** (1).
- **Catholic schools** are renowned for being good or outstanding so there is **pressure there** and rightly so! It has to be good or outstanding, there isn't room for any complacency erm but again if you go into **being a head of a requires improvement or special measures school you have pressure there** and I just think people don't want that **responsibility** any more (1).
- I think it's the **expectations** to do and be everything. That's the main thing as that **responsibility can be overwhelming** (2).
- I think it's because of the **increased accountability** of the head (3).
- You have to be proven to be a **very good Catholic**. The **expectations are now very steep**. They expect you to be **working within the** church, as well (3).
- I think we've got a leadership crisis anyway because I think that the noises that come out of government are not helping! Everything else makes it a difficult proposition to be an erm effective head teacher and erm as you know you have to work at it constantly and a lot of things are out of your grasp (4).
- **You used to be able to mould your staff and get the ethos the right way**, you've now got to not just mould but put them into a specific mould to make sure that the mould is tight and that everyone fits into it. So **you are accountable so much more now for everybody else** (4).
- **There are less and less practising Catholics** around and less and less people who want to become heads anyway! (4).

- Deputy headship, people see that as a good place to get to these days, they see headship as a real difficulty unless they are really driven (4).
- I just don't think people want the added pressure of the role these days. People don't want the hassle (5).
- Another is the pressure of being a practising Catholic. This has an impact as there are less practising Catholics nowadays, less young people going to church, so it's having a knock on effect (6).
- Not convinced there is one but feel it's a different quality that fills positions (7)
- People's perceptions of the role (8) and it's the responsibility and expectations (8)
- People don't want the ultimate responsibilities of Headship. Some Catholic schools are in difficult inner city areas and have a low number of Catholics. Catholic Headship carries extra responsibilities involving the Catholic faith and sacramental preparation (9).
- That's quite hard one to fully answer. There could be a few reasons. Just looking at the hours that I do could put people off (10).
- (11-15) Do you think we have a leadership crisis in Catholic primary schools?
- I don't think it's just Catholic Primary schools; it's across the board in schools. Primary schools especially and particularly one form entry schools (11).
- Most definitely! They are struggling to get head teachers, particularly catholic head teachers and the deputy heads just from being here and seeing people the number of people who came to look round for the deputy head position there was hardly any takers. So I'd say that deputy head position is an issue as well (12).
- There is a problem with Catholic schools having leaders. A leader commands and inspires another group of people and the Catholic school appears not to be attracting the right people. There is an issue with people not wanting to

take on the ultimate role and I think it's down to life choice. People don't want the ultimate responsibility and so without people being encouraged into the senior role there will be a leadership crisis and if you've got a hiccup in your faith (such as divorce) this stops your progression anyway. (13).

- Headship is like a premiership manager, one mistake with OFSTED and you lose your job (13).
- I wouldn't be surprised if there is a leadership crisis with all the changes that have come in since the Conservative government coming in with the extra stresses and pressures that have been put upon leaders (14).
- Crisis is a strong word. Let's say that there is a cause for concern as there is schools in special measures being run by non Catholic deputies because people are not stepping up to running a school (15).

## 2. How can we encourage people into senior roles in Catholic schools?

- You've got to lead by example and show staff that you can have a life outside of school and you've got to inspire them. See the good in them and the job (1).
- Having a link with another school helps and allows the deputy or senior leader to bounce ideas off one another. This gives them development, professionally (1).
- The NPQH has helped me and I think it does hone you in to thinking about headship; looking at different styles of leadership. It makes you look at your own skills (2).
- I think its good succession planning a lot earlier on. So... middle leadership programmes planned for after the NQT year. As soon as possible (3).
- It's effective delegation too (3).
- I think you have to nurture the people within your school and give them the positive outlook about the job (4).
- Then you have to give the staff the skills and knowledge and begin to give more and more responsibilities to give impact (4).

