

*Silos to Symphonies: Social work and its contribution  
to student wellbeing programs  
within a Victorian Catholic School*

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*For mum and dad*  
*My love and admiration*  
*Belongs to your generosity and unconditional love*  
*Thank you*

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### **Doctor of Philosophy Declaration**

‘I, Doris Testa, declare that the PhD thesis entitled *‘Silos to Symphonies: social work and its contribution to student wellbeing programs within a Victorian Catholic School’* is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work’.

Signature

Date

## **Abstract**

Schools of today are very much about preparing young people to function as productive members of society. Schools equip young people with the skills and knowledge needed to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of their local, national and global communities. Alongside a vocational role schools have another role. This role is to provide a health promoting setting within which students can develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to live healthy lives both in the short and long term.

Using a case study, this thesis examines how a cross-disciplinary collaboration between teaching and social work can negotiate the global, national and local policy trends that require schools to focus on both vocational pathways and student wellbeing needs.

By examining how one Victorian Catholic Primary school included social work in its development of student wellbeing programs, this research found that, while it is possible to introduce formal and professional structures that will serve the vocational and student wellbeing needs of students, successful cross-disciplinary collaboration is difficult in a context where there is no tradition of collaborative effort between social work and teaching.

This research also found that successful cross-disciplinary collaboration is dependent on a number of factors: commitment to the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration, the clear identification and articulation of the expert skills and knowledge that each discipline brings to the collaboration and the effective negotiation of the contribution of each discipline's expert skills and knowledge to the cross-disciplinary collaboration. When these factors are embedded in a School's formal and professional arrangements, then student wellbeing programs are more effective.

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## **Glossary of terms**

AASW: Australian Association of Social Workers

AHPSA: Australian Health Promoting Schools Association

ANHMRC: Australian National Health and Medical Research Council

BSSC: Brigidine Secondary Schools Council

CSB: Congregation of St Brigid

CST: Catholic Social Teaching

CECV: Catholic Education Commission of Victoria

CEOM: Catholic Education Office, Melbourne

COAG: Council of Australian Governments

DEET: Department of Employment, Education and Training

DEECD: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

DEEWR: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

DSP: Disadvantaged Schools Program

EMA: Education Maintenance Allowance

ENHPS: European Network of Health Promoting Schools

FEC: Field education coordinator

GATT: General Agreement on Trade and Trade

HPS: Health Promoting Schools Framework

IMF: International Monetary Fund

IUHPE: International Union for Health Promotion in Education

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MCEETYA: Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

NSSF: National Safe Schools Program

NESB: Non-English Speaking Background

NHMRC: National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia

LYSA: Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth

OBE: Outcome-based education

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PPT: Parent Partnership Team

PISA: Program for International Student Assessment

SSO: School Services Officer

SWC: School Welfare Coordinator

SWS: Social Work Student

SFYS: School Focused Youth Service

SSWSIG: School Social Workers Special Interest Group

VELS: Victorian Essential Learning Standards

VIT: Victorian Institute of Teaching

WHO: World Health Organisation

WTO: World Trade Organisation

## Chapter 1: Overture: the journey

This research is about student wellbeing. In this thesis I will argue that student wellbeing refers to the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions of the student's life. Student wellbeing is culturally specific, is influenced by individual, social and environmental factors and includes both a healthy emotional state and an ability to relate and function with others (Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPCD); Barnard 1997; Cahill & Freeman 2006; World Health Organisation 1998). I also argue that schools have a role to play in the development of student wellbeing, especially if a school invites all its stakeholders – parents and carers, students, staff and the community – to work together to create an environment that promotes the wellbeing of each and every student while at school. Weare (2000) and Kenway (2006) argue that school environments that have a whole school approach and multiple strategies to deal with student wellbeing contribute positively to student achievement, particularly to the acquisition of the literary competencies required for participation in the social and economic life of the nation state as well as to good emotional wellbeing. In this sense, student wellbeing and student achievement are interdependent that is, 'good performance promotes health and health promotes good performance' (Roost 2004, p. 7).

While student wellbeing and student achievement are interdependent, this thesis will **focus on schools and their success or not in creating a healthy school site for its students** to learn and grow, emotionally, culturally and socially. Specifically this thesis is about how one Victorian, Catholic primary school. While the principal St Paul's primary school from 1994 to 2005 I developed long-term student wellbeing relationships and partnerships with the school, the community and six Victorian Schools of Social Work to deliver school based effective and sustainable student wellbeing programs and practices. The programs and practices, also known as the 'St Paul's Model', were concerned with developing a school environment that supported and promoted student wellbeing.

The St Paul's Model developed organically over a twelve-year period. The model is situated in St Paul's primary school, a Catholic primary school located in the Melbourne's Western suburbs. The primary focus of the model was a desire to acknowledge the individual needs of students as well as the social and familial influences that affect a student's ability to learn.

As such, programs and practices were gradually developed which fostered connections between the student, their wellbeing and the school culture and environment. Connections developed by the St Paul's Model provided student wellbeing programs along a protective continuum of care. This continuum of care ranged from primary prevention to secondary intervention programs available, not just to the most vulnerable students but also to the whole school population. In this way the St Paul's Model supported the vulnerable student while also sustaining support structures that reinforced positive social emotional attributes for all students. For this thesis the 'St Paul's Model' is an inclusive term that describes these program and practices and an analysis of this model informs a major part of this thesis.

It must be stated at the outset that my role in the development of this model was crucial. As its Principal, with both education and social work qualifications, I attended to my role with dual commitments to student achievement and student wellbeing, a combination my qualifications made possible. I am also a Brigidine nun that brought a religious dimension to my work i.e. a Catholic commitment to social justice and attention to disadvantage. So to understand the organic development of the St Paul's Model it is important first to understand my religious, social/political motivations and personal motivations as well as the broader policy developments of the period that led to its development. Personal and religious motives had their genesis in my family and in my youth, especially from the religious women who taught me during my formative years. Both the religious, social, political and education policy contexts had their genesis in the global, national and local education, social work and health promoting discourses of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, which were influential in my latter years

Let me begin this thesis by reflecting on each of the aspects that influenced my growth as a teacher, social worker, religious woman and more latterly an academic.

### **Religious note: The Brigidine Sisters and growing up**

Impressed by the work the Brigidine Sisters carried out in schools I chose this order of religious sisters and in 1980, aged twenty-five, I entered the Brigidine convent and made a life commitment to the Congregation of St Brigid in 1983. The Brigidine mission and ministry impressed on me the freedoms and opportunities that education brought, for example, participation in the social and economic life of the nation state and the contribution to community networks of care within the neighbourhood and within wider societal structures. As a young student, living in a poor western suburb of Melbourne, born of migrant parents and attending Brigidine schools, my educational achievement and life chances were influenced by the value this order of women placed on schooling and social justice. The Brigidine Sisters

believed and taught that education is a powerful means of social transformation which promoted the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice are promoted.

My family who have a lifelong commitment to the Catholic faith also communicated to me the value of schooling. Commitment to the Catholic faith meant participating in the life of the parish through attendance at liturgies, enrolment in Catholic primary and secondary schools and more importantly a practical commitment to engage in the charitable works of the parish. As I grew to adulthood, I made these commitments my own. Along with the Brigidine sisters, my parents also stressed upon me that schooling was a major contributor to positive life chances and a means of securing just outcomes for individuals and families. The message was that schooling and life chances were interdependent and as I grew up I took these values as my own.

It was no surprise then that encouraged by my parents and the example of the Brigidine Sisters, teaching became my career choice. Graduating from teachers' college in 1976, I took a teaching position in a Catholic primary school in a poor western suburb populated by migrants. In thirty four years of teaching I have taught in six primary schools and have been the principal of two. All of these schools except one have been located in economically and socially disadvantaged suburbs of Victoria and all were serviced by the Brigidine education ministry and mission – Ardeer (twice) and West Sunshine in Melbourne's western suburbs, Noble Park and Springvale in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs and Maryborough in regional Victoria. To understand the Brigidine education and ministry one needs to know a little about the Brigidines themselves.

### **The Brigidine Order**

Daniel Delany, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, established the Congregation of the Sisters of St Brigid (Brigidine Sisters) in 1807. The Brigidine Sisters was founded in the shadow of the Irish penal days where the need for education and revitalising the Catholic faith was stark. Bishop Delany's vision was to introduce secular and religious education for rich and poor children and adults. With the six founding Brigidine sisters, Bishop Delaney trained religious educators, established Sunday schools, Communion and Confirmation schools, reading schools and libraries throughout Tullow, Ireland. As the Brigidine Congregation increased in membership, the Brigidine Sister's secular and religious ministry expanded to other Irish regions: Mountrath in 1809, Abbeyleix in 1842, Goresbridge in 1858, Paulstown in 1874 and in Ballyroan in 1887. This expansion included the establishment of an orphanage in 1815 and a boarding school in Tullow in 1851 (Minehan 2009; Sturrock 1994). As the twentieth century progressed, Brigidine foundations were also established in other parts of the world: NSW (1883), Victoria (1886),

New Zealand (1898), Wales (1939), England (1948), Texas (1953), Papua New Guinea (1966), Mexico (1983) and Kenya (1983).

With a historical tradition that is committed to the education of children and adults the Brigidine Sisters of the twenty-first century still maintain a strong thrust for social justice. In addition to schooling, the Brigidines Sisters have now added to the focus of their ministry: care of the sick in hospitals and parishes, challenging human trafficking and care of the earth (Brigidine Secondary Schools Council 2005a). While the Brigidine Sisters are involved in a suite of social issues as well as caring for the sick and vulnerable, the primary focus is on education particularly good quality education for the most disadvantaged. Despite the progression of time the mission and relevance of the Brigidine Sisters is as relevant in the twenty-first century as it was in the nineteenth century. As the Congregational documents<sup>1</sup> state:

the belief that education has a fundamental role to play in spiritual, personal, social and intellectual development has engaged the imagination and energy of Brigidine women. This has led to involvement in all levels of education, both in teaching and in administration – primary, secondary, tertiary, adult – in the countries in which we work. Others work in home-school liaison roles. The focus on educating in faith and building strong learning communities is seen as a powerful means of social transformation whereby the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice are promoted (Brigidine Secondary Schools Council 2005b).

These underlying beliefs are particularised in an associated commitment to carry out all Brigidine work according to key criteria (Brigidine Sisters 1988). As Brigidines:

- We will work out of an educational base.
- We are committed to ways of working that are collaborative and just.
- In ministry we will adopt a pioneering and creative approach.
- We will work in ways that acknowledge the right of full participation of all baptised persons.
- We have a particular concern for women's rights and interests.
- We choose to develop structures that will enable us to be flexible in our approach to change, personal need and communal involvement ([www.brigidine.org.au](http://www.brigidine.org.au)).

Developed in the latter part of the 1980s, these criteria for ministry continue to determine the choice and location of Brigidine ministries.

As a Brigidine and a Brigidine principal I took to schools a set of beliefs and the accompanying set of criteria for ministry. To these two parameters was added a defining set of core values that

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<sup>1</sup> The key documents in religious congregations are referred to as Constitutions and Statutes. These form the basis of their governance structures and religious ministries.



are embraced by all Brigidine Sisters working in education. In Brigidine Schools, we are encouraged to:

- Be faithful to our Catholic heritage
- Welcome all people and especially the most vulnerable
- Work in ways that are collaborative and just
- Engender a hope and sense of purpose in learning
- Celebrate all that is good with joy and hope. (Brigidine Sisters 1988)

As a young nun and as a young principal in the latter part of the 1980s there was no denying that my work in schools was motivated by the aspirations of the Brigidine Order. I was also motivated by a desire to live the Brigidine mission and by an undertaking to work from a set of criteria and a responsibility for carrying out my educational work guided by a set of core values. While my religious beliefs were important as guiding principles and as values to live by what I had not envisaged, when I was in the actual school site, was the impact of the socioeconomic background of the students and families and how these factors affected each and every child's ability to learn and succeed. This realisation would test every skill I had and mercilessly lay bare every skill I did not have.

As both teacher and principal, I soon learnt that teaching and leading entailed much more than attending to the academic achievements. The students and families that attended my schools lived in areas that were disadvantaged educationally, economically, socially and politically. As teacher and principal I found myself spending much of my time counselling women who sought a way to escape family violence at the same time as I sat with breadwinners who had lost their job as the factory doors in the western suburbs were closed. Despite their problems I also found that these parents wanted the best for their children, indeed, for these parents and carers schooling was a way to improve their children's' life chances and a means of breaking the cyclic, intergenerational problems of poverty, educational underachievement and unemployment. I soon realised that student wellbeing was intimately connected to the students' personal, familial and community wellbeing. For me the teaching role required teachers to be available simultaneously to both teaching and to students' wellbeing. As a school principal, I was confronted with a situation where teachers were spending a considerable amount of their teaching time dealing with student wellbeing issues that were located beyond the classroom: in family, in neighbourhood and in the community. Additionally, the teachers and I were also

trying to address these student wellbeing issues without possessing the expert knowledge and skills of the helping professions. I saw this as a knowledge and skill gap that needed to be filled.

Personally, as I became more and more confronted with the reality of students' lives, I became more and more interested in student welfare and student wellbeing and looked to other helping professions that could work with teachers in developing and delivering student wellbeing programs and approaches. It was during this time of the 1980s that I studied, part time, for a Graduate Diploma in Student Counselling, completed in 1985. As I studied my attention was consistently on children who had difficulty attending to their learning because of, for example, spasmodic attention spans, psychological health problems, infrequent attendance and on how I could use my post graduate studies and leadership positions to positively support teachers and student wellbeing programs for students. However, at a theoretical level I also knew I needed to understand the political and educational policy contexts that were driving and defining student wellbeing. I reasoned that if I knew the political and educational policy contexts and the demands of those policy contexts, then I would have a way to navigate a means through school based student wellbeing approaches.

The next section examines the how the changing religious, political and educational policy context of schooling in the 1980s and beyond developed in me an appreciation of socio, economic and political structures. Also discussed in the next section is the liberalisation of the Catholic Church's doctrine, Catholic Social Teaching (CST)<sup>2</sup> and their significance to both my teaching and social work practice in.

### **Understanding the school of the 1980s; religious and political influences**

What sort of religio-political world intersected with my life as a young nun? In the church hierarchy theological arguments raged between those who believed in the emerging liberation theology, those who labelled it as Marxist and those who believed that such a theory was close to the Gospel message of the preferential option for the poor, meaning a call to work with the most disadvantaged. At that early stage, I understood little about Marxism. What I did understand was that there was a critical link between social and political structures and what happened to people in their daily lives. Liberation theology, with its critique of development and its attempt to articulate the interrelations between economics, politics, culture and social structures, caught my imagination and sharpened my understanding of the possibility of living a vowed life from a politicised position.

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<sup>2</sup> CST encompasses aspects of Catholic doctrine and relates to matters dealing with the collective welfare of humanity.

For me, religion and politics were one and the same. My reading of CST documents consistently demanded that action be taken on behalf of the oppressed and marginalised. For example Pope Leo XIII's 1891 social encyclical 'Rerum Novarum (On the Condition of Labour)' (1891) emphasised the call to social responsibility. Pope John XXIII's 1961 'Mater Et Magistra (On Christianity and Social Progress)' (1961) exhorted the faithful to act in terms of both their own social wellbeing and that of others. In his 1963 encyclical 'Pacem In Terris (Peace On Earth) (1963)', Pope John XXIII situated Catholics in the world, calling on them to exercise their social, political and economic rights as citizens located in local and global communities. Pope Paul VI's 1967 'Populorum Progressio (On the Development of People)' (1967) reminded Catholics that social justice must be extended to all people and especially to those who lack options, urging that social reform should be the central consideration of a faithful life. Recently, Pope Benedict XVI's 'Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth)' (2009) highlighted Pope Paul VI's 1967 'Populorum Progressio (On the Development of People)' (1967) and renewed the call for a commitment to social justice and human wellbeing. In parallel to these documents I was also reading and studying Church policy documents that set out the mission of the Catholic school. These documents urged Catholic school leaders and teachers to respond to the increasing complexities of life for children and families. School leaders and teachers were challenged to see the Catholic school as being of service to society as well having responsible for nurturing and maintaining the Catholic dimension of its mission (Sacred Congregation for Catholic School Education 1997). What I was reading in Church documents, the themes of engagement with families, the link between structural inequities and student wellbeing and the importance of taking action to redress social injustice, was resonating with the emerging social reform agenda of the short lived Australian federal Whitlam Labor government.