- Give the senior leadership roles the opportunities to experience what it's like to be a leader in a school. Like work shadowing so that people can see the actual role before they decide to take the plunge and decide it's what I want to do (5).
- People see too much hassle in the role, too much red tape, now there's a view that you are isolated in the role. There's a lot to be said about shared leadership (5).
- I think the courses that are out there are really good. I think sending people on the leadership CPD courses encourage people to take on senior role (6).
- Also because of the nature of the job many people need to know that they are going to have a work life balance because they don't have much being a class teacher (6).
- Need to experience other school, such as a school placement scheme for half a term so it's not such a culture shock to be a head (7)
- It's nurturing people and the self-belief that you can do the job (8).
- Mentorship for prospective head teachers to give them an understanding of the roles and responsibilities (9) .
- I think the head has to model the good aspects of the job. At every heads meeting all I hear is moaning! This does not give people the impression it's a good job to do. I think people have to be coached to do roles. Shadow other people and see what leadership is like (10).
- I think CPD is key but I think it should be distributed through a career and not all at once. So that people can become good at what they do, each stage of what they do and not okay at lots of things (11).
- I think we've got to show that it's something worth striving for. At the moment with everything that is going on the core values of being a Catholic seem to go out of the window. Management becomes harder to focus on your faith because you have so much else to focus on (12).
- As you move up the faith is being diluted not because of the individual but because of the sheer pressure that is put on them (12).

- Often this is down to the head themselves. They see you as having the potential and give you the opportunities. It's called talent spotting in the business world (13).
- The heads though need to stop moaning! I've been at meetings where there's so much negativity. This doesn't inspire me to want to progress (13).
- Not being given loads of roles all at once but support with small steps. In stages, so they can become experts in those stages and roles which will make them feel more confident in their own jobs and feel they can do senior roles (14).
- Some form of mentoring and shadowing is the only way to really think about this. BUT, there is no substitute for experience (15).

### 3. How could the NPQH award be improved to show the realities of headship?

- Shadowing a head for a longer period of time (1)
- Have an approved acting head scheme (1)
- Acting headship should be a requirement of NPQH (2)
- How to deal with exclusions, application forms, interviews (2)
- How to make an impact in interviews (3)
- Work Shadowing of another head, longer than two weeks (3)
- It needs adjusting so more on the job, shadowing on a regular basis for at least six weeks (4)
- Work shadowing, like the GTP, so seconded for a term and not two weeks (5)
- Need training in leafy suburbs and inner city as parents are different so skills required will be different (5)
- You need training on how to equip yourself with change (5)

- I think we need to know more about budgets. It is mentioned but is pushed to the side a lot. It is something we have done as a SMT but on courses it's not given a lot of emphasis (6)
- Put the people in the job for a couple of days a week. So they are actually doing it before they take the role on. So they have experience and so it's not so much of a shock when they actually get one. You know maybe they should do acting headship before they actually do the job (6)
- Needs to be a school headteacher placement scheme but not at your place of work and for that school to ability to recommend the person (7)
- You need the scheme to deal with finances and parents (7)
- I think the NPQH should be at master's degree level with different roles and expectations incorporated so you know the SENCO roles etc (8)
- The NPQH should have shadowing, monitoring of teachers, teacher standards and observation techniques as core modules then it would be more worthwhile (8)
- To work alongside existing heads for help and support of their application (9)
- Shadowing a head for at least half a term (10)
- Work to do: attend governor meetings, monitor staff and talk with finance (10)
- I think it's very good as a qualification; the only thing I could think of is interviewing a potential head, maybe in a role as an OFSTED inspector to determine the realities and the pressures that come with that (11).
- I don't really know about the award and so I couldn't possibly comment unless I purely guessed (12).
- I have completed the NPQH award a while ago and I'm a statistic for one who didn't become a head. The award doesn't show the role of head enough (13).
- Governors was a short session and they have so much power in a school it's frightening! How to run the finances and remain in budget is key to running a

school. If you've had experience outside school then that's a real advantage as you don't in a senior leader's role and that's wrong (13).

- I think that you need longer in another school. Two weeks is just a paper filling exercise. Six months secondment would show the realities of school leadership as a job share head (13).
- I don't know very much about the award, in fact anything about the award (14).
- I don't know enough about NPQH. I am singularly uninterested in doing this qualification at the moment in time and as it's not compulsory I doubt the future generation of deputies will bother with the qualification (15).

4. What, in your opinion, is putting people off applying to be a headteacher and how can we encourage younger people to take on this role?

- Ultimate responsibility, pressures of the job (1)
- Perceptions by the media, hassle from parents, governors, media and the diocese(1)
- It's not a nine to five job, it includes weekends and people don't want it (1)
- Didn't think about the role when applied to be a deputy and after five years it's time to consider headship (2)
- Pay... in a two form entry school to become a head I could earn less. The responsibility is not worth it for the money (2)
- Dealing with the problems really get to you and I don't need it (2)
- Work life balance and the expectations where the goal posts are changed (3)

- You've got to think of your family... this job is a massive, big ask if you've got children (3)
- The accountability and the buck stopping with the head (4)
- You've got to prove you can lead a school in two hours, half a day and that's not practical. You show it on paper and over half a day. That needs adjusting (4)
- Pressure of OFSTED. You're not trusted to do the job and constantly being observed and watched for failure (5)
- The numerical pay rise isn't worth the actual hassle (5)
- I think applying to be a headteacher is that first step, isn't it? Because once you apply you're committing yourself to the whole process of if you get an interview you've got to accept the job if they offer it to you. So I think people are being choosier about where they apply to (6).
- OFSTED puts so much pressure on schools, especially if you have previously gained 'satisfactory'. It's having an impact as there is no middle ground anymore(6).
- The whole interview and recruitment process is one of the main ones. It's never a nice process and there will be sleepless nights beforehand (7).
- There are a few people who never want to put themselves up for the whole process... as they like their safety cushion of being able to go higher for a decision (7).
- The main reason is OFSTED. People don't want the rigors and rigmarole of OFSTED... the deputies don't want the added pressure (7).
- The buck stops with you and you have to be self- confident (8).
- Nobody can force you to do it and I don't have the confidence (8).
- Taking on the ultimate responsibility for education and the Catholic life of a school (9).



- There is not a financial incentive for taking on a smaller school if you're a two or three form deputy (9).
- Work life balance as many deputies have young families (10).
- There's a fear of the job... sometimes you have to be a showman and it's easier to stay in the background (10).
- Application process can be off putting. Visit to school is informal interview, observation, then presentation and finally interview. If there's an internal candidate it can put you off. You have to really want the job (10).
- Lack of support from the local authority or in Catholic schools the RE Department maybe. You seem to be just left to it. It seems that once you become a head then that's it. There doesn't seem to be much support. Staffing issues to deal with... Schools don't run like a business but that's what you're supposed to run it as – a business (11).
- OFSTED is a big issue and a huge deterrent. The unrealistic challenges that are put onto head teachers. Not just from OFSTED but also the day to day progress that every child has to make – it's never a fair playing field. The goal posts are always moved and that's making it hard. The threat of OFSTED and when you get them and then the result afterward is often demoralising (12).
- When you are looking at what a head teacher has to do give you no encouragement to strive for that. Especially if it goes wrong and jobs are on the line. Times are worrying (12).
- I think OFSTED is the main thing affecting younger people's choice to move up the career ladder. We don't hear anything other than OFSTED and we as primary school teachers... I already know what my workload is and when you're accountable for everything I just think the workload and the reason why you are doing it gets pushed to one side. It's paperwork and justifying what you do and what your staff do all the time. I think that's a big deterrent (12).
- OFSTED! We don't hear anything other than OFSTED and as a primary school assistant head my life is dominated by the requirements for OFSTED.

The new regime from September 2013 is horrific. The inspectors dig so hard that you feel inadequate even if the school turns out to be okay (13).

- The higher up you go, the more accountable you are and most people don't want it. I want the job satisfaction, not the extra stress (13).
- Workload and accountability of heads puts me off. I've seen the weight fall off my head as we're in inspection year and quite frankly you can keep it. I'm stressed proving my children are progressing and filling in data forms so God only knows what it's like further up but I don't want to know (13).
- In the media, at the moment, there is so much to do with education that is so negative with the new government and the constant changes. The media doesn't show the realities of the workload for teachers (14).
- A thankless task that is unsupported. There are no support structures that I can see to support people (15).
- There are plenty of people who are young who aspire to be a senior leader. Then, when they see the reality, they decide to give up! I can give you the names/emails of people who have become entirely disillusioned by it all (15).