Recognising that poverty and disadvantage had an adverse affect on student achievement the Whitlam Labor government, 1972 to 1975, launched a myriad of federal government-sponsored initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty and disadvantage. These initiatives were based on the values of justice, access and equity. The Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP), introduced in 1974, was an example of one such program (Johnston 1993).

This DSP funding was available to schools to build partnerships with students, families and wider communities in order to provide educational programs to enrich the students' educational outcomes. The first school in which I was principal was a recipient of DSP money. Suddenly I was able to access money to address social disadvantage within students' lives. Teachers could plan excursions to places usually inaccessible to students because of their economic situation,

for example, art galleries and theatre productions. The school library was stocked with new books and the teaching and learning programs were designed to build on students' and families' own experiences, for example, literacy programs began with the students' experiences so that curriculum was tailored to the unique experiences of the students. In 1986 I used DSP funding to employ a family liaison worker.<sup>3</sup> I did so recognising the potential benefits of bringing into the school community a practitioner with community development skills and knowledge, expertise I believed teachers did not possess.

In the years of her employment, 1986 to 1992, her role was to build family-school partnerships and assist the staff and me in involving students and their families in the task of schooling. Together with the school staff she developed opportunities for students to access school based welfare programs and for families to access community-based resources. Thus, the school became the conduit for a range of resources to families and students: parenting programs, emergency food baskets, preschool groups, adult education programs, excursion programs and English language classes. My aim along with my staff was to build strong partnerships with the school and with community services to assist with the education of the 'whole child'. I knew that student engagement with their learning was easier when his/her parent/carer was engaged with the school. The logic was simple: 'families connected to schools keep children connected to schools'. This logic was the catalyst for the next phase of my education career, my appointment to the Brigidine Family Ministry Team. This appointment strengthened my developing religio-political perspective and further impressed upon me the importance of linking the educational with the social.

### **Brigidine Family Ministry Team**

In the late 1980s, the Brigidine Sisters, listening to the themes emerging in their parish and school-based work, recognised that families were struggling to keep up with social pressures, for example unemployment and needed social and psychological support. The response to these emerging themes was the formation of the Brigidine Family Ministry Team. The team comprised of three Brigidine sisters. My appointment to this team allowed me to work alongside parent and staff groups – networking, designing and implementing parenting programs, adolescent programs, drug education programs, transition programs, sexuality programs and educational programs – all focussing on community development in Brigidine-associated

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<sup>3</sup> The family liaison worker, although trained in welfare, was classified as a teacher and paid a teacher's salary. The argument of the Catholic school authorities was that funding coming from an education source must go to a trained teacher. Even in my early years as principal I found this article nonsensical since I needed someone with welfare skills and knowledge not a teacher.

primary and secondary schools across Victoria and South Australia. The goal was to link schools, students and families and to provide networks of support and learning to the children, to each other and to the broader community. This Brigidine Family Ministry Team operated between the years 1989 and 1992.

It was within this time that I added to my qualifications, in 1989, a Certificate in Family Therapy. The experience of working within the Brigidine Family Ministry Team introduced me to another professional discourse: social work. With its focus on the person in the environment, I appreciated the benefits that social work skills and knowledge could offer to any school within which I worked and so, in 1991, I began social work studies.

First the Bachelor of Social Work, completed in 1992, and a Masters of Social Work completed in 1994. I found that social work values resonated with my religio-political values, that is with my commitment to social justice and with my religious commitment. While studying social work I was exposed to such things as community development, social work theories, home-school partnerships, counselling skills and cross-disciplinary collaborations. Importantly, as I progressed through my studies, and always sure that I would be in the school site in some capacity or other, I could see that social work could contribute its expert skills and knowledge to the development of school based student wellbeing programs, a wholistic child development approaches and to the development of home school partnerships. I could also see that teachers and social workers could work collaboratively in the development and delivery of school based student wellbeing programs.

In 1993, while studying for my Masters I worked in the field of child protection. I saw this as giving me the opportunity to develop and consolidate my assessment and intervention, case planning and community working skills. It was also an opportunity to familiarise myself with social welfare agencies. I considered these skills and contacts important resources for teachers and school leaders intent on developing a whole school approach to student wellbeing. It was also a time to develop an appreciation of the policies and on institutions responsible for acting on any policy changes. The following section examines the social and economic context that bounded education policy during my time as principal, 1994 to 2005.

### **Understanding the school of the late 1990s and beyond**

At both state and federal levels, the 1990s' ideological shift to neoliberal economic rationalist politics and the deregulation of the economy had changed families' lives. For example, using the rhetoric of 'profit' and 'value adding' businesses downsized their workforces, closed

factories and sent work offshore where labour was 'cheaper' many unskilled workers living in disadvantage areas such as West Sunshine lost their jobs. In the welfare sector 'equal opportunity' rather than 'equality of outcome' had become policy platforms for both levels of government. In practical terms, this meant that any recipients of welfare had to 'earn' that welfare by giving time in return for their benefits. 'Mutual obligation' became the mantra and the goal of welfare programs was to provide opportunities for all to participate and contribute to their own and to their nation's prosperity. This was difficult for families without support systems, without proficiency in the English language and without job ready skills. The neoliberalism and economic rationalism discourses that had changed the economic and political landscape had changed the education policy landscape. I had to come to understand that schooling was being fashioned along market lines. Schools looked different to the school I led in the late 1980s. Although poor families from low socioeconomic backgrounds, multicultural and by now, multi-faith backgrounds typified the St Paul's school population, in the early and late 1990s school policy context had changed. Programs, once supported by DSP funding were no longer available and families such as those of the children attending St Paul's were left without support and the children themselves had to cope in an environment which paid little attention to their wellbeing and where the main aim had become focussed on educational achievement.

Schooling was firmly linked to microeconomic reform and vocational preparation became the major discourse. St Paul's, as did all schools, became the site where 'value adding', 'inputs', 'outputs', 'benchmarks' and 'standardised tests' were terms attached to the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)<sup>4</sup> discourse of federal and state education policy. School curriculum was beginning to reflect and respond to the requirements of OBE philosophy. Significantly, the concept of disadvantage was redefined and a residual justice rationale was gradually introduced as a model used to allocate funding to schools. For example, federal funding was allocated on a per capita basis rather than on the socioeconomic status of the school's community, as was the basis for the DSP model (Henry 2005).

Education policy also reflected the belief that scholastic achievement, school retention and successful completion of schooling would guarantee passage into paid employment and into the economic and civic life of the nation state. Thus, Federal and State governments' education policies stressed 'equal opportunity' rather than 'equality of outcome'. Therefore, in contrast to the education policies of the 1980s, funding was no longer available for breakfast programs,

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<sup>4</sup> Outcome-based education refers to the focus on developing a clear set of learning outcomes around which all of the school's teaching and curriculum focuses (Spady 1994).

excursions and social skills programs. Funding instead turned the attention of teachers more towards achievement in literacy and numeracy skills. Resources were reallocated to literacy and numeracy support programs and personnel. For schools like St Paul's, Family Liaison Officers were a thing of the past as money could not be found for them in the shrinking educational budgets. Unlike resource poor schools, schools that were resource rich could maintain specialist staff, welfare or enrichment programs. This rationalisation of welfare and enrichment programs was occurring in the context of another emerging discourse: the health promoting school discourse.

Paralleling the emergence of the OBE discourse and the focus on student outcomes, literacy and numeracy skills was the health promoting school discourse, the health promoting school (HPS) framework and their relevance to student achievement. While there was nothing new in the idea of teachers being concerned about the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people in schools, young people's health and environment emerged as one focus of global, national and local public health policy. Led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) conferences and charters the school, environment, curriculum and surrounding community were recognised as potentially powerful catalysts for the creation of health for the total school population. The HPS was also seen a significant contributor to student achievement. By developing supportive environments conducive to the promotion of health and assisting young people during formative periods of their lives, the HPS was considered a key vehicle in supporting the development of healthy lifestyles, reducing inequalities in health, promoting social inclusion and raising educational achievement and assisting in reducing health and social inequalities. Thus it was within this twofold policy context, the OBE and HPS discourses, that in 1994, I again found myself as school principal, this time at a much larger school in the western suburbs – St Paul's primary school, West Sunshine.

St Paul's primary school was where I had first started school and the suburb was where I had spent my youth. In a sense, I had come home to the landscape of my formative years in which the narrative of my school experiences and that of my parents and neighbourhood had been etched. When meeting parents and carers I became aware that a substantial number of parents and carers of St Paul's students had sat next to me in class in those formative years. As students from many cultural backgrounds, we had shared the same lessons and playgrounds. However the life path for many of my school peers was different to mine. My life path was directed by the opportunities that flowed from the completion of schooling and entry into higher education. My parents had the social, cultural and somehow found the economic resources to insist that I

complete secondary school and then higher education. My parents ensured that I would escape low status jobs. In contrast, my peers had families who wanted their children to escape employment in low status jobs but did not have access to the same social, cultural and economic resources as my parents. Many had parents who could not speak English. Many of my peers had not progressed beyond secondary school and many had married early, raised families. For those in paid employment, employment was in low paid unskilled jobs. For these parents and carers life chances were limited by social, cultural and economic circumstances.

The St Paul's school that I had returned to was a community made up largely of an unskilled parent/carer population, an increased level of unemployment and a greater number of parent/carers working 'split shifts'. Parents/carers who worked split shifts had one parent/carer working a morning shift and the other night shift, often meeting each other as they passed their children from one to the other. For some parent/carers in paid employment, grandparents become the Monday to Friday primary carers of their grandchildren while their adult children worked long hours. For the newly arrived Vietnamese, Sudanese and South American migrants in the school, the absence of the extended family and the burden of unstable housing arrangements meant that they were living in stressful situations. As principal I once again found that my role as principal was largely supporting the staff as well as students and their families to overcome or address the social, cultural or economic disadvantage that limited their educational opportunities.

All the parents and carers that I met at St Paul's school had aspirations that their children's educational level would surpass their own and that their children would benefit from the life chances that accompanied the successful completion of schooling.

This narrative underlined every encounter I had with the parents and carers of the St Paul's community and I was acutely aware that my studies and the privileged position of being their principal were a consequence of opportunities and resources that I inherited from my family and not a result of a superior intellect. Further, added to this narrative was new knowledge and awareness from my time within the Brigidine Family Ministry Team and from my time as a child protection social worker. I had new personal and professional knowledge and skills to work within the particular socioeconomic circumstances of the St Paul's school community. For example, my studies of Bell Hooks (2000), the American feminist and social activist, taught me that the interconnectivity of race, class and gender could perpetuate and reproduce oppression. Fook (2002), the Australian social work scholar, taught me how to link social analysis with every day social work practice. Fook (2002) and Ife's (1997) scholarship introduced me to



critical thinking and radical social work practice. These and other critical theorists developed my understanding of structural social work and helped me situate the socioeconomic circumstances of the St Paul's school community within the macro, meso and micro influences that shaped their educational outcomes.

My experience was telling me that the structures of schooling and the professional arrangements that were evolving to manage schooling in the later 1990s were increasingly disadvantaging some students and their families while advantaging others. Some families had the social, cultural and economic resources to compensate for or adjust to a downturn in the employment opportunities. Some had the resources to enrich their children's life experience with, for example, art events, holidays, hobbies, sports affiliations; some did not have this capacity. Some families had the wherewithal to buy the computer that was fast becoming a necessary study tool. Other parents and carers had no such capacity. It was becoming clear to me that social, economic and cultural capacity were vehicles for successful schooling and eventual life chances. Schools were also being differentiated along lines of social, cultural and economic capacity.

Resource rich schools had parent and carer populations who could contribute to fundraising, to resource purchasing, to learning programs, to classroom programs and/or to extracurricular activities. Poorer schools had no such access to this pool of parents and carers. For some families the equality of outcome educational policy goals of the 1990s and beyond was being hampered by social, cultural and economic circumstances. I also surmised that neoliberalism's micro economic reform agenda had placed increased expectations on teachers to comply with the ever-increasing policy and practice demands of federal and state education policy to improve student achievement and to be responsible for both the achievement and failures of their students.

Although teachers have always understood that students bring a multiplicity of experiences, positive and negative, to the classroom and that negative experiences affects a student's ability to engage in learning in a purposeful way, teachers increasingly had to privilege their time spent on student achievement ahead of their time spent on student wellbeing. At St Paul's school this meant that I had to find some way to support teachers while not imposing further burdens on an overstretched staff and an under-resourced school. I knew that, unlike Victorian State government schools, I did not have access to school social workers or other school based health professionals since they were not included in the professional teams available from the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne (CEOM). Nor did I have the funding capacity to employ such

mental health professionals to work within the school. Therefore, drawing on my credentials and skills as a social worker, in 1994, I contacted the Victoria University (VU) Social Work Unit with the notion that I could offer them my skills as a social work supervisor and the social work students could assist me with programs that responded to grassroots student wellbeing dilemmas.

VU was my university of choice because

- it was located in the west
- the social work department worked from an ideology that was consistent with my religious and political framework and the teaching philosophy was embedded in the critical analysis of the causes of injustice at local, national and global levels
- partnerships between the university and the wider community were an emerging emphasis in the university

Other universities who had heard about the program came on board as the St Paul's Model developed. Between 1994 and 2005, the collaboration between Schools of Social Work and St Paul's school extended to Deakin, Monash, Latrobe and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. During those years, I supervised 79 social work students who contributed to the St Paul's Model. Over twelve years, with the collaboration between teaching and social work, these wellbeing programs developed from a single prevention program to a set of student wellbeing programs, always set in the school community, always responding to the wellbeing needs of students and always aimed at enhancing the social, economic and cultural resources available to the St Paul's students and families. I considered these programs important if student's were to be available to teaching and learning programs.

The success of this partnership, and implicitly of the St Paul's Model, was recognised when the Australian Association of Social Work's awarded me the 2006 Madelene Crump Award for 'Outstanding Fieldwork Teaching in Social Work'. Importantly the input of social work students to the St Paul's Model meant that teachers had the support and resources to address the social, emotional, economic and educational needs of students and families. It also meant that teachers had access to the expert knowledge and skills needed to focus on the wellbeing themes emerging in the St Paul's school community. In this sense, the St Paul's Model was organic and was informed by the needs of the students, the staff and the community. The introduction of social work students to St Paul's school offered me another opportunity. This opportunity was an opportunity to teach within the higher education sector.

### **The path to academe**

While supervising the social work students on placement at St Paul's I was invited to do sessional work within the social work unit at VU. After discussion with the school staff to make sure that they would support my leaving the school at three o'clock, one day per week, I accepted the invitation to teach as a sessional lecturer. I began teaching the practice skills in 2001, an arrangement that continued until I resigned from the St Paul's principal position in 2005. Having completed my term as principal, I accepted additional part time lecturing at VU.

Lecturing at VU introduced me to adult learning and to the life of a beginning academic. While preparing lectures I was able to concentrate on social work theory and practice and to reflect on the journey that had brought me to higher education. I also had time to reflect on how my passion for teaching and my passion for social work had combined to develop the St Paul's Model. It was this reflection, together with encouragement from the lecturers within the VU social work unit, which set my focus on the possibility of research and undertaking a PhD.

In 2006 I began doctoral studies. Undertaking a doctorate has given me a number of opportunities. The most significant opportunity was to reflect personally on my religious, political and educational experiences in light of the critical discourse and the epistemology underpinning critical discourse, the philosophical position which underlines the VU social work program. This resulted in an opportunity to engage with the significant policies and practices emerging from the educational, social and health discourses that had and were directing current policies and practices in schools across the sector. Most significantly the doctorate provided me with the opportunity to reflect on the place of social work in my previous work at St Paul's and the program and practices that were developed by the social work students over the 12 years that I was principal. I realised that this was important work. All programs were focussed on attaining students' wellbeing in order to help all students but especially the more vulnerable students make the most of the learning opportunities afforded them during their school years.