5. In the questionnaire responses, acting headship was seen as a way forward with the leadership crisis. What is your opinion of acting headship and how could this be encouraged?

- Before you go into headship you need to put your foot in otherwise it's a big shock (1).
- Acting headship pushed me to address parents in a formal way and I need to do more of that (2).
- I think it's a good idea... and should be for a year to determine the school cycle (3).
- You have to put the years in as a deputy (I did six) before acting headship (3).

- Acting headship, acting anything is good, so you can gain experience (4).
- Acting headship is great so long as you have support as you could make a real mess of things. The Catholic partnership and diocese must help (4).
- It's a fantastic idea! The more encouragement to try it, the better (5).
- Deputies and assistant heads need to be trained up so they can do the job (5).
- I do think acting headship is a way forward, I think it's a good way of people realising they can do a job (6)
- People can see they can do the job. It may not be as hard as they imagined, or possibly seem to be. They should do half to a full year to determine what it's like (6)
- There are many people who get into headship who really shouldn't be a head and acting headship can have a get out clause (6).
- It's got to have feasibility to it as fifty four deputies acting up at the same time couldn't work (7).
- Deputies need to do a practise in another school as part of a Catholic element to the NPQH where a practise headship is an element rather than acting headship (7).
- If you act up, the diocese needs to give you support. If you do it then the year should be taken (8).
- Acting headship is a good idea but sometimes is difficult if someone has spent a long time in the same school. Accountability can be questioned (9).
- It's a great idea. A year is enough to give a feel of budgets, governors and parents but longer than that could cause the school unnecessary worry (10).
- (11-15) *In the questionnaire responses, there was a range of strategies discussed as a way to encourage people to move into headship. Can you think of a possible strategy?*

- Acting headship – again if you're given the support it would be a good journey into headship but you need a good model to work alongside. Erm continuous support throughout your acting headship would help. It's a way forward but needs careful planning (11).
  - I think what we see from my experience what's lacking is a support network for head teachers. Unfortunately, as a catholic school system that has to be the fault of the diocese. I think that you need to determine that headship support is in place (12).
  - Acting headship in partnership with another head is a possible strategy too. I think acting headship is fine so long as it works for the school and the support is there but once in the permanent position the support is taken away then you've not been given a true assessment of what the role is going to be (12).
  - Acting headship could be the answer. It needs to be a structured programme to work though. Sometimes I think until we know what the job is like we avoid doing it (13).
  - I think a way forward is for the media to leave the profession alone (13).
  - People's opinions on education, a lot of people's opinions on education is negative so it'd be great to hear good examples of good practice in an environment where you are appreciated and where they can see people reaping the rewards for having to work that hard (14).
  - I think that acting headship makes sense (14).
  - Directed support would be an improvement and really important past the first year. Mentoring for three years should be a minimum (15).
  - Acting Headship is one solution to the problem but if there needs to be more support for those in the role (15).
6. In the questionnaire 'workload levels', 'OFSTED' and 'family Commitments' were the main factors for hindering taking up headship. Why are these issues

seen as the reasons for not apply for headship, do you think? What contributes to workload levels?

OFSTED contribute to the workload levels because there's before an inspection, you know, as you're waiting for inspection you're geared up all the time as well as the stuff that comes with the day. It's the stress levels as well!(1)

The workload is the paperwork. I'm a governor at another school too and other additional meetings are more nights out that are not yours. It's often seven in the morning until ten at night and back up at five the next day! It's like Groundhog Day! (1)

It's the number of emails and phone calls you have to make. Erm, CAF's, I'm leading three at the moment! All of that. It's, it's the amount of meetings you have to go to and the time. Others have their PPA time but you don't get that, that's the thing. Undisturbed time? Nothing is undisturbed in leadership (2).

I think it's the extra expectations, such as the governor meetings and things like that (3).

It seems to me that when you first go into headship no one really gets in touch with you (3).

The workload is, can be immense. However, I do think workload in all areas of the school has increased immeasurably (4).