Indeed it soon became evident that many of the formal and professional arrangements supporting the St Paul's Model paralleled and, in some instances, preceded the global, national and local socio-ecological health promoting policy developments. I had in fact designed a program that was possibly the nexus between the two policy discourses operating in schools during my time as principal: the OBE and HPS discourses. I concluded that the St Paul's Model was about both OBE and HPS. I also concluded that in the push towards a greater emphasis on learning outcomes and a greater emphasis on student wellbeing, the St Paul's Model could be an exemplar of how, in a context of both OBE and HPS policies, schools could use partnerships

and cross-disciplinary collaborations to further student wellbeing and student achievement. I finally surmised that the St Paul's Model was important because it did not neglect what is at the core of schooling: a concern for a child's development in the widest sense: social, emotional, spiritual and educational.

Excited about the awareness and intrigued by the notion that something special happened at St Paul's the PhD program at VU initiated an educational journey of my own. In reflecting on my extensive experience in schooling, social work and my religio-political perspective I soon realised that

- There was a corpus of health promoting school literature that could be used to research student wellbeing and ultimately the effectiveness or otherwise of St Paul's Model.
- There were different theoretical lenses that could be used to research and understand student wellbeing and my task was to explore the most appropriate.
- The St Paul's Model was an innovative student wellbeing program and partnership within Melbourne's Catholic Education sector.
- The exploration of the effectiveness of the opportunities and challenges of a student wellbeing model could have some resonance for the social work and for schools.

I now had a focus and as I began to search I was captivated by:

- The discovery of the different theoretical paradigms through which to critique and understand such terms as 'schooling', 'achievement', 'disadvantage' and/or 'wellbeing'.
- The opportunity to name the theoretical underpinnings and the different global, national and local policies that came to be reflected in the St Paul's Model.
- The opportunity provided by research to map the St Paul's Model's efficacy and the subsequent contribution that the St Paul's Model could make to the health promoting school discourse.

In drawing together this new knowledge and mindful of the different theoretical paradigms that can be used to understand 'student wellbeing', I began to form my research question for this study. But first I had to place myself with the various and competing paradigms framing the research. As my life reflected a lifelong commitment to social justice and addressing disadvantage and as my current social work teaching is informed by a critical approach to both scholarship and practice it was evident for me to start with a critical lens when undertaking the

research. The critical lens charts how the dominant economic, political, social and cultural institutions shape individual and group experiences, relationships and feelings (MacDonald 2006). I am aware of the need to explore this stance more fully (and I do so later) but for now I had a focus and a framework and, importantly, the research question that would guide this thesis. As literature indicated the difficulty that schools were having in balancing the outcomes-based education discourse with the health promoting school discourse, using an iterative approach, as the research progressed, in consultation with my supervisor, the focus of the research shifted for the contribution of social work students to student wellbeing programs. The focus of the research became the student wellbeing components themselves and on how social work could contribute to the health promoting school.

With this in mind the data specific to social work field education was subsequently separated from the final data set<sup>5</sup>. With this qualification, the research question is:

*RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; and (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing? Finally, (c) can the St Paul's model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

As stated earlier, this thesis is not concerned with the teaching role exercised by teachers or an exploration of their role in achieving specific education outcomes for children (although this role is ever present) but with the student wellbeing role that lies alongside and within the teacher's formal tasks and responsibilities in the curriculum. To do this the thesis has a particular structure, but before we embark on this journey I need to define the five key concepts used throughout this thesis: schooling, student achievement, student wellbeing, the St Paul's Model and the health promoting school.

## **Definitions and key concepts**

### **Schooling**

Saha, cited in MacKinnon, Kearns and Crockett (2004), argues that schooling and education differ in that

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<sup>5</sup> It is the intention to use data concerned with field education at a later time.

education is the transmission of social rules, norms, culture, and knowledge – formal and informal. Schooling, on the other hand, is defined as the more formal and deliberate processes that transmit culture and knowledge to some or all members of society. (2004, p. 237).

Because this thesis is concerned with the ‘formal and deliberate’ processes that transmit the culture within which student wellbeing is developed and the ‘formal and deliberate’ processes that transmit our knowledge about student wellbeing the term ‘schooling’ is used throughout the thesis.

## **Student achievement**

Student achievement is variously described as the mastery of standards (Donnelly, K 2005), the expected standards of pupils performance, the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2009) and essential learning (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b). All descriptions of student achievement have in common an implicit understanding that student achievement is about what each student is ‘expected to learn about and learn to do’ while enrolled in school. Within this thesis ‘student achievement’ will refer to what each student is ‘expected to learn about and learn to do’ at a given time in her/his stage of schooling.

## **Student wellbeing**

Student wellbeing refers to the student’s health along physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions. It includes both a healthy emotional state and the ability to relate to and function with others. It is culturally specific and influenced by individual, social and environmental factors. It is dynamic and changeable and has a strong relationship with learning (Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPCD 2010); Barnard 1997; Cahill, H., Shaw, G., Wyn, J. and Smith, G. 2004; World Health Organisation (WHO)1998).

## **St Paul’s Model**

The St Paul’s Model (‘The Model’) is the student wellbeing model, developed organically over twelve years (1994 to 2005) and implemented in St Paul’s School, a primary Catholic school situated in the Western suburbs of Melbourne Victoria. The Model had twelve student wellbeing components that spanned the early intervention to post intervention student wellbeing spectrum. The Model involved the input of social work students from six Victorian University Schools of Social Work.

## **Health promoting school**

The WHO defines the health promoting school as a school that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. To this end, a HPS involves all its stakeholders as focussed on efforts to promote health:

A health promoting school implements policies, practices and other measures that respect an individual's self esteem, provide multiple opportunities for success, and acknowledge good efforts and intentions as well as personal achievements. It strives to improve the health of school personnel, families and community members as well as students, and works with community leaders to help them understand how the community contributes to health and education (WHO Health Education and Health Promotion Unit 1998, p. 11)

With these key terms in mind, the following sections explain how the thesis unfolds.

### **Structuring the chords – about the thesis**

This thesis has used a framework and methodology that may seem unfamiliar to some readers. In particular, the use of the musical metaphor as guidepost of the thesis' development and the use of a case study. The following section explains the reasoning behind the methodology, the chapter organisation and the use of musical metaphors.

### **Why use a case study?**

Ryan and Sheehan (2009), in their limited study of the content analysis of articles published in the Australian Social Work Journal 1998 to 2007, found that in 313 articles over a ten year period the majority of research and evaluation undertaken was discursive (55%), qualitative (27%), mixed method that is, qualitative and quantitative (10%) and quantitative (8%). Overall, the number of case studies reported represented only 1.2%. Case studies were also poorly represented in Fook's research who found 'a small number of case studies, biographies and histories' (cited in Ryan, & Sheehan 2009). Therefore, to choose a case study as the methodology for this research was to chart an unfamiliar territory within social work research. So why choose a case study?

Yin's (2009), Creswell's (1994) and Stake's (1995; 2000) scholarship on case study research and case study design and methods posit that case studies are the most appropriate research tool to explore the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions as well as providing for a range of data sources to provide validity to the findings. Yin's work in particular drew my attention to the efficacy of case studies and to the many facets of what could be included in a case study method, design and development and its relevance to addressing my research question. Therefore, with the research question in mind and in discussing the methodology with my

supervisor, I mapped what data was available to the research and set the process for designing a particular case study that guided the research undertaken in the thesis.

I found that I could access literature to review the student wellbeing discourse as well as review and include the relevant literature on global, national and local student wellbeing policies. Further I already had access St Paul's school policy documents, program descriptions, student, social work student, principal, parent/carer documentation, and vital archival records and physical artefacts which were important materials to help explore and understand the 'what' and 'how' of the St Paul's Model. So what was also needed was quantitative data from the people involved in the program. So with ethics approval I could include data from surveys and focus groups to the already collected evidence. Access to all these data sets would provide for thick descriptions of the St Paul's Model and ultimately answer the research question. Thus using a case study approach seemed the most appropriate and logical choice of methodology: a methodology design to include the use of many data sets from qualitative to quantitative sources.

### **About the literature review**

The literature review conducted in the course of this thesis explores two areas: context and history. Firstly, the literature review examines the context underpinning schooling. Secondly, the literature review examines the history of global, national and local student wellbeing, the health promoting school discourses, and the contribution of social work to student wellbeing.

Using Neuman's (2006) taxonomy the literature review is a both a context literature review and a historical literature review. Literature concerning the policy context and the historical development of the health promoting school aided the patterns and categories that were used to assemble the collection of documents (including policy documents), archival records, surveys, focus group materials and physical artefacts gathered during the case study.

### **Music as the metaphor**

This doctorate uses the language of music composition. Music plays a key role in my personal life. I am a classical guitarist and spend a considerable amount of free time playing other people's compositions. Symphonies are not made of isolated notes. The notes that I try to play on my guitar must string together the harmonies intended by the composers whose works I take into my musical life.

Thus, when deciding on a structure for this doctorate, using the music metaphor made sense. The doctorate is pieced together using many notes. Notes from education, notes from health,



notes from politics, notes from religion and notes from social work. The opportunities and the challenges involved in bringing those notes together in one place, in one Catholic primary school, is at the centre of this doctorate. Using the music metaphor became the way of understanding and theorising the relationships between the different stakeholders and of understanding student wellbeing. Moreover, the music metaphor became a way of dreaming another composition, a student wellbeing composition in that the findings of this study offered a new composition – a composition formed in partnership with school, home and community as way of addressing student wellbeing. This new composition also includes teachers and social workers, each contributing their expert skills and knowledge, each of equal value, different but critical to a successful student wellbeing program. The findings can inform other compositions as each schools site applies the findings to their own specific school setting or musical score. It is in this sense my composition.

### **How the thesis unfolds: organising the chapters**

As discussed earlier, the music metaphor is used to arrange the doctorate. Each chapter concerns itself with a particular aspect of importance to the research. Consequently, chapters of this thesis are arranged as follows.

Chapter Two, '*Composition of the Schoolyard*', is concerned with the questions 'What is the purpose of schooling?' and is used to inform RQ (a): are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing as articulated by the health promoting school discourse?

Examining the role of schooling in the globalised world of the late twentieth and twenty-first century, specific attention is given to the Australian, Victorian system. Particular focus is also given to the marketisation of schooling, the pros and cons of current Federal and State education policy and the role of the schooling in social and cultural control and class differentiation. Finding voice in this chapter is the literature on outcome-based education, the progression of results-driven schooling and standardised testing. The place of Catholic schools in Australian, Victorian, education policy is also examined in this chapter with a view to understanding how Catholic schools balance their responsibilities to CST with their responsibilities to Federal and State funding polices and requirements.

Chapter Three, '*Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning*', explores the socio-ecological health discourse. This discourse examines why student wellbeing is pivotal to student achievement. To do this, literature in Chapter Three examines and critiques: (a) the

conceptualisation of student wellbeing in the broader context of the socio-ecological health discourse, principally the World Health Organisation (WHO) literature; (b) the health promoting school (HPS) discourse and a brief historical overview of the development of HPS vis-à-vis the WHO HPS framework; (c) the health promoting school and its development within the Australian, then Victorian, school structure and school-based structures which advance the HPS discourse; (d) a brief examination of how teachers manage, or not, the location of the OBE and HPS discourses; and (e) an analysis and comparison of how health promotion and health promoting principles are arranged in Victorian government and Victorian Catholic schools.

Chapter Four, '*Composition of Social Work*', examines social work in schools, as one discourse and one discipline amongst a suite of health professions available to promote student wellbeing, assist teachers and schools meet government OBE mandates while also operating as health promoting schools. The historical and current location of social work in schools is examined to understand how social work has positioned itself in schooling and in student wellbeing. The literature is mined to see how, if and why the school is a logical and complementary location where social work can contribute its expert knowledge and skills to student wellbeing. Also examined in this chapter is cross-disciplinary collaboration, its relevance to health promoting schools and the benefits and difficulties that accompany cross-disciplinary collaborations.

Chapter Five, '*Gathering the Ensemble: Research Methodology and Method*', explores the research process, what is meant by research, the underpinning assumptions in the research and the rationale for the choice of method and methodology. In explaining why particular research tools, data collection methods and how research participants were chosen, questions of ethics are also answered. Such development ensured a process 'that merits respect ... [is laid] out for the scrutiny of the observer' (Crotty 1998, p. 13) and shows how the research was conducted. The ontological and epistemological choices are also discussed in this chapter as are issues of reflexivity, trustworthiness, validity and reliability..

Chapter Six, '*St Paul's Model Data: Silos to Symphonies*', presents the research data. This chapter presents the professional and formal institutionalisation of the St Paul's Model. The chapter describes how social work students and teachers collaborated to develop student wellbeing programs. Chapter Six interrogates the data collected during the research and examines how the strategic introduction of social work students attempted to support student wellbeing. The voices of key stakeholders, including students, parents and carers, staff, social work students and field education coordinators are heard. These voices offer insights into the subtleties that shaped or frustrated the contribution of social work to student wellbeing.

Chapter Seven, *'Accompanying Notes: Hindrances and Harmonies'* revisits the St Paul's Model case study. In this chapter, research findings are discussed and analysed. Discussion and data analysis draws on the literature review which examines where the St Paul's school community is situated socially, economically and culturally vis a vis the OBE and HPS discourses. This data informs why and how the St Paul's Model developed its student wellbeing programs and whether the cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers was successful. Based on these findings, this chapter discusses questions of cross-disciplinary collaboration, transferability and sustainability. Can this model predict how other collaborations between the social work and education disciplines can combine to address the social determinants of health? Do the incorporation of the social work field education programs and social work students in the St Pauls' Model positively or negatively influence the effectiveness of interdisciplinary collaboration? What areas of opportunity does it offer to both professions? Can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for social work contributions to student wellbeing? This chapter offers a framework that could be used to introduce a cross-disciplinary collaboration that will optimise the effectiveness of student wellbeing programs. Finally, this chapter concludes with questions and suggests opportunities for further research and further exploration, for it is always the work of the composer to aspire to compose the next opus.

Chapter Eight, *'Reprise: The Journey'* will be a short personal note to peel the impact that this research has had on the researcher for, as is true of social constructivist disciples, reality is made and remade in personal interpretations and ongoing narratives.

## Chapter 2: Compositions of the Schoolyard

This chapter, 'Compositions of the Schoolyard' examines the changing nature of Australian schooling with a particular focus on Victoria in the 1990s and beyond. While there are many aspects that this chapter can examine within the broader landscape of school reform for example: curriculum changes, teacher credentialing and registration, school governance or public funding for private schools, the focus of this chapter is student achievement and the Australian federal and state policies that have shaped the discourse around student achievement. Specifically this chapter will examine

1. The marketisation of schooling and the introduction of the outcomes-based education (OBE) discourse at both national and state levels.
2. The pivotal role of schooling in a globalised economy and its links with the prosperity of individuals as well as the ability of nations states to create wealth through (amongst many activities) individual achievement and the implications in the development of student achievement policy with its specific focus on vocational development.
3. How neoliberal and New Right ideologies have been embedded in school policy and practice and how, specifically within the Victorian Kennett led years, 1992 to 1999, an emphasis on such things as market principles, managerialism and performance targets have led to the marketisation of schooling and the introduction of OBE.
4. OBE with a critical lens and will argue that a myopic focus on OBE Education without a consideration of individual, familial, community and social factors that influences student learning and achievement risks being advantageous for some individuals and a section of society while simultaneously disadvantaging other individuals and a section of society,
5. The role played by schools in social and cultural control and class differentiation. Drawing on the scholarship of critical theorists literature will argue that the marketisation of schooling and the OBE discourse can frustrate the achievement of individual prosperity that the free market promises as well as alienate students and

families who begin without the social, cultural and class resources necessary to exploit or participate in the 'school market'.