Do I work at home? Of course I do! You have to be seen to do your job and then move on. You have to show you can do it and it's difficult but you have to do it (4).

As a Head you have to know the school policies, making sure people do their job properly, governors. I just think it's the amount of paperwork that we have to do and it's getting worse. I think dedicated head teacher time that none of us take, should be taken into account from the start (4).

Yeah, I think it depends as some people think of headship as a very lonely position and everything is on your shoulders (5).

Workload levels? It's loads of things, extra pressures. In our scenario, a Catholic school, we have a lot more commitments in regards to First Holy Communion and Confirmation and thing like that. Parish, School Masses is another example. In some respects it may be a workload level specific to being a Catholic (5).

Main factor of workload levels is the paperwork that you do. It's ridiculous!(6)

Family commitments, you know someone like me with two young children I spend enough time away from them as it is without wanting to spend anymore. I mean they only get me at weekends (6).

I think ultimately it's the paperwork and the amount of meetings headteachers have to go too. Then on top of that is the Catholic School we have all the extra Masses etc (6).

Workload levels are down to delegation. I've always delegated reasonably well and not tried to involve myself in every facet of what is going on (7).

OFSTED, I've got to say this area is top of my list. I find the whole OFSTED year horrendous. You're not yourself in the OFSTED year as you have too much accountability (7).

It's huge as a deputy! If you think the workload is huge do you then think 'how on earth can I fit in running a school?' (8)

The accountability of Headship people may feel they don't want to take on the ultimate responsibility just yet with the new regime of Ofsted and if they have a young family (9).

Workload levels are not constant. I have mad, crazy weeks and then quiet ones where I'm walking the school a lot (10).

*(11.15) In the questionnaire factors for hindering the taking up headship were discussed. What in your opinion hinder the take up for headship?*

Workload levels are contributed to by government, OFSTED, the way things change every two minutes but might not be relevant to the classroom. This is added stress that teachers and leaders don't need (11).

OFSTED now is a big hindrance and it will continue to be. It's bad enough on the shop floor but when you're accountable for absolutely everything particularly with our experience of parents and OFSTED it's not something I'd want to do so I will remain a middle leader. Also how everything changes so often (12).

OFSTED is first. Accountability is second and third has to be the juggling between my family and school. Full time is the only option for me but I sometimes worry I don't spend the right amount of time with my children (13).

The stress and pressure. The obstacles from people who have an opinion but don't necessarily know the job and what the job involves. People making judgements when you have done the right thing but still those people have an opinion, I'm talking about parents now especially (14).

I guess there must be an expectation of having had experience of having been part of a strong leadership team and how the workload has been evenly given out and delegated (14).

OFSTED - Readiness to sack staff. There is too much pressure and quite frankly I don't want it and I think I'll be a long term deputy (15).

Every element of school now has to be measurable. Too many government initiatives – eg wraparound care, pupil premium, sport premium etc. All of these have to show progress for every pupil and this is an impossibility as not



all children are the same. The initiatives keep coming and we don't get a chance to catch up (15).

7. Salary is not viewed as a major factor in headship applications, of a Catholic school. Why do you think this is?

I certainly didn't look at the salary or the leadership scale when I applied here. You know you want to be a head of a good or an outstanding Catholic school. It's the credibility, the standards and I think I want to be part of that erm the community as well (1)

As head of a Catholic school you're there to serve really. You are not there to be served. As head of a Catholic school you have to go last and put everyone else first and it may sound contradictory but you're not there to be put on a pedestal (1).

Catholic school is about mission, isn't it? You've there for a greater reason, aren't you? Because you've been given that opportunity and I think there's a little bit of Catholic guilt there as well. It's your responsibility... that's what I feel (2).

I think it's because this job is a vocation, obviously. You don't go into Catholic headship lightly, do you? It has to be something you want (3).

Actually, I think the money in teaching is really good. I think sometimes teachers if they go into teaching straight from college forget the real world. Especially as teacher pay incrementally goes up and so they have this expectation of not putting in too much work in and gaining high rewards (3).

Catholic faith is not about salary but I do love my job. We all do it for the Catholic faith. Would I turn down a huge pay rise? For the school, probably.

The money needs to be spent on the kids and being spent on me doesn't help them at all. It won't help me do the job any better. I still work hard regardless (4).

No! I don't think it's a major factor as I think it's a status to be ahead of a Catholic school. So I don't think salary plays a big part and I think it's just the headship role is more the workload issues and the isolation that are more factors. (5).

I think it's because most people who become Heads are not thinking about money but about the children that they potentially will help and the impact they'll have on their lives. I don't think people who take up headship are worried about money but always about the Catholic children and that's why it's not a major factor. They think about how to support the future generation of our country and our faith (6).

I think it's because we're not badly paid, to be honest. Where I do think it's an issue is when you take over another school, school or as a federation headship then it concerns me then the level of pay doesn't reflect this (7).

In the Catholic sector there is a strong feeling of wanting to lead and share the faith. You need a good salary but it's not so important (8).

To want to be a Head teacher of a Catholic school and all the extra responsibilities that brings you will already have a strong faith which will inform your decision more than financial reward (9).

I'm a Catholic and I want to be a missionary to the children in my school. I'm paid well, really and so salary is not really an issue. Children is my priority and money comes way down the list (10).

Publicity and the news. Bad experiences of people that you know. There haven't been many people that have gone into headship that would encourage others to do it because of the added stress of the workload. There's not much salary incentive that matches the stresses that the workload increase would justify (11).

In some schools the salary isn't much different to me as a middle leader and that's wrong. It should be on the role and not the children who count and the area you work in (11).

I think any promotion then salary is important. I think you'd be naive if you didn't. That's what many people strive towards and especially if you have to do a lot more work you would expect some recognition, some hope you'd be rewarded for it. I use the word hope there deliberately (12).

The heads I know want to impart their religion on the future generation. *'the salary the heads see their role as a vocation'* I also know that salary isn't a consideration, the pay doesn't match the workload increase but it doesn't matter to heads as they see the role as a vocation (13).

I do believe though if you have a tough school you should be given extra money to support the challenges this brings (13).

There is obviously a higher salary which I'm sure differs from head teacher to head teacher and that would be an incentive to most. As far as what they don't regard as important, I don't know. For those teachers who do it because they are so passionate about it the salary isn't important; it doesn't matter (14).

A high salary is only good if you know you're going to be in a job after a year, especially as OFSTED is so good at wrecking people's careers if the judgement goes against you. I think you, erm, you have to have high stress thresholds as the role is demanding whatever your position (15).

8. The reasons for a person becoming a headteacher were found to be 'good experience as a deputy', 'acting headship experience' and 'job fulfilment'. How can we ensure leaders have these experiences? How long should acting headship be (if it is considered)?

Writing your SEF, governor meetings, transitions makes for writing the daily diary of a head teacher so they can see exactly what goes on each day. But I do think shadowing a head teacher gives people an ownership (1).

I would agree with the three reasons as I've had a great experience of deputy head (2).

If it's another school it should be a substantial amount like six months to make any sort of headway or otherwise you're messing around with another school, you know (2).

My old head didn't hold the school to herself. She wasn't that precious. It was 'our school, our children'. She had a really good attitude to my progress. When it came to my NPQH she was great and supported my transition to headship (3).

I think from the start you have to have a career path for those people in your care and give them the responsibility at the appropriate times (4).

It's giving senior leaders the opportunities to be in charge and allow them to run the school. If there is anything wrong to be on the end of the phone to give guidance (5).

Erm, I think that's hard as it depends who the Head is. If you're working under a Head who isn't particularly liked it isn't easy I can think of some Heads I wouldn't want to work under as they are particularly regimental and disciplinarians in their leadership style (6)

There are many Heads who won't listen to anyone else's opinion and I think it would be difficult to ensure all deputies have similar experiences under that leadership style (6).

Job fulfilment is definitely there. I've never not enjoyed the job except the OFSTED years (7).

So as heads if we can convey positive images of the job. Often when a deputy is out at a heads and deputy conference they will hear the majority of the time heads moaning about aspects of the jobs. We need to convey, as heads, a different image needs to be conveyed to them about the great aspects of the job (7).