6. The Catholic school, the reasons for the establishment of the Catholic School system in Australia and how the Catholic school system is positioned within federal and state education policy. Literature will show that Catholic schools, in complying with federal and state education policies are challenged to balance OBE imperatives with CST's call to have schools that are socially just and inclusive.
7. Finally this chapter concludes by arguing that student wellbeing must be taken into account in all considerations of schooling and in all policy and practice contexts since positive health ultimately provides students with the social and emotional resources that contribute to student achievement.

From the perspective of this research, this chapter is relevant to RQ. The examination of schooling and the major discourses framing student achievement policies and practices provide the context within which student wellbeing is located and within which student wellbeing being must be constructed.

### **Globalisation, economic reform and school reform**

Jamrozik (2001) writes that globalisation has ended notions of national economic sovereignty and that nation states no longer have the power to regulate their own economic or social policy goals. Nations and states, he argues, regulate their economic and social policies to reflect and respond to their interdependence with other countries. Power (2001) describes this interdependence as 'linking people's lives more deeply, more intensely and more immediately than ever before, shrinking space, shrinking time' (2001, p. 25) and intensifying the social, political and economic interactions amongst and between nations and states. Ultimately globalisation results in the disappearance of borders amongst nations and states as economic and social exchanges become fluid. The impact of this 'shrinking' on economic and social policy is the accommodation by nations and states of an integrated and interdependent work economy underpinned by the neoclassical economic theories, specifically the various forms of neoliberalism/neo-conservatism theories (Jamrozik 2001). In Australia, these neoliberal/neo-conservative theories are referred to as economic rationalism.

That globalisation and its movement towards economic rationalism benefits nation states is much contested in the social sciences community. Two different perspectives are argued. Some argue that globalisation is a source of economic growth and prosperity since more opportunity is generated for the exchange of goods, services and knowledge which in turn offers greater

opportunities and rewards for individuals, nations and states, (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 1998; Rupert 2006). Others argue that globalisation is a threat to social stability since individual interests take precedence over collective interests and individual and individual effort is privileged and rewarded ahead of collective effort and interests (MacDonald 2006; Rodrik 1997; Woodward 2009). However, consistent across all commentaries is the argument that globalisation has had a transforming impact, positively or negatively on nation states and on citizens within those nation states. Agreement too that globalisation is a key consideration in all economic and social policy determinations in current day social and economic policy at global, national and local level (Beare 1998; Boxely 2003; Dudley & Vidovich 1995). Relevant to this thesis is how globalisation has impacted on the role of schools and schooling and especially the growing link between schooling and the workforce.

The link between schooling and a workforce suited to the growing needs of a globalised economy has had an important impact on the way schools are directed to develop their curricula. In fact, the link between schooling and the workforce has emerged as a new player in the global market (Ferguson, Lavalette & Whitmore 2005; Martin, R 2003; OECD 1998; Robertson 2005). The logic that has driven changes in schools and school curricula goes something like this:

1. The knowledge economy is the new currency of exchange for national, state and individual prosperity and therefore the balance between knowledge and resources (labour and capital) has shifted towards knowledge (Beare 1998; Lingard 2005; Martin, I 2003; OECD 1998, 2001; Zyngier 2004).
2. Securing economic prosperity is much dependent on a skilled and 'knowledgeable' workforce (OECD 1998; Robertson 2005).
3. Individuals have a responsibility to develop their human capital and contribute this human capital to the economic agendas of nations and states (Ferguson 2004; Robertson 2005).
4. Since participation in the workforce, and in the longer term, participation in the economic life of the nation state, vocational training and/or the completion of twelve years of schooling is a critical factor in the development of a 'knowledgeable' economy and to individual, national and state prosperity (Australian College of Education 2001; Australian Government 2002; Beare 1998; 2005).
5. Schools play an important role in the economic prosperity of the nation state by providing the education, training and knowledge needed to forward the economic

agenda of nation/states (Beare 1998; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) 2008b; Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) 2008; Taylor 2004).

6. In order to play a critical role in the economic prosperity of the nation state, schools need to respond in ways that advantage and develop the economic interests of nation states competing within the globalised world and hence nation states can rightly direct what happens in schools and in school curricula (Lynch & Moran 2006; Robertson 2005).

Hence, in this era of globalisation there has been a shift in economic theory and its resulting policies. 'Human capital' models that argue technology and knowledge are intrinsic to economic development, have replaced traditional economic models and education/training/knowledge are no longer as separated from economic growth (Beare 1998). This shift has tightened Government connections with and expectations of schools and the work they do with students. For example, various Australian Federal and State education reports and documents have underlined the centrality of schooling in a nation state's prosperity. Amongst these reports and documents are the Finn Report (1999), the Adelaide Declaration (2000), the Kirby Report (Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET) 2000), the 'Footprints to the Future' Report, the 'Stepping Forward' statement (Australian Government 2002) of state, territory and Commonwealth education ministers and the Compact with Young Australians (Council of Australian Government (COAG) 2009).

All these reports and documents acknowledge that strengthening the connections between schooling, employment and trade is a key determinant for promoting and contributing to the nation's economic competitiveness at global, national and local levels. Further, all these reports and documents are premised on the reasoning that the critical products for national and individual prosperity, that is, skills and knowledge, are acquired through schooling. Human capital and individual and economic prosperity are interdependent that is, the market dominance aims of neoliberalism is reconciled with the marketisation of schooling.

For an understanding of how this reconciliation between the market dominance aims of neoliberalism is reconciled with the marketisation of schooling the following section examines school reforms in one state – Victoria, driven by Kennett's 1992 to 1999 Liberal government. The Kennett years are particularly pertinent to this research since it is during these years that the St Paul's Model was developed and it was within these years that the market discourse became the dominant discourse in the making of education policy.

### **Kennett, marketisation, managerialism and schools**

The changes to the way schools operate in Victoria are relevant to this thesis. These changes have their origins in the landslide election victory of the Kennett Liberal centre-right government in October 1992. Kennett, referred to by Pascoe and Pascoe (1998) as ‘arguably the most reformist [Australian] political leader’ (p. 4) initiated a body of changes that was to transform the way in which the Victorian government and civil service operated, schools included.

Kennett, as did other State conservative government leaders, put in place a reform agenda with a preference for market mechanisms in the provision of public services and a focus on clear accountability for results for public agencies (Beer 1998; Pascoe & Pascoe 1998). Under Kennett a smaller, less interventionist government led to the depoliticisation of government. Pascoe and Pascoe (1998) describe this restructuring of government involvement as a ‘steering’ rather than a ‘rowing’ approach. Premised on the belief that the private sector was better able than the public sector to manage service delivery efficiently and effectively, the government positioned itself at arm’s length from political decision-making and separated the making, that is, steering, of government policy from its implementation that is, from rowing.

Intent on concentrating on policy formation and strategy, the direct consequence of this policy direction was that Government, employing corporate strategies and principles, abandoned the delivery of services to its citizens and relocated responsibility for service delivery in the hands of businesses that were required to be efficient and cost effective. For example, utilities such as power and water supply, public transport and telecommunications were privatised and institutions of public order such as prisons and related correctional agencies became commercial undertakings and profit making activities (Jamrozik 2001; Pascoe 2004; Pascoe & Pascoe 1998). The conceptual model for the public service became managerialism; a concept taken from the discourse of corporate practices. This adoption of corporate practices resulted in the move away from administrative values and towards managerial values. Pursuing the results-oriented approach of the managerial discourse, public servants adopted private sector principles and practices with a particular focus on three ‘E’s: efficiency, economy and effectiveness’ (Van Gramberg & Teicher).

Theoretically it was argued that Kennett’s reform agenda empowered the consumers of public services, minimised government bureaucracy for consumers and established the management of public agencies in a professional and business-like way (Pascoe & Pascoe 1998). In practice Kennett’s ‘efficiency, economy and effectiveness’ reforms led to the introduction of competitive



business planning and performance measurement in all areas of public sector management. The public service sector was downsized and competitive tendering for all government services, linking service delivery objectives with rewards was introduced. Performance pay for employees; accountability structures, including the submission of three-year corporate and business plans, customer satisfaction surveys and performance measurement data became embedded in all Government instrumentalities (Pascoe & Pascoe 1998; Van Gramberg & Teicher).

The shrinking of the public sphere and the adoption of a managerialism discourse had profound effects on the economic, political and social dimensions of welfare and welfare delivery. Amongst these effects were the concentration of wealth in the hands of fewer people, the diminution of the common purpose and common interests in favour of the rise of individualism. Without the economic means to purchase interests in private enterprises and profit from the gains of their investments, less wealthy individuals were faced with the increased costs of the services delivered to them (Jamrozik 2001; Jamrozik & Nocella 1998).

Schools did not escape the reform agenda of the Kennett era. The structural and systematic reforms of 'efficiency, economy and effectiveness' applied to government instrumentalities were applied to schools as well. In the interests of efficiency and economy, the size and authority of the central schooling bureaucracy was reduced and schools were closed; 350 government schools were closed and 7,000 teaching jobs removed (Teicher & van Gramberg 2008). The management of government schools became site based, the administrative, professional and financial functions of the school was devolved from central government to local school councils; school councils and principals were granted increased power to manage activities within the school site (Pascoe 2004). The rationale was that increased effectiveness of schooling and school operations flows from the transfer of power to school sites. Thus, the Kennett reforms centralised the accountability principles and practices employed in schools. For example, school principals and their school councils were directed to have greater parent representation on their councils who in turn had greater input into how the school operated and greater access to local decision-making. In addition the efficiency and effectiveness of school teaching and learning programs was the next focus of the Kennett reforms. In this case effectiveness was measured through the introduction of annual standardised, state-wide tests and benchmarking, a process used to compare a student's achievement with that of other students of the same age and year level. Public access to student and school results was seen to offer two things: parents and schools have better knowledge of how student achievement

compared across school cohorts and schools had data on which to focus improvements in teaching and learning programs. In short and in line with managerial practices, schools had now a public way to show how their 'input' had become 'output'.

Kennett's reform agenda with its principles of 'efficiency, economy and effectiveness' was intent on 'improving the general education system [as an] essential priority of government an investment and a matter of economic not just social policy' (Power, 2001, p. 348). Moreover, with its underpinning agenda of 'efficiency, economy and effectiveness' the Kennett reforms introduced to schooling the market as the dominant policy discourse in its structural and systematic reforms. The characteristics of this market discourse are summarised by McClelland and Smyth (2006), Power (1997), Lynch and Moran (2006) as:

1. Schooling is a private commodity in which individuals' invest.
2. The free, competitive market, rather than the state will ensure the quality of schooling.
3. The social benefits of schooling arise as a result of the sum of the individual choices and investment of producers and consumer.
4. States have a minimal role in schooling.

These characteristics continue to be as salient and operative in the 2000s as they were in the Kennett years. Using Beare's (1998) metaphor to understand the marketisation of schooling, schools in the 2000's and beyond are now 'enterprising schools' (p. 16) that is, schools adopt structures and practices suited to business corporations. Like corporations, Victorian schools operating within the policy context of current federal and state government and who are increasingly entering partnerships with the Commonwealth government are required to respond to a cost-conscious public sector looking for a return on the investment of the public dollar. It is assumed that schools will seek out sponsorships and philanthropic assistance to bridge the gap between the government's investment in schooling and its real cost. Schools must satisfy the customer, compete for resources and provide a marketable product if they are to survive (Gillard 2008). Decision-making powers are localised but tied to education policy (Federal Government 2008). Indeed, in Victoria the subsequent State Labor governments have consolidated these developments further introducing policies that require schools to organise themselves like 'enterprises', and ensure that schools 'produce' the 'human capital' required by the nation states.

Examples of policies that have been introduced in schools and that shape their 'enterprise' post the Kennett reforms include school commitments to: Curriculum and Standards Frameworks

(1995), the adoption of the National Goals of Schooling (2005), the adoption of State and National performance targets and tests at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in literacy and numeracy to assess the success in achieving these benchmarks (2005), flying the National flag and displaying the 'Values for Australian Schools' poster (2005), implementing the 'National Safe Schools Framework' (2005) and adopting plain language student reports (2006). Even as this thesis is being written Australian, Victorian schools are asked to adopt other policy reforms that continue to implement major educational reform agendas, for example, the adoption of a National Curriculum.

At both state and national levels of government two key policy documents the 'Quality Education: the Case for an Education Revolution in our Schools' (Federal Government 2008) and the 'Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development' (DEECD 2008b) have set out their reform agenda. These documents continue to be premised in an ideology of the interdependence of schooling, individual, national and state competitiveness and prosperity. Both documents also underline the need for schools to achieve targeted and measured outcomes mandating stronger accountability and performance criteria for schools. An example of stronger accountability and performance criteria is the much-contested Federal Labour's 2010 introduction of the My School website. This website, publically accessible, statistically compares and ranks schools and contains information about each of Australia's 10,000 schools, including the number of students at the school, the number of teachers at the school and how the school is performing in national literacy and numeracy testing (DEECD 2008b; DEEWR 2010). Criticism of this website signals the danger of reporting only literacy and numeracy results without also reporting on the other factors that may both add and/or distract from student achievement or school success. Such de contextualised reporting may unfairly label schools, students and communities marginalising them within the community and unfairly presenting them as 'poor schools with poor teachers' (Cox 2010; Australian Education Union 2008, Demaine 2002; Donnelly, 2005; Reid 2010; Robinson 2009). Supporters of the website argue that such information provides for transparency and that access to such information is the parent and carer's right and that they should have an option to use this information to purchase the best schooling for their child/ren (Murphy 2010).

My thinking is that the usefulness of My School is somewhere in between these two positions: some schools are failing their students and need comparative data to target interventions and program development more accurately but this data must also be contestable and the debate should be robust. Schools and school communities must have the opportunity to contest the

perceptions and judgments that may be made on the basis of the published results and policy makers must have the opportunity to legislate to improve schooling outcomes. However that said, as the debate about accountability and transparency continues what is not contestable is the fact that market principles are well embedded in school policy of the 2000's and beyond and that schooling is critical to the economic agendas and outcomes of nation states. Reflecting the needs of the nation state and the market discourse, teachers must produce students who can contribute their basic and functional literacies to national and state prosperity. Additionally, parents of students, based on the reported outputs of various schools, can consume schooling by choosing between the commodities (schools) on offer and the value of those commodities when seeking a school for their child (Coburn 2000; Demaine 2002). The sum of all these market driven reforms is foundational to what has come to be referred to as 'outcomes-based education' (OBE).

The OBE discourse, positioning schools within the demands of globalised economies, prescribes what students are 'expected to learn about and learn to do' (Alderson & Martin 2007; Spady 1994). Spady (1994) has defined OBE as a process of 'clearly focussing and organising everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences' (p. 1). This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organising the curriculum, instruction and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.

The evolution of an OBE approach to education in Australia, mirroring the approaches taken in the UK, Canada, New Zealand, Norway and North America, had its genesis in 1988, with the then federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, John Dawkins (Berlach 2004; Donnelly 2007). He called for such competencies against a backdrop of an economic recession and viewed schooling as a tool for economic revitalisation. School curricula were thus driven by an economic and political imperative to produce outcomes serving which national interest. Schools need to produce a more productive, literate, intelligent and technologically sophisticated workforce.

Policy imperatives situated within the OBE discourse reasonably argue that the nation-state will benefit from the changes: nation states will more ably compete in the economic globalised world (DEST 2005a, 2008). In addition, Australia is more competitive, more involved in transnational enterprises and wealthier by having a workforce focussed on increasing its personal wealth and status (DEEWR 2010; Federal Government 2008). These policies also reasonably argue advantage to student, student achievement and student life chances who will,

through clearly defined curricula, attain the knowledge and skills required to participate in the economic life of the nation state. However, I will argue in the next section that schools are not solely places where time honoured knowledge and traditions are passed on to young people. Nor are schools solely places that prepare students for the workforce or for their contribution to national and state prosperity. I want to argue that schools are also sites that participate in the ongoing pursuit of social justice for individuals and for communities as well as places where the individual has an obligation of service to other community members. I want to argue that the power differential that accompanies class, race and gender and structures that reinforce social and cultural control and class differentiation will frustrate student achievement and student outcomes. The following sections critique the OBE discourse and sets out the arguments both supporting and challenging its dominance in Australian, Victorian school policy debates.