Job fulfilment is a lot to do with relationships. It's important that you believe in your faith and that you want to do the best for the children and the parents and your staff, really (8).

Acting Headship should be for a limited time so that there is continuity and stability for the children. Erm, maybe at least a term but a maximum of a year. It really would show the true life of a school and the responsibilities this bring (9).

Deputyship gave me all the skills needed such as performance management and I had delegated duties (such as a budget) which meant that the whole school budget wasn't so daunting. The more you get to look at diverse styles the better and the more experience of the headship role the better (10).

*(11.15) Why do you think people become head teachers?*

The way deputy heads job role shifts has shifted towards excessive paperwork is putting people off. As a Catholic head it is in our interest that the children that we have in our school are moral, happy, considers their faith and other peoples. Yes, they need understanding of reading, writing and maths but it's not the be all and end all. The faith should be central to the head teacher role but it's too data driven (11).

Career aspiration and they may have reached the top of what they are currently doing and they could lead a school. I think some people have that drive and have the aspiration to get to become a head. But also I think some people have been persuaded, perhaps because they have been in roles and due to the crisis in Catholic schools have been approached and persuade to become a head (12).

Career aspiration and ambition. Some take the role on and shouldn't but with OFSTED they're being found out. You really have to want to be a head yourself or the school suffers (13).

I think some people have gone into teaching and been in it so long they've worked their way up and it seems like the next logical step (14).

Natural job progression is the obvious one but some people have a calling to it and it becomes a vocation (15).

9. What can the Catholic Church do, in relation to succession planning, to ensure a constant supply of Catholic Heads? Or is this the Headteacher's responsibility?

The head must be a practising Catholic. I think that goes without saying. You're head of a Catholic school and you have to lead by example. They need to consider people's lifestyles now. I don't know many people my age who go to Mass every week anymore! (1)

You hear so many heads clashing with the parish priests. Erm, there has to be support from the diocese. We want you to be a head but erm this is the support we'll give you. And erm having some sort of mentor (1).

I can't think really. I don't know whether having a Chair of Governors as a priest is a good move or not. The priest has taken on the role as no one else felt they were good enough but they could of done a good job (2).

Maybe they need to think about the home circumstances as it puts me off as I live my life according to the Gospels. There's a worry that really good assistant heads, practising Catholics, but because they're no longer married are penalised. That's wrong (2).

The diocese in particular? I really can't think what they could do to ensure succession planning. I do think the head teacher has the ultimate power and that the school should have a policy of some sort (3).

From our diocesan point of view more positivity for our head teachers and more visible positivity. Are we celebrated enough, by our leaders? Is it out there we do a good job? I don't think it is! (4)

This is where the problem lies as it depend on the people who go to church. If you look at the middle leaders do they regularly attend church? Priest then helping school leaders identify future leaders and support them in their process of moving further (5).

I think they're trying with the courses that they are putting on especially for church and faith schools. Such as 'moving on' one and the pre-NPQH that are now on offer. Before there was nothing between 'Leadership Pathways' and 'NPQH' (6).

There are few middle leaders who go to assistant head first then deputy(6).

The only real course is for the Head teachers to not be practising Catholics. That's the only way round it and they're never going to do that (6).

I don't know. I am concerned about Catholic succession planning. I think the level of quality of some older head teachers and their Catholic position is another debate (7).



For the priest to be more accessible then it would encourage more Catholic children into teaching. It's hard sometimes and without church support there will be very limited succession planning (8).

Develop the experience of Senior or Middle managers through training and mentorship. It has started but a lot more needs to be done so everyone has equal opportunities. At the moment it's down to the digression of the head teacher or teacher in charge of training (9).

I think the Catholic Church need to be more involved with the day to day needs of heads so they can support them more. As a new head, the National College supported me but the Catholic Church were supposed to give me a mentor. I never once saw or heard from them. That isolation can't be right (10).

*(11.15) What can the Catholic head teachers do, in relation to succession planning, to ensure a constant supply of head teachers for the Catholic sector?*

Talking to leaders about what the job role is, what it entails, the extra work involved, work load increase is key. Just because headship goes on in school doesn't necessarily mean that the person may have seen the extra work that the role generates (11).