### **Outcome-based education: pros and cons**

In the traditional approach to schooling, that is, prior to the tightening of connections between government agendas and school operations, schools were somewhat distant from the economic agendas of the nation state; student achievement was an individual pursuit, and schools provided a public good and a public service (Beare 1998). This has been replaced by a discourse that embeds schooling in national and state economic agendas: the OBE discourse. Student achievement is no longer a private pursuit and schools are no longer separated from contributing to the economic agendas of the nation state.

Australia's adoption of OBE and the accountability regimes accompanying OBE have been argued as having both positive and negative aspects. Support for OBE is situated within the neoliberal perspective and the negative points are situated within the critical perspective, cluster around three themes: accountability, accuracy and effectiveness.

### **OBE discourse: the pros**

*Accountability:* Firstly, OBE provides effective school accountability arrangements and gives direction to federal and state education policy. Secondly, the availability of accurate and detailed information on student and school performance provides the impetus needed to spur on the development of improved teaching and learning practices. Thirdly, OBE provides more efficient and accurate ways of determining the need for and use of school and community resources (DEECD 2008b; DEST 2005b; Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) 2008; Donnelly et al. 2005; OECD 2001).

*Accuracy:* Firstly, by providing a clearly defined set of outcomes, time spent in classrooms is manipulated in the best interests of what students need to learn and need to do in. Secondly, a prescribed set of outcomes will provide students with the skills and knowledge needed for participation in the economic life. Thirdly, OBE strategically focuses curriculum, strengthens student learning and optimises student performance (Federal Government 2008; Spady 1994).

*Effectiveness:* Firstly, national and state benchmarks provide fairer and more accurate evaluations of students, teachers and school performances. Secondly, students who reach the set benchmarks increase their life options, and have skills and knowledge to secure a way out of poverty and across the class divide, a passage to meaningful employment. Thirdly, on entering the workforce boost their own and the national income levels. (Comber 1997; Comber & Hill 2000; Connell 1994)

### ***OBE discourse: the cons***

*Accountability:* Firstly, increased expenditure on national or state curriculum statements, the establishment of a teaching professional body or the setting of benchmarks and standards do not necessarily raise the achievement levels of students. Secondly, focussing on testing regimes and individual student achievements overlooks structural inequities that compromise student achievement. Thirdly, an increased sense of accountability has implications for teacher professionalism in the global knowledge economy. Fourthly, the issue of trust is becoming increasingly important and in a high trust environment, workers are able to exercise their skills and knowledge effectively. Conversely, in a low trust environment new ideas remain undeveloped: ‘working conditions marked by hierarchical and segmented relations will fail to generate work-based cultures that lend themselves to creative endeavour’ (Avis 2003, p.320). In an OBE environment, increased surveillance and accountability is counterproductive to education innovation and curriculum reform and also exempts governments from supplying additional resources to schools (Avis 2003; 2004; Coburn 2000; Donnelly 2007; Hayward 2004; Saunders & Sutherland 2006; Singh. P & Taylor 2001). Fifthly, in a market choice system, parents have the power to choose schools, but a key point of debate is whether all parents are able to use accurate data, make informed decisions about the schools their children attend and whether they can afford those choices.

*Accuracy:* OBE argues that the completion of twelve years of schooling is synonymous with educational success, workforce participation and positive life chances. Australian research, while finding that the completion of twelve years of schooling is an important pathway to

employment, also found that school completion is not necessarily the only pathway to employment and participation in the economic life of the nation state or, by implication, positive life chances (Lamb, Rumberger, Jesson and Teese 2004). For example, the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), a research program that tracks young people as they move from school to post-school destinations, found that, for 64 per cent of the participants, the pathway into employment, participation in the economic life of the nation state and the eventual life chances that early school leaving delivered did not depend on the completion of twelve years of schooling. Participants in this research viewed early school leaving as a positive and timely move which replaced the need to complete school and gain a school qualification (Marks 2009).

*Effectiveness:* Student achievement is not solely a consequence of teacher input. A students' social, emotional, economic, physical or structural advantage or disadvantage has an impact on student outcomes. The OBE discourse disregards the limits to what teachers and schools can do to ameliorate the social, emotional, economic, physical or structural disadvantage that impedes student achievement. The hard-won prosperity that some students achieve is elusive for others since students' achievements and their eventual life chances are influenced by the structural, personal and social circumstances that accompany them into the classroom. In a market choice system, parents have the power to choose schools, but a key point of debate is whether all parents are able to make informed decisions and to afford those choices (Ball, S 1997; Ball, S. 1999; Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz 1994; Black 2006; Blyth, Kazi & Milner 1994; Brosio 2003; DEST 2005b). As will be discussed in later section, the social class location of their school populations has efficacy in how much schools can offset disadvantage. While some schools and their teachers will have the resources – human and other – to compensate for personal, educational and socio political disadvantage, others have no such access to resources (Boxely 2003; Catholic Education Office, Melbourne (CEOM) 2004; DEST 2005b; Linden 2007; Lynch & Moran 2006; Margison 2001).

Concerning the positive and negative arguments outlined above, my position is this. Measurement of student achievement is important; schools need to know that students are acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge that will give them passage into positive futures. However, a narrow focus on literacy and numeracy raises questions about what it is to be educated and runs the risk of limiting what is given priority in teaching and learning. Is it wise to restrict the measure of aptitude to a student's literacy and numeracy? Is aptitude merely the extent to which students are or are not able to become labour units in our industrialised, market-

driven economy? Is the ability to argue or think critically and to develop critical literacy valueless?<sup>6</sup> If not, how can critical literacy be measured and standardised or benchmarked? How important is the aptitude for developing thought, understanding and making choices? Robinson<sup>7</sup>, (2009) a visitor to Australia in 2009, observes that school systems often discourage creativity by favouring academic measurement ahead of creative ability. Falk (2000) and Harris and Ranson (2005) concur, arguing that the current OBE discourse runs counter to the notion of Australia as a 'clever country' and socially just country.

Further, there are many examples of children who have lived in impoverished circumstances, achieved scholastically and proceeded to very successful careers and contributions to society (me included), there are also children who have been unable to overcome the structural disadvantage in which they and their families find themselves. For these students, their family's social, cultural and economic disadvantage has not changed their destinies – educational or otherwise. The link between disadvantage and poor school outcomes has been well documented (Anderson 2005; Campbell 2004; Margison 2001; Martin, 2003; OECD 2000; Shaver 2004; Willms 2003). Socially, culturally and economically disadvantaged students have been unable to break the cycle of intergenerational under/unemployment. They have been unable to access resources that assist them in their learning and they have attended schools that are resource – human and otherwise – poor.

It could be argued that attention must be given to disadvantage as much as it is to student outcomes. 'Space' must be made in a student's circumstances and, more importantly in a School's capacity, to strengthen the social, emotional, cultural, spiritual as well as the academic capacity of disadvantaged students and 'space', in the form of compensatory or empowering strategies. These adjustments must be made by schools to address their students' disadvantage (Withers & Russell 1998). These factors, which will be further examined in the next chapter, 'Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning', are key determinants of a student's academic achievement and eventual participation in the social and economic life of the nation-state. Finally, in privileging a particular type of 'outcome' that is, performance, richer, more inclusive, more humane, conceptions of schooling, are displaced turning the gaze of policy-makers away from the need for a closer consideration of social and educational disadvantage and from the school's role in influencing social and cultural control and class

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<sup>6</sup> 'Critical literacy' refers to those skills that enable the student to engage in discourse analysis.

<sup>7</sup> Robinson, the central figure in developing the strategy for creative and economic development as part of the peace process in Northern Ireland which resulted in the blueprint for change, 'Unlocking Creativity' (2009) politicians of all parties and business, education and cultural leaders across the Northern Ireland provinces, adopted Robinson's blueprint.



differentiation (Doyle & Wells 1997; Lokan, Greenwood & Cresswell 2001). There is ample evidence to support the view that the interplay between social and cultural control and class differentiation and the school system has an impact on individual effort. Following is an examination of such evidence and an examination of how schools reinforce the social, cultural control and class differentiation.

### **Schools as sites of social and cultural control and class differentiation**

Not all scholars agree that schools who adopt OBE and the public and government accountability that accompanies OBE reinforce social, cultural control and class differentiation (Doyle & Wells 1997; Lynch & Moran 2006; MCEETYA 2000; McGraw 2006; Smith, R 1993; Sullivan 2001).

On one side of the argument are scholars who argue that schools who adopt the OBE focus on the improvement of literacy and numeracy standards decrease social disadvantage and social exclusion and increase social and cultural mobility between different classes (Connell 1994; Margison 2001). Their arguments are premised on the hypothesis that students are ‘stuck’ in the lower rungs of society because of the deleterious effects that accompanies the incompleteness of schooling and/or failure to reach learning benchmarks on participation in the workforce (Brown & Lauder 1996). Evidence of this hypothesis is found in Peel’s (2003) research. Peel’s research of students in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney communities confirmed that young people who failed to complete school and/or students who failed to achieve adequate and functional literacies were highly represented in unemployment and welfare dependency statistics.

Other scholars, drawing on the work of Foucault and Bourdieu, argue that schools adopting OBE’s focus on the improvement of literacy and numeracy standards increases social disadvantage and social exclusion because there are structural impediments to individual success. These scholars hold that school structures and practices are known to contribute (in part) to maintain inequalities, which further restricts social and cultural mobility between different classes (Apple 2004a; Brosio 2004; Coburn 2000; DEST 2005b; Graham 2007). They attribute this differentiation to schooling practices such as: the binary system of public and private schools, the dominance of exclusive curriculum exemplified by abstract and decontextualised knowledge taught on an individual basis, an all pervasive, competitive assessment system and school organisational arrangements that ‘stream’ different groups of students into different curriculum experiences – some that are more highly valued than others (Apple 2000; Harris, & Ranson 2005; Rupp & Lange 1989).

It could be argued that the truth is somewhere in between the two positions. While the hypothesis that the incompleteness of schooling and a failure to secure the skills and knowledge needed to participate in the workforce will lead to limited positive life chances and possible entrapment in low socioeconomic circumstances and classes, structural determinants cannot be overlooked. Student achievement is influenced by social location and schools do have a role in determining for their students social and cultural control and class differentiation. Certainly, as will be discussed in a later chapter, the narrative of many of the parents and carers that are the subject of this research have experienced the negative effects of uncompleted schooling and how St Paul's school contributed or not to its students' social location.

As an example of how structures and practices frustrate the OBE promise of student success and of how inequality of outcomes is perpetuated the OBE testing regime, I briefly turn my attention to the impact of testing students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). Lankshear (1998) highlights the injustice and adverse impact of testing students from NESB at a time when they are learning to become proficient in English. It is likely that NESB students who are dealing with resettlement in a new country, learning a new language and establishing themselves in a new community are disadvantaged by a schooling system that measures their progress via standardised tests. As Bourdieu (1983) has argued, the 'scholastic yield from educational action depends on the cultural capital previously invested by the family' (p 220). By using educational accountabilities in the form of measurements as sole measures of the effectiveness of schooling and student achievement, cultural capital is displaced from view as the hidden variable that influences student outcomes. Parents of NESB may not have the resources necessary to support their children's learning and they may not have the English proficiency to interact with their children and consequently the ability to assist them with their learning tasks. These students, possibly very competent in their own mother tongue, are marginalised from accurately indicating their literacy skills as well as any other achievement that they have acquired during their time at school.

It is also likely that parents and carers of students from NESB may have come from a country where the schooling system was different and/or where their role in their child's schooling was differently defined and managed. These parents and carers are additionally disadvantaged and further differentiated along lines of class by the new, unfamiliar schooling system. Further, since these parents and carers may lack the large stores of cultural capital that proceed from familiarity with social systems and/or abundance of social and economic resources, they may have limited participation in their children's schooling and/or the ability to manipulate the

‘school’ market to advantage their children compounding their class differentiation. If schools are to be truly about equality of outcomes, they must provide equality of opportunity. For NESB students, testing literacy and numeracy in prescribed years may need to be re examined if justice is to be served and equality of opportunity is to be realised.

Factors such as cultural and socioeconomic status cannot be ignored in the acquisition of human capital. Learning cannot be constructed as an activity that is independent of specific context or cultural frameworks. Leaving the example of the impact of testing NESB students and considering the wider circumstance of class differentiation, I ask the next question: what is the impact on school populations where students and parents and carers from low socioeconomic backgrounds, whose social, economic and cultural circumstances and class prevent them from contributing to school life? Critical theorists cogently answer this question by highlighting the interrelationship between low socioeconomic status, limited stores of social, economic and cultural capital and parent/carers capacity to contribute to school operations:

1. The concentration of poor parents and carers in low performing, low status schools (Grace 2002; Jamrozik 2001; Ryan, & Watson 2004)
2. The abandonment of the ‘community school’ as parents and carers are motivated to act in their own self-interest by covertly choosing their ‘better school’ reinforcing the educational power, image and market product that they aspire to (Apple 2001; Cahill et al. 2004; DEECD 2008b; Sheehan 2004) and
3. Poor parents and carers without the social, cultural and economic resources to contribute to school improvements concentrated in under resourced schools (Calder 2003; Griffiths 2005)

The cumulative impact of the above points is another impact: the impact that social and cultural control and class differentiation has on the pursuit of social justice.

Bastiani (1993), Margison (2001) and Martin (2003) contend that the rise in market choice and the concentration of cultural capital in the hands of those with more human capital has placed parents and schools in competition with each other. This, they continue, has had a negative impact on social justice outcomes and has failed to raise substantially the level of achievement in students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and in school systems and sectors. They continue that socioeconomic background is an important predictor of general success at school and levels of disadvantage still account, in part, for student achievement.

An International corpus of research on the nexus between social class, poverty and education supports this view as the achievements of students from low-income families are shown to continue to fall below those of their more affluent peers. However, in spite of the OECD's 'Program for International Student Assessment' (PISA)<sup>8</sup> and unchanging documentary evidence of the relationship between cultural and human capital and the potential for OBE to reinforce social stratification and arrangements that are contrary to social justice (OECD 1998, 2000, 2001), Australian policy-makers continue to support OBE policy and practice.

Dobell's (2001) research on student achievement and on student, family and the institutional factors that explain differences in student performance reinforces PISA (Lokan, Greenwood & Cresswell 2001) claims that, in the push for OBE, structural inequities are being ignored. Presenting at an international symposium on the relationship between social location and student achievement, Dobell showed that underachievement is closely linked to a student and family's socioeconomic circumstances and to those of specific communities. Children from low-income families did not, on average, overcome the hurdle of their lower initial academic achievement and social class differentials remained a powerful indicator of subsequent educational achievement.

This general statement is true of Australian students as well. Despite government policy interventions into what, when and how schools achieve, socially disadvantaged Australian students continue to miss international benchmarks. PISA ranked Australian students high in average literacy proficiency but low in equity (OECD 2001). Lamb et al. (2004) and Rumberger, Jesson and Teese's (2004) analysis of the influence of socioeconomic status and school sector on school performance, found that school performance was strongly linked to student background. Further Lamb et al. found that a concentration of high-achieving students in a school population provided certain schools with a platform on which to build successful outcomes for their students. Students' achievements and their eventual life chances are advantaged or disadvantaged by the social and economic resources provided by the family, and their parents' choices and capacity to mobilise their cultural and economic capital in favour of their children's passage through schooling. In short, parents and carers rich in cultural and social resources could support their children's academic achievement and conversely schools

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<sup>8</sup> The *PISA* study is the most detailed international analysis ever undertaken to assess student performance and collects data on student, family and institutional factors that can explain differences in performance. It measured the reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy of 265,000 15-year-olds in 32 countries during 2000, with 6,200 students from 231 schools in Australia participating.

rich with the cultural and social resources of their parent and population could support student achievement.

For disadvantaged students in disadvantaged schools, the cumulative effect is that many children perform below national and international benchmarks and have poor educational achievement patterns. As this thesis is being written Marslen (2010) wrote that the OECD's annual 'Going for Growth' report, released on 10 April 2010, found that social stratification is more marked in Victorian schools than elsewhere in Australia. Children of well-off parents and carers are more likely to be enrolled in private school or in state schools in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, where they mix with others of the same socioeconomic grouping. This pattern has been found by others as replicated and continued across generations and within communities leading to social differentiation that fails to bridge the gap between class structure and educational failure (Harris, A & Ranson 2005; Nelson & Edwards 2006; Verhoeven & Vermeer 2006).

Rather than increasing social equity, the marketisation of schooling and the processes used in the OBE approach to schooling further entrenches disadvantage, further stratifies sectors of society and further destroys public faith in educational institutions (Comber 1997; Henry 2001). The result of this is that compensating for individual, educational and socio political disadvantage while simultaneously using the school collective to empower and redress disadvantage is much easier in schools that have middle class, culturally affluent school populations than in schools that are poor in cultural affluence. For schools that are unable to harness the social, cultural and economic resources of their parent and carer populations, they must seek out and adopt other strategies to compensate for the individual, educational and socio political disadvantage of their student population while simultaneously using the school collective to empower and redress disadvantage. Before addressing one school's attempt to do this that is, St Paul's school's attempt, I need to describe the Catholic school system since an understating of Catholic schools provides the context of the research that will be presented in chapters six.

### **The Catholic school and outcome-based education**

While the scope of this thesis does not permit a theological exploration of the distinctive qualities of the Catholic school, it is important to note that Catholic schools, like other Catholic institutions, draw on CST and Canon Law<sup>9</sup> when determining how they shape their work and

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<sup>9</sup> Canon law is the universal law that governs the Catholic Church.

mission. For this reason, this analysis stands alone and focuses on the Catholic school's role within a system that is funded by Federal and State governments. As directed by Canon Law, Catholic schools are places where parents are recognised as the first and lifelong educators of their children. Canon Law also supports the right of parents to send their children to a denominational school and the establishment of schools as the principle means by which parents can fulfil their role as educators (Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand 1983). This section in no way wants to suggest that Catholic schools have a different purpose to Government schools or that Government schools are inferior to Catholic schools. Nor do I want this section to imply that the establishment of a Catholic school system is preferable to a free, secular government school system. Rather, since this research is about a particular Catholic school within the Catholic school sector, the following sections are limited to an examination of the establishment of the Catholic School in Australia and to a brief examination of the role of the Catholic school in an OBE policy environment.

### **Catholic schools: a short history**

In Australia, following the State Education Acts in the 1870s stating that schools would be free, compulsory and secular, Australian Catholic bishops decided to establish their own schools. Subsequently, in the 1870s and 1890s, based on the belief that education should encompass the whole person – academically, aesthetically and physically as well as in terms of their religious, moral and spiritual development and should be wholly permeated by a religious sensibility, the Australian bishops introduced a Catholic education system (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 1985; Pascoe 2004).

By the end of the nineteenth century, a comprehensive system of Catholic schools was established in Australia. These schools were to have three underlying principles. They were to be available to all, especially the neediest and therefore had to be run at low cost since the socioeconomic status of students and families was not to be an inhibitor to enrolment in a Catholic school, a position I will argue as being at risk in a later section of this section. They were to be staffed by religious men and women and they were to be located in the Catholic parish. With the exception of the second principle, a result of the diminishing numbers of religious men and women available to staff schools over the years, these principles continue to underpin the rationale for the existence of Australian Catholic schools (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 1985; Pascoe 2004).

Pascoe (2004), reviewing the role of Catholic schooling in Australia, maintains that Catholic schools, over time have had three purposes. Their purpose as community schools is

to make the schools available to all Catholics, irrespective of income and position, and hence at low cost; to staff them with religious orders rather than with lay persons; and to base them on the parish system – closely reflecting the socioeconomic mix of society at large. (Pascoe, 2004, p. 2)

As public institutions their purpose is

not ... [to be] a private initiative but ... an expression of the reality of the Church, having by its very nature a public character. Catholic schools, like state schools, fulfil a public role, for their presence guarantees cultural and educational pluralism and, above all, the freedom, and right of families to see that their children receive the sort of education they wish for. (Congregation of Catholic Education, 1997: 16–17). (Pascoe, 2004, p. 4)

And as significant service providers their purpose is to

Tak[e] responsibility for the receipt and distribution of government funding and for the monitoring, accountability and reporting on expenditure and educational outcomes. (Pascoe, 2004, p. 5)

These principles and purposes remain central to the activities of Catholic education authorities in each Australian state and territory. In each Australian state and territory primary and secondary schools have been established under the authority of the bishop of their diocese. Bishops delegate this authority to education offices and Catholic Education Commissions who act on behalf of their respective bishop, implementing Catholic Education Commission policies and assisting Catholic schools to maintain the highest possible standards of learning and teaching (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 1994; Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b; Pascoe 2004). The current OBE discourse could be argued as potentially compromising a Catholic school's ability to follow CST and particularly their role as community schools. The following section presents my arguments.

### **For Caesar or for God: Catholic schools and government funding**

As both an academic and a religious community, a Catholic school receives funding from Australian federal and state governments and therefore must comply with the education policies and practices mandated by these authorities. Thus, they must comply with the counting and accounting agendas that have become dominant themes in federal, state and territory education policies (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b). In 2009, Victorian Catholic primary schools, which account for 22 per cent (256) of the school population in Victoria, received 56 per cent of their total income from the Australian Federal Government and 16 per cent from the

State Government. They remaining 28 per cent of their income is raised through fees and other private sources (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2008)<sup>10</sup>.

As recipients of government funding, Victorian Catholic primary schools are not exempt from the OBE policy imperatives of adoption of and participation in national and state wide testing and reporting regimes and the adoption of national and state curriculum. Like government schools, the business of Catholic schools is to conform to mainstream schooling policy and to develop their students' human capital. Learning and acquiring human capital, sits alongside believing as the purpose of Catholic schooling. As do government schools, Victorian Catholic schools are required to commit to the suite of mandates set by federal and state governments. High levels of commitment to reporting, accountability, transparency and collaboration are all fundamental dimensions of the regulatory environment in which the Catholic education sector operates (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 2006).

However, while it can be reasonably argued that complying with these funding requirements promotes accountability and transparency, disregarding the impact of family circumstances on student achievement raises an inherent contradiction in which the Victorian Catholic school serves both 'Caesar and God' (Luke 20:26). My position is that Catholic schools and the marketisation of schooling and the imposition of an OBE discourse runs counter to the Catholic schools mission. Why? Firstly, a Catholic school system which cooperates with the marketisation of schooling potentially marginalises the students and families they are meant to serve. For example Minto-Cahill (2005) using evidence from the Census of Housing and Population which incorporates data on family income and religion, reported a decline in the enrolment of poor Catholic children from poor families enrolled in Catholic schools. She also wrote that the same report indicated that Catholic children from low socioeconomic groups were less likely to attend Catholic schools than their more affluent peers and that children from low socioeconomic groups were less likely to attend Catholic Secondary schools than they are to attend Catholic primary schools. This same trend was found in Catholic Education Commission, Victoria's (CECV) (2004) research into the affordability of Catholic Schools. This 2004 report found that enrolments of students from low-income families had declined between 1998 and 2001 (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 2004). The CEOM restates in its mission statement the role of Catholic education in addressing structural disadvantage and its own commitment to social justice and equity:

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<sup>10</sup> Private income for Victorian Catholic primary schools typically comes from school-based fundraising activities.



[The CEOM] is committed to the equitable distribution of resources, with a special solicitude towards poor and needy communities, individuals and families; and advocates for and promotes Catholic schools as public institutions contributing to the achievement of the public goals of excellence and equity. (CEOM 2008 p. 2)

Since CST requires that Catholic educators care for the marginalised the findings of the two reports noted earlier, Catholic schools may be failing the students and families they are called to serve. For Catholic school leaders 'playing the market' and attempting to attract into and maintain in their school populations middle class, affluent parents and carers who can contribute their human and capital resources to the school, makes it much more difficult to serve the poor and powerless. In an OBE policy context the school principal, with support from Catholic Education Offices, must find ways to include and support poor students and their families in the school community. Calling upon the resources and skills of middle class, affluent parents and carers to contribute their human and capital resources in ways that would benefit their own and other children's schooling may go part of the way to offset the alienation of poorer students from the Catholic school.

Secondly, the outcomes and accountability regimes that the Catholic education system must adhere to if it is to receive public money from federal and state authorities may compromise the fundamental mission of the Catholic school. If complying with the expectations and demands of an OBE discourse becomes the focus of schooling, the Catholic school may be compromising the distinctive religious culture of Catholicity itself. Grace (2002) makes such arguments when she writes that Catholic schools that are

Preoccupied by the visible and measurable in education [do so to the] detriment of the invisible and more intangible outcomes of education. The potential for Catholic schools to be incorporated into the secular marketplace of education [may] weaken their relation to the sacred and the spiritual and the distinctive culture of Catholicity itself. (p. 5)

I note that, in the 2007 Annual Report, the CEOM's mission statement lists accountability to funding bodies and parents ahead of the call for an equitable distribution of resources and the care of the poor and needy (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2008). While I celebrate the fact that Catholic schools have successfully provided schooling to many generations and continue to be instrumental in developing young people's human and cultural capital, I also argue that the Catholic school needs to be vigilant in reconciling OBE policy imperatives with the distinctive culture of Catholic schooling. The challenge for a Victorian Catholic School bounded by the impositions of OBE is it negotiates this balance in such a way as to keep in sharp focus its fundamental mission. The mission of serving the most disadvantaged, advocating for the equitable distribution of resources and care for the poor and needy, paying equal

attention to the wellbeing of each and every student and to policies and practices that are designed to support both student achievement and student wellbeing. One way of how Victorian Catholic schools can negotiate this balance is the subject of this thesis: the St Paul's Model.

### **Rest note**

This chapter, 'Compositions of the Schoolyard' examined the changing nature of Australian, schooling with a particular focus on Victoria in the 1990s and beyond. Specifically this chapter:

1. Argued that global trends and issues have influenced education policy. Literature indicated that the marketisation of schooling and the introduction of OBE resulted from the importance of schooling to national and state prosperity.
2. Argued that young people's acquisition of skills and knowledge is critical to individual, national and state prosperity.
3. Examined how the introduction of the market discourse and its accompanying managerial principles to schooling during the Kennett Liberal party led years (1992–1999) and beyond, reformed schools. Literature showed that Kennett's market discourse had three aims: efficiency, economy and effectiveness and that these reforms are recognisable in what is currently referred to as 'outcomes-based education'.
4. Argued that OBE focuses schools on three things: accountability, accuracy and effectiveness. Presenting the positive and negative aspects of OBE argued by different scholars, I presented my position. This position was that while student achievement must be the focus of school operations and school policy, equal attention must be given to the structural conditions that impact student learning: social, emotional, cultural and economic circumstances.
5. Examined how schools are sites of social and cultural control and class differentiation. Literature indicated that cultural and socioeconomic status cannot be ignored in the acquisition of human capital.
6. Presented a short history and contextualised the Catholic school within the current market discourse and OBE policy context. It was argued that Catholic schools must balance the imposts of OBE with CST's call to focus on the poor and disadvantaged and to achieve at school.

The next chapter 'Composition of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning' examines the socio-ecological determinants that further influence a student's passage through schooling and eventual life chances. Student wellbeing will be examined as a chief contributor to student

achievement as will the concern by school authorities with the promotion of student wellbeing since some students are recognised as needing additional support and attention to help them develop into adulthood as self-respecting, responsible, autonomous and healthy people.

Student wellbeing<sup>11</sup> refers to the student's health along physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions. Improved student wellbeing is positively associated with improved outcomes for students in all aspects of their schooling. Students with positive stores of wellbeing who are not distracted by significant physical, social and emotional issues are better able than those without to engage with learning and teaching programs (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2007a; McGraw 2006; St Paul's 2005c; Waters, Goldfeld & Hopkins 2002). Moreover, attending to the social and affective education of students supports the development of their academic learning. Conversely, schools that disregard the former will fail at the latter (MCEETYA 2000; Weare 2000; WHO 1998). Roost's (2004) statement, in his address to the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS), succinctly explains the interdependence between student wellbeing and student achievement: 'good performance promotes health, and health promotes good performance' (p. 7). Positive health and positive performance ultimately presents students with multiple social, emotional and educational competencies.

Socially, there is a correlation between high-achieving students and high levels of social competence and the skills. Students with positive stores of wellbeing experience an increased capacity for positive social skills (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006c; Eckersley, Wierenga & Wyn 2006; Keleher & Armstrong 2005). Positive wellbeing strengthens students' positive social networks with their peers and their relationships with their teachers and contributes to their levels of social competencies and their acceptance and connectedness and belonging with these networks (Withers & Russell 1998). It also contributes to the students' ability to successfully navigate and complete their schooling (Spence, Burns, Boucher, Glover, Graetz, Kay, Patton & Sawyer 2005; St Leger 2004; Thomas 2005; VicHealth 2005; Whitehead 2006). Emotionally, students with positive stores of wellbeing have increased abilities in problem solving and in taking the perspective of others. A high store of wellbeing also enhances management of negative emotions and goal setting, and flexibility and persistence. All of which are required to competently self-regulate one's emotions and behaviour and decrease a student's likelihood to engage in self-harm (Barnard 1997; Brown & Lauder 2000; Cahill et al.

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<sup>11</sup> The literature also uses the terms 'resilience', 'social emotional learning' and 'social capital' interchangeably when referring to student wellbeing

2004; Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006a; DEST 2005b; McDaid, Curran & Knapp 2005).

As student wellbeing and student outcomes are interrelated, schools, whose mission it is to further student achievement, must invest effort in promoting student wellbeing. Rather than diverting schools from their focus on the development of human capital, school-based approaches aimed at improving student wellbeing advance the academic mission of schools while also ensuring that they meet their broader mission to produce caring, responsible and knowledgeable students. The development of student wellbeing thus provides students with basic skills for success not just in school but ultimately in their personal, professional and civic lives (Cahill et al. 2004; Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006a; St Paul's 2005c; Thomson 1999). The next chapter, 'Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning' examines student wellbeing.

## **Chapter 3: Compositions of student wellbeing: preconditions to learning**

In Chapter Two I discussed the role of schooling, the global trends and issues that have influenced education policy, the schools role in providing students with the necessary skills and knowledge required to advance both individual and national and state prosperity and the current emphasis on OBE. The previous chapter also examined how the introduction of the market discourse in schools and its accompanying managerial principles focussed schools on three things: accountability, accuracy and effectiveness. Presenting the positive and negative aspects of OBE the argument was put that while student achievement must be the focus of school operations and school policy equal attention must be given to the structural conditions and arrangements that impact student learning that is, to the student's cultural and socioeconomic circumstances. Arguing that cultural and socioeconomic status cannot be ignored in the acquisition of human capital literature examined how indicated schools are structurally arranged to maintain class structures, social control and class differentiation. Next, as is the interest of this thesis, I examined the Catholic school. I presented a short history and contextualised the Catholic school within the current market discourse and OBE policy context. I argued that Catholic schools must balance the impositions of OBE with CST's call to focus on the poor and disadvantaged and to be a voice of justice in the community. The previous chapter concluded by arguing that student wellbeing must be taken into account in all considerations of schooling and in all policy and practice contexts since positive health ultimately provides students with the social and emotional resources that contribute to student achievement.