The would have to be made to sound appealing. I don't know how you'd do that with so many pressures but it would have to be done so people would aspire to the position (12).

As to how the Catholic heads can do succession planning? I'm not sure but the diocese should be at the forefront of designing a programme (12).

CPD from the beginning. Spot the potential future leaders and start the training from the second year (13).

Linking up with other schools, sharing good practice and erm advising each other... working as a team so that you don't have all school's pressure yourself. If that was something that was consistent in all schools then for acting heads, assistant heads, deputy heads then if that support was there they may be inclined to take the next step and feel less intimidated into moving into headship (14).

Maybe some sort of shadowing, but this is difficult as it would need to have a lead person to do it and to coordinate heads would need a strong person in a role created for the purpose. Maybe the diocese could lead on it? (15).

10. What opportunities should senior/middle leaders be given to ensure they become Catholic Heads?

I don't know many people our age who have got that faith. May be the church needs to give spiritual direction to senior leaders, some sort of Catechesis training or support or direction. It's almost like a calling, being a head, like a priest has. Maybe something along those lines to entice them in. You will be supported by the church, by God. You are His servant and you will be serving others (1).

Everyone is working together now more. Schools are more honest. We're shadowing staff in our consortium (2).

Attending Catholic clusters and being put on middle leadership courses etc. Working collaboratively with other schools. My school headship was re-advertised too. So that's interesting as schools are tough now and everyone wants an easy 'good' school(3).

The thing is to give them experiences, positive experiences and positive chances. I also think we need to make more of our ethos which you don't tend to get in many schools (4).

You can spot assistant and deputy heads material by the way people act in the school. Then you select appropriate courses (5).

Yes Budget is one of them. I think dealing with parents from the top. When I deal with parents, if they don't agree with me they go and say it to the head teacher (6).

We're setting up shadowing here next year. That 'step up' approach is the answer to the problem (7).

Opportunities? Erm I hope as part of their role they get chances to take responsibilities for subject areas and take staff meetings. I hope others seek their advice so they're positive role models. It's the SMT who need to facilitate that through nurturing and giving training (8).

Take on the role of Acting Head/Mentorship from a present Head teacher (9).

Work shadowing, delegated powers and the national middle leaders courses that are available (10).

Maybe placements in other schools. Different catchment areas are important (11).

Understand the funding and the money behind everything (11).

I think they should, need to know the realities in a positive way. We all know about the negatives such as workload, data, paperwork but there must be positives somewhere. We don't always see that as middle leaders. Shadowing would be good. So you see the true, both sides of the coin (12).

As a middle leader in a school that requires improvement we seeing a lot more paperwork, files and files of it but there should be opportunities to determine why people took the role of head in the first place (12).

Help from the diocese. We did have courses but they've dried up. I think we should get to shadow other leaders in different settings but ultimately all this comes down to the present head. If they let you attend CPD then you get the opportunities, if not then you're stifled (13).

The government need to create a succession planning scheme and then there wouldn't be a leadership crisis as it would be assumed that that was the direction you were heading (13).

If we were thinking of becoming Catholic heads, CPD for the main one (14).

Greater exposure for the roles over time so people can experience the realities. I think also possible invitations to join the SLT and to give presentations would be of a great benefit (15).

*Catholic Numbers (when mentioned between 1-10)?*

You know if a school was a Catholic school, No doubt about it from the ethos that you met immediately. So low Catholic numbers would not influence me at all. However, I might be worried when thinking ahead... will this be remaining a Catholic school and would I still have a job in the next few years (2).

Maybe promoting the schools in different media is a way the diocese could

help recruits new heads for hard to get positions. Children are children aren't they? God loves everyone(3).

No it doesn't affect anything. Personally you can tell a difference but not really ... it wouldn't stop me applying for a job in any Catholic school (5).

If you want to apply to that Catholic school, you apply regardless. If you feel it's the right place for you then you don't worry about Catholic numbers (6).

The fact so many low catholic number schools have to re advertise could give an indication that this is the case (10).