Chapter Three, 'Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning' reviews the relevant literature from the social health discourse to provide another relevant aspect of the current knowledge that sets the context for this thesis. As stated earlier it is not my intention to ignore the value of student achievement but my interest here is student wellbeing. In addition to attainment of academic ability there is plenty of evidence that student wellbeing is an important if not crucial precondition for the development of human capital if a student is to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to participate in society and benefit socially, culturally and economically from this (Comber 1997; Comber & Hill 2000; Hauser & Featherman 1976). To

attain student wellbeing the social support of family, communities and society in general is needed (Keleher & Armstrong 2005). This support should be provided at the place where students live and work. This chapter will review literature that examines the school as one site where student wellbeing can and must be supported and promoted if student human capital is to be developed. To examine the role of schools in developing student wellbeing this chapter will:

1. Review the health and wellbeing literature and its approaches to public health policy. To do this I will outline two approaches to public health policy, the biomedical and socio-ecological discourses.
2. Examine the WHO's socio-ecological approach to public health and the health promoting conferences and charters that inform global, national and local public health policy
3. Explore the identification of schools as significant sites for health promotion and the development of the health promoting school (HPS) vis-à-vis the WHO HPS framework as well as examining the major debates that accompanied the transfer of the WHO HPS framework to the school site.
4. Examine the establishment of the HPS in Australian schools context, the historical differences in approaches to health and health education in schools and the Australian Federal and State policies and initiatives that developed in response to public health issues, particularly youth suicide. Literature will indicate that, at both Federal and State government levels, recognition of the importance of student wellbeing was driven by health policy rather than education policy. I will also argue that the assessment of health promoting schools must respond to both efficacy and effectiveness debates if the HPS is to become embedded in the student wellbeing paradigm
5. Examine the teacher's role in the health promoting school. I will argue that teachers are caught in both the OBE neoliberal, economic rationalist agenda as well as the HPS socio-ecological agenda. I will argue that the policy imperatives of an OBE policy environment causes dilemmas for health promoting school teachers
6. Examine how health promotion and HPS principles are arranged in Victorian schools. To do this I will examine the Department of Education Employment and Training's (DEET's) 'Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (Four Levels of Activity)' adhered to by Victorian government schools and secondly the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010 followed by Victorian Catholic

primary schools. This examination contextualises why Victorian Catholic schools developed an alternative framework to DEET's 'Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (Four Levels of Activity)'.

7. Compare the Victorian Government and Catholic primary school HPS frameworks and strategies in order to articulate the differences between Victorian government and Catholic school health promoting frameworks.

The relevance of this chapter to the thesis is its examination of student wellbeing and the school structures that support student wellbeing. Such an examination addresses RQ global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse and provides information and contextual analysis against which to examine the St Paul's Model, one approach to developing a HPS.

### **Understanding health and wellbeing: The biomedical and socio-ecological discourses**

All civilisations have valued health as an important element of individual welfare and happiness and also as a key element in a broader societal context – for social cohesion, productivity and economic sustainability. The ancient Greeks viewed health as a great good; Indigenous cultures view health as a consequence of harmonious living with the environment, while Eastern traditions conceive a mind–body balance as the prerequisite of health (Saylor 2004; Weare 2000). However, acknowledging the importance of health in the human experience does not translate into a consensus on health promotion approaches nor the shape of public health policy. Two opposite approaches are considered in this thesis: the biomedical approach at one end and the socio-ecological approach at the other (Keleher & Armstrong 2005; Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Renwick 2006).

The biomedical discourse, developed in the earlier part of the twentieth century, uses the physiological lens to understand and manage health. Its focus on health is simply 'the absence of disease'. Consequentially public health policy concentrates on and puts resources towards managing the physiological and risk factors in individuals and population groups. Individuals enter and gain access to health intervention through their exposure to traditional medical personnel such as general practitioners, nurses and allied health practitioners whose main treatment goal is the improvement of individuals' personal behaviour and the control of their disease. The procedures and practices used in the biomedical approach are expert led and individuals are recipients rather than agents in health and wellness management.

This management is typically concerned with cause and effect of illnesses and symptoms of ill health and is typically aimed at containing individual illness through the use of scientific based medical care and or pharmaceutical developments, for example, large-scale immunisation of the general population to prevent the spread of disease (Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Sturgeon 2006). Consequently the biomedical discourse emphasises primary care and disease prevention by focusing policy intervention on the treatment, diagnoses and screening of individuals and on offering individuals advice and services in order to treat and prevent illness occurring in their lives. With individuals as the primary target of health interventions an individual's social, environmental and political life factors and conditions are not considered; health is a private matter and managed by specialised knowledge and/or special methods of intervention and cure for particular conditions and ills. From a structural perspective the biomedical approach pays little regard to the impact of an individual's social life on her/his health nor does it factor into consideration the impact of how, for example, social class, housing and/or unemployment contributes to poor health (Jamrozik 2001). The socio-ecological approach (also referred to as the social health model) challenges the biomedical model by arguing that the attainment of good health must consider how structural arrangements impact on health in order to fully understand the context in which individual health can be discussed and improved.

The socio-ecological discourse had its genesis in the latter part of twentieth century. Informed by what Saracci (1997) refers to as a major advance in understanding health, encapsulating the WHO's (1978) definition of health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. This focus on complete wellbeing began to change the previously dominant focus on medical solutions towards the individual's social, environmental and political circumstances as an important determiner of an individual's 'good health and wellbeing' as well as a determiner of the level of health and wellness experienced by individuals (Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Labonte & Schrecker 2006). For example, in contrast to the biomedical health discourse, the socio-ecological discourse locates negative health within structural inequalities and aims to redress these inequalities caused by, for example, poverty, unemployment and/or social class influence health.

Premised on the principle that the road to good health requires the collaboration between the realm of an individual's social life, health policy and health management extends its focus beyond primary care to influence the political and economic sectors in which the individual exists. The principle aim of this influence is to empower individuals and their community to



create supportive, engaged environments wherein individuals, health professionals and communities can advocate, mediate and reorient health services on behalf of individual and groups for structures that promote and sustain good health (Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007). As summarised in Table 3.1 the differences between the biomedical and socio-ecological approaches are in aims, method and target groups and actions.

Table 3.1: Comparison between biomedical and socio-ecological approaches and understandings of health

	Biomedical	Socio-ecological
Approach	Primary care, disease prevention	Socio-ecological health promotion
Aims	To improve physiological risk factors and personal behaviour	Redress of inequality Locate and address health determinants in social, political and economic structures within which individuals and population groups exist
Methods	To manage interventions through individual contact with primary healthcare services	Manages interventions through primary health care, community engagement, supportive environments, advocacy, mediation, reorientation of health services towards empowerment and engagement,
Target groups and action	Individuals, expert-led, passive clients	Active clients and communities Changes in communities and organisations

Note: Based on Keleher, MacDougall and Murphy 2007.

The socio-ecological approach to health and wellbeing is particularly pertinent to this thesis. Concerned with student wellbeing as a critical factor in student achievement, an understanding of the socio-ecological approach to health and health promotion contributes a way in which schools can develop health promoting environments and how actions that promote and develop the right to health, like the right to education, can meld into the fabric of school structures. To explore and examine how schools can be health promoting, the next section reviews a number of WHO health conferences and subsequent declarations which have made personal health and health promotion a matter of public policy. They have also provided policy direction in which nations could strategically address the structural determinants of health and the inequalities that militate against the attainment of health and wellbeing (WHO 1984, 2000, 2001a).

### **The World Health Organization: health and public policy**

Writing on global health governance Huynen et al. (2005) and St Leger (2004) argue that, in this time of globalisation and neoliberal discourses the most important organisations are the WHO and the World Bank. The World Bank since it identifies poor health as a factor that inhibits learning, the acquisition of human capital and the importance of good health for

economic development and productivity and the WHO since its policy debates and developments assists governments to strengthen their health services and health promotion efforts. Chief amongst WHO's policy debates and developments are the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) established at the 1990 world summits and which focus on global partnerships as a means for their attainment. These global partnerships, made a commitment to reach the MDG by 2015, target and respond to the world's main development challenges: poverty, education, maternal health, gender equality, child mortality, AIDS and other diseases (<http://www.undp.org/mdg/>). The precursors to the MDG goals and which have provided leadership on global health matters are the WHO's public health policy charters (see Appendix 1 for a summary of these Charters). WHO have been active in promoting global health policy initiatives for over thirty years or more.

The first of these was the WHO Alma-Ata Declaration, (1978) signed by one hundred and thirty four nations including Australia. Alma-Ata took account of the wellbeing of citizens in many contexts, cities, hospitals and schools. It emphasised health actions that improved people's wellbeing, functioning and resilience and strengthened the health promoting structures within these contexts (WHO 1978). Reaffirming health as a fundamental human right, the socio-ecological values of social justice and equity and advocacy and mediation as the processes for their achievement, the Alma-Ata Declaration concentrated on structural determinants for health, for example, poverty, unemployment. Alma-Ata also highlighted the need for the social and economic sectors to work with the health sector when developing and implementing health policy (WHO 1978). Alma-Ata's call to focus on the structural determinants of health was emphasised by the WHO conference held in Ottawa, Canada. In Ottawa, the world's nations came together and produced the now famous Ottawa Charter (1986). The charter had important implications for Australia as well as the rest of the world.

The Ottawa Charter (1986), carrying forward and adopting the WHO's 1948 understanding of health, added the consideration of the structural determinants of health and health promotion to its policy directions. This charter is credited with 'redefining health promotion, repositioning institutions, communities and actors at the health end of the disease-health continuum and overcoming the individualistic understanding of lifestyles' (Mittelmark 2007, p. 99). Consistent with the socio-ecological discourse, the Ottawa Charter defined health promotion as 'the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health' (WHO 1986). Stressing the agency of social environments and the policy contexts of health promotion the Ottawa Charter established five areas for public health. These are: creating supportive

environments; strengthening community action by empowering people to have more control over their health; developing personal skills to promote the empowerment of communities; reorienting health services towards illness prevention and health promotion; and building healthy public policies by putting health on the planning agendas at all level of government (WHO 1986). Young (2005) asserts that the Ottawa Charter added scope and purpose to health promotion and had the potential to reconcile different viewpoints on the relative roles of the both the individual and society in promoting health.

Subsequent WHO health promotion conferences in Adelaide (1988), Sundsvall (1991), Jakarta (1997), Mexico (2000), Bangkok (2005) – attracted global attention to the private and public, personal and political aspects of health. These conferences underscored WHO's foundational principle of people's involvement and cooperation between sectors of society and primary health care. Importantly, the 'Putting Mental Health on the European Agenda (1998–2000)', strongly advocated the contribution of public health policy to a population's wellbeing and to an individual's acquisition of social, human and cultural capital (Lehtinen 1997).

Crucial to this thesis because of its specific mention of the role of schools in facilitating and supporting the wellbeing of individuals and communities is the Sundsvall (1991) declaration. The third of the international health conferences, Sundsvall continued WHO's pursuit of global, national and local public health policy focus on the need to provide supportive environments for health. Concentrating on the socio political and economic determinants of health Sundsvall highlighted four aspects to include in public health policy. Firstly, the social dimension, including consideration of the impact of cultural norms and social processes. Secondly, the political dimension requiring governments to guarantee democratic participation in decision making and a commitment to human rights and peace. Thirdly, the economic dimension requiring nations to re-channel resources to achieve health for all. Fourthly, importantly, the need to recognise women's skills and knowledge in health work promotion (Green & Tones 1999).

Arguing the need for public health policy to provide supportive environments Sundsvall emphasised settings as pivotal in shaping the health outcomes of communities and individuals. The Sundsvall declaration emphasised the family, schools and workplaces, as well as local neighbourhoods and specific micro networks such as religious groups, or community places such as libraries as health promoting settings and important determinants of good health (WHO 2000). Underpinned by the socio-ecological epistemology, Sundsvall's focus on health promoting settings advanced the belief that each setting, although having a unique culture and

climate, remains interconnected to others in various ways. Thus, the Sundsvall conference consolidated WHO's reorientation of health policy advocating that individuals should have agency in the treatments and interventions in their own health. As important was the WHO's clearly articulated statement that health actions cannot treat groups as homogenous. Instead, groups had to be viewed as having their own sets of characteristics that do or do not contribute to the advancement of individual health and wellbeing. These characteristics must be factored into any health policy plans and programs (Renwick 2006). While the concerns with health and health promotion is not new, Sundsvall's and the WHO reemphasis of the agency of settings is as health promoting has engendered new debate and refocus in schools. The next section examines health, health education and the health promoting school.

### **Health, health education and the health promoting school**

As stated earlier, in advocating a settings approach to health actions and health promotion, Sundsvall (1991) singled out schools in particular as institutions that are in several ways appropriate settings for health promotion and health actions. WHO recognised that the importance of the school site lay in its existing structures and in their efficacy of promoting and implementing a health promotion agenda for its young citizens. WHO's recognition of schools in health promotion was not new. Kickbusch, adviser to the WHO Regional Office for Europe as early as 1984, was the first to conceptualise the school as a health promotion site. Kickbusch's original discussion paper set out the broad concepts and principles of health promotion. In turn, Kickbusch's work engendered further debate which set out the social model of health and ideas on the role of the state in promoting health (International Union for Health Promotion and Education 2005).

In 1984, the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) setting out its core interests as defending health education and locating the role of health education in a broader policy framework of health and health promotion, promoted schools as institutions that had a significant impact on a nation's health. This was reiterated in the 2006 Millennium Goals' call for countries to invest in their people through health care and education (<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/>). Arguing that schools are critical partners in the promotion and attainment of individual health, in 1985 WHO assigned to its collaborating centre, the Scottish Health Education Group (ENHPS), the task of organising a symposium to deliberate on the role and function of schools as health promoting settings. Pursuing a policy focus on the structural determinants of health the IUHPE, health promotion alliances and partnerships originating in the Scottish Health Education Symposium developed into the

European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS). Formally established in 1992, the ENHPS a joint initiative between the Council of Europe, the WHO European Office and the Commission of the European Communities. Collaborations and alliances, all committed to promoting the HPS framework, gradually spread from Europe to include Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and, in 2008, South Africa. Viewed as a pragmatic vehicle for the establishment of health alliances and strategic operational partnerships that provide method, outcome and project status to the HPS discourse, the ENHPS re emphasised the link between health and education, citing education as a major determinant of health in that education contributes to people's health through health literacy (Rowling 2003). One hundred and fifty delegates from twenty-eight member states attended this symposium.

This symposium was significant because it offered WHO an opportunity to apply its developing theoretical model of health promotion to the school setting (Young & Williams 1989). The symposium report described the HPS as 'a combination of health education and all the other actions which a school takes to protect and improve the health of those within it' (Young 2005 p.113). The symposium reiterated the importance of the school site. Schools have at their disposal existing infrastructure to incorporate the educational opportunities needed to advance health and wellbeing agendas. School staff are trained in the provision of education, access and links to health services which are all useful in incorporating and reinforcing health messages and health actions not only for students and staff but useful for later life as well (Deschesnes, Martin & Hill 2003; Paulus 2009; WHO 1991). More importantly, WHO recognised that schools have access to the major influences on children's health: family, peers and the local community that can be harnessed successfully for the effective promotion of good health messages to the younger members of society as well as suggesting strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle throughout the individuals lifespan (McBride, Midford & Cameron 1999). Moreover, the ENHPS symposium finalised and elaborated its conceptualisation of the health promoting school. The ENHPS reframed health promotion away from the traditional approach of health education which concentrated on knowledge acquisition, attitudinal and behavioural change towards a consideration of the structural determinant of health, for example, poverty.

An outcome of this symposium was the commitment of three pilot schools in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenian Republic (which now has more than forty countries committed to the implementation of HPS, Australia included) to carry out its HPS schools agenda. In present day the HPS discourse, which links democracy, participation and health, has gained acceptance as one of the most powerful approaches to promoting health, empowerment and action

competence in and with schools (Clift & Jensen 2005). Thus, during the 1990s, as the socio ecological approach to health was being clearly articulated, the roles schools might play in health promotion and how health and wellbeing programs might be resourced and managed within the school site were also becoming clarified (IUHPE 2000; National and Medical Research Council 1996; St Leger 2000).

For example WHO's IUHPE conference considered the effectiveness of health promotion, specifically the different issues emerging from the HPS discourse. These issues included such things as the effectiveness of school based health promotion, indicators for success and evaluation approaches and methods as well as the socio-ecological principle that health and health promotion was more than the acquisition of health knowledge Egmond and Zee (2000). The firm position of the delegates attending the IUHPE conference was that health and health promotion should simultaneously address health literacy as well as other domains of individuals' lives that is, the affective and behavioural, social, economic and political impacts on health components of health and health promotion (Clift & Jensen 2005; Keleher & Armstrong 2005). This argument is consistently supported by a growing corpus of scholarship from scholars like Jones and O'Byrne (2003), St Leger (1999), Kickbusch (1998; 1998), Walker (2004) and Weare (2000, 2002). In their scholarship these scholars consistently argue that disregarding the structural determinants of health shifted the blame for and burden of ill health onto the individual in isolation from the social, political and economic context within which the individual lived and worked ultimately reinforcing social, economic and cultural disadvantage.

Using an ecological settings approach, the HPS framework establishes the need to improve outcomes for all school stakeholders: students, staff and the wider community (Stewart-Brown 2001; WHO 1998). School-based activities in HPS are predicated on the mutually reinforcing relationship between health and education and on a commitment to promote student health and to creating conditions that are supportive of effective learning (WHO 1998, 2006). At its core, the HPS discourse recognises the importance of attending to the socio-ecological circumstances of the children who 'arrive everyday not ready to learn'<sup>12</sup> (Croll 2004; Harvey 2006; Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Allen-Meares 2002; Woolcock 2001). In the absence of structural and social group support and confronted with the impact of poverty, unemployment, family disharmony and social disadvantage on student programs and practices, the HPS focuses on creating an environment that is conducive to health and health promotion (Boyd, 1996;

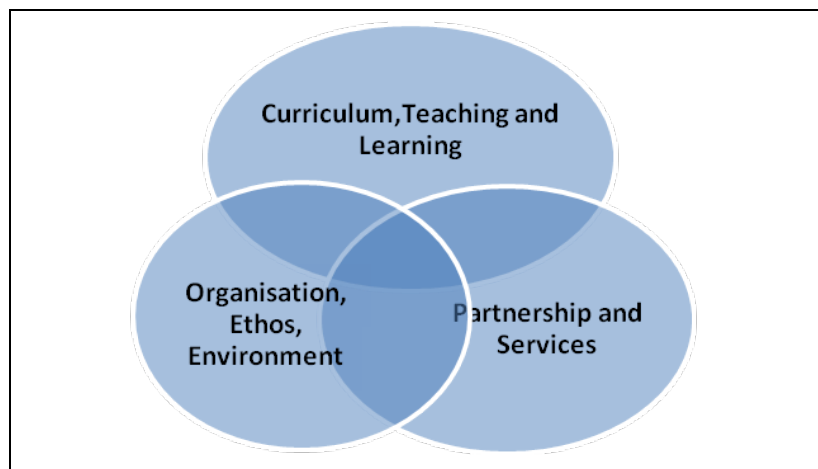
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<sup>12</sup> This is the term I use to describe how children's life circumstances impact on their schooling. Experience has taught me that many children grow up in conditions of severe stress, risk or adversity and that these experiences impact on children's ability to attend to the task of schooling.

Sergovianni 1994; Weare 2000). Accordingly, the HPS framework concentrates on social and cognitive outcomes (WHO 1995).

Concentrating on three school domains, the curriculum, teaching and learning; organisation, ethos and environment; and partnerships and services<sup>13</sup>, each domain represents a major aspect of the work of schools and the influences that affect the way schools operate (WHO 1996). Figure 3.1 illustrates the HPS framework.

Figure 3.1: WHO HPS framework (reproduce from Department of Education Western Australia)



While Figure 3.1 shows the spheres as separate but interrelated entities, their activities, taken together, form the school's approach to health promotion activities. This framework focuses on strategic improvements in all three domains, each of which is critical to student wellbeing and all of which are integral to student achievement. Pragmatically this framework, while having health promotion efficacy, also satisfies the neoliberal, economic rationalist principles and government interest in reducing public health policy expenditure. It does so by facilitating school cost-effective interventions directed at reducing patterns of behaviours that increase risk of disease offer an obvious.. Additionally the approach produces the social and economic benefits that flow from equipping young people with the skills and opportunities to live productive and fulfilling lives (Burgher, Rasmussen & Rivett 1999). How Australian schools have adopted the HPS framework and how and why governments at both federal and state levels

<sup>13</sup> Curriculum, teaching and learning emphasise pedagogy, resources and outcomes. Organisation, ethos and environment emphasise school culture, attitudes and values, policies and practices, extracurricular activities and the social and physical environment. Partnerships and services emphasise relationships between school, home and the community.

contextualise the need for schools to focus on student wellbeing while also promoting OBE is examined in the next section.

### **Australian schools, health education, health promotion and the HPS**

As discussed in Chapter Two, successful passage through schooling is essential both to individual and national propensity. However while governments at both federal and state level continue to pursue the market driven OBE policy approach to schooling, both levels of government also acknowledge the interrelatedness of student achievement and student wellbeing and the importance of a health promoting school. For example at a policy level, various Federal and State statements and goals single out the importance of attending to student wellbeing. Amongst these is the Adelaide Declaration of National Goals for Schooling (2001) and the Federal Government's National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)<sup>14</sup> (DEST 2007). These documents made clear the link between the school environment, health and future life chances and directed schools to pursue actively health promoting school environments

By providing a supportive and nurturing environment, school contributes to the development of students' sense of worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future. (MCEETYA 2000, p. 1)

Also amongst these goals are statements that refer to life skills needed beyond the schools gates referring to

[student's] potential life roles as family, community and workforce members ... the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and justice, and the capacity to accept responsibility for their own actions' (MCEETYA 2000, p. 1) and 'the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to establish and maintain a healthy lifestyle and for creative and satisfying use of leisure time. (MCEETYA 2000, p. 1)

Concern for student wellbeing is also extensively represented in state and territory curriculum documents. National and State curricula usually include pervasive value statements relating to aspects of wellbeing some of which are incorporated into the substance of the curricula. For example, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) relate explicit learning outcomes to aspects of wellbeing, such as communication, social responsibility, personal identity and collaboration (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2008).

Thus reflected in these policies and documents is a holistic and socio-ecological approach to the promotion and sustaining of health actions, for example, ensuring bullying free environments (Rowling 2003). However as I will go on to argue, recognition by federal and state governments

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<sup>14</sup> The NSSF incorporates existing good practice and provides an agreed national approach to help schools and their communities address issues of bullying, harassment, violence and child abuse and neglect (DEST 2007)



and representation of the same in national and state curriculum documents of the interrelatedness of student wellbeing, student achievement and health promoting schools presents some practical challenges. Chief amongst these is how teachers balance the accountability and testing regimes of OBE with the need to attend to the social, economic and cultural determinants that impact on student achievement. Before I address how teachers are faring in this balancing the OBE and HPS discourses, I briefly examine the development of the HPS discourse in Australian schools.

### **HPS discourse and Australian schools**

For school environments to provide a holistic and socio-ecological approach to the promotion and sustaining of health actions the school must be ‘constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working’ (Department of Education Western Australia 2001). Murphy (cited in Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006c) writes that this health promoting capacity must be visible and operating at all levels of the school if they are truly to be called HPS. This capacity is visible when there is

[a] comprehensive and coordinated system of student support which includes activities and arrangements integrated into many levels of the total school ... support for students will be manifested within school philosophies and beliefs and attitudes and school organisation, links with parents, the community and the outside agencies, classroom practice, teacher and student relationships and curricula. (p. 4)

To date, Australian schools, acting on the research and debates driven by WHO, have made incursions into the implementation of the HPS discourse. However, the development of HPS practices has exposed different viewpoints as to where schools place their health promotion emphasis. Whether it should focus on imparting knowledge to students on a series of health issues (i.e the traditional or biomedical approach), or addressing the affective and behavioural domains (i.e. the socio-ecological or HPS approach) of student health education or both, on the knowledge and affective and behavioural domains. These separate viewpoints are grounded in the different ideological and philosophical values that ultimately frame the health promotion approach adopted by schools. For instance, a particular government, as is the case with the adoption of the OBE discourse in the 1990s and beyond with its emphasis on academic outcomes, might be driven by an economic imperative and insist that its schools should ensure that pupils acquire the economic skills and motivation needed for a successful enterprise culture. In contrast, an educational philosopher might assert that the main purpose of schooling is to nurture children’s creative urges and to ensure that teachers foster young people’s mental, physical and social growth and development (Green & Tones 1999; Tones 2005).

Emphasis on an economic imperative, while not dismissing the importance of health promotion, does affect where schools invest the majority of their human resources and health promotion activities spheres: in curriculum, ethos and environment and/or partnerships and services. However, although schools may have the will to develop a health promoting school, the dilemma for some schools, particularly those populated by economically and culturally disadvantage cohorts, is that they often lack the resources needed to influence the factors external to the school, including family, media and peer pressures, and biological determinants (St Leger 2000). I also argue that in a complex policy landscape, the introduction of the OBE discourse and its increasing emphasis on student achievement has shifted the overriding priority of health promotion policy towards outcomes, also shifting the emphasis of a school's health promotion approach away from an ethos and environment and partnerships and services towards curriculum.

Evidence of this is the debates surrounding the effectiveness of health promoting schools. These debates cluster around two arguments: efficacy research and effectiveness research. The main contest comes from scholars like Green and Tones (1999), St Leger (2000), Nutbeam (1992) and Weare (2002) who argue that the sites approach to health policy is difficult to measure and evaluate. The main objection is that measurement and evaluation approaches do not collect evidence that has a multidimensional appreciation of the nature of health promotion, nor does it promote a holistic view of health which is underpinned by the principles of empowerment, participation, multidisciplinary collaboration, capacity building, equity and sustainable development. In contrast, scholars like Judd, Frankish and Moulton (2001) and Viljoen, Kirsten, Haglund and Tilgren (1996) argue a pragmatic position. These scholars, while acceding that measuring and evaluating health policy is incompatible with HPS principles of empowerment, participation, multidisciplinary collaboration, capacity building, equity and sustainability, argue that it is pragmatically necessary to comply with and satisfy the Western world's neoliberal political input and output agendas. They go on to argue that the collection of evidence that both funding bodies and individuals and communities can measure and setting targets based on evaluation standards that, when met or exceeded, signal success, improvement or growth, satisfies the input and output agendas and ensures program continuation.

Another position is that there is room for both approaches when researching the effectiveness of HPS that is, research that counts and accounts for the funding received and research methodologies that uses HPS principles of empowerment, participation, multidisciplinary collaboration, capacity building, equity to measure the effectiveness of health interventions.

Such an attempt was made in this research. The effectiveness, by way of attendance in the St Paul's Model components was measured while the values (e.g. participation, collaboration, empowerment) underpinning the HPS were incorporated into the research design. This said, a review of Australia's school health promotion strategies reveals a strategy of developing knowledge and skills and attempts to engage schools and their community in influencing the socio political structures that have a positive or negative impact on health.

### **Australian schools and health promotion strategies**

These strategies had their origins in an Australia-wide focus on health and health promotion funded by the National Health Promotion Program and which established the Network for Healthy School Communities (1991). The Network for Healthy School Communities was responsible for producing professional materials disseminating work on the HPS, facilitating professional development for educators and strengthening communication and collaborations between people, project and agencies with an active interest in health and education. Its main task was to 'foster the ongoing engagement of educators and their school with health promotion and community sectors where there is a common interest in the welfare of education systems' (Network for Healthy School Communities 1991, p. 4). Engagement was achieved through the facilitation of workshops, forums and working groups. At the end of the funding period, the network had sufficient support and understanding of various constituencies around Australia to set up, in 1994, the Australian Health Promoting Schools Association (AHPSA).

Reflecting the socio-ecological heritage of the Ottawa Charter, the AHPSA recognises that knowledge alone is insufficient to empower people to make healthy choices and change their behaviour (Moon, Mullee, Thompson & Roderick 1999; Mukoma & Flisher 2004). To this end, the AHPSA promotes and exchanges information and advocates and strengthens practices consistent with the Ottawa Charter. It does so by providing resources for use in the implementation and strategic planning of HPS's principles.

Much of the health promotion material and resources developed by the work of AHPSA is promotional material aimed at behavioural change that will either reduce a risk or avoid it completely. For example, research into the efficacy and impact of introducing crime prevention programs, materials and initiatives O'Connell (2002) found that students sought real-life information and commensurate life skills, including social skills, how to build relationships, drug education and other matters that impacted on health living. O'Connell concluded the schools should provide the health education and promotion programs that supports adolescent health while also helping students to build healthier lives when they were adults (O'Connell

2002). During 1997, the AHPSA received funding to undertake an audit gathering national baseline data about the HPS approaches being used in Australia (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association 1997). This data eventually informed the National Strategic Plan and facilitated the provision of a coordinated whole-school approach clearly defining education and health roles and enabling an economical development of networks and partnerships (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association 1997).

Renwick (2006) maintains that the AHPSA represents a grassroots organisation with members, including academics, who represent a range of alliances and interests and who together deliver and promote health initiatives at the coalface of the schoolroom. In 2009, the AHPSA continues to provide leadership, act as a reference group and seek to influence policy and practice with regards health and health promotion in schools (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association 1997).

Interest and stakeholder involvement in developing the HPS discourse was not restricted to the education arena. The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRCA) also contributed the promotion of the HPS discourse. The NHMRCA is responsible for the coordination of public health policy and provides advice on health and medical research, although having no legislative power. In 1996, the NHMRCA produced a document called 'Effective school health promotion: towards health promoting schools'<sup>15</sup>. Summarising 'what constitute(d) effective practice for promoting health in the school setting' (p. vi) the NHMRCA articulated the practical differences between the traditional (biomedical) and, HPS (socio-ecological) approaches that schools were adopting to address student wellbeing and student health literacy. Table 3.2 outlines the differences in approaches as how these two approaches were formalised and structured in schools.

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<sup>15</sup> The NHMRC rescinded the contents of this document, which no longer represents the Council's position.

Table 3.2: Comparison between traditional school health promotion approaches and that of the HPS

Traditional (biomedical) approach	Health promoting school (socio-ecological) approach
Focus only on the school	Focus on the school in the context of the local community
Focus on classroom teaching	Focus on all aspects of the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the curriculum, teaching and learning</li> <li>• the school organisation and environment</li> <li>• the school community</li> </ul>
Does not ensure consistency between classroom teaching and the wider school environment	Ensures that wider school environment reflects and reinforces what is learnt in the classroom.
Addresses health issues one by one	Addresses and integrates specific health issues into a coordinated program of developing health literacy, life skills and self concept
Addresses only the health needs of students	Is concerned also with health needs of staff, parents and the wider community
Plans programs independently of normal school planning and development	Addresses health issues through the normal structures and functioning of the school. Integrates health promotion planning with broader school planning and development

Note: Based on Young & Williams (1989)

Articulating the two different approaches used in schooling, the NHMRCA advocated a shift from the traditional school practice of ‘doing health promotion’ to the socio-ecological practice of schools ‘being health promoting’ (National and Medical Research Council 1996). However, the NHMRCA, with no legislative power to have schools implement HPS structures, continues to maintain a vision of schools adopting WHO’s socio-ecologically driven HPS. Amongst this vision is that teachers are able to build empowering and enabling relationships with all school stakeholders and forge links with parents, the community and outside agencies while simultaneously operating within an OBE policy climate. The literature reveals a disconnect between the OBE and HPS tasks required of the teachers.

### **Teachers and the health promoting school**

A core tenet of the HPS is its emphasis on both the physical and social aspects of the school environment. In this environment it is of critical importance that the management structures, policies and practices promote wellbeing throughout the entire school community. These core tenets recognise that school personnel, especially teachers, play a fundamental role in influencing not only children’s learning outcomes but also the transmission of health messages and the adoption of lifestyle habits by children. It assumes that teachers alone have the role and

responsibility to shape the organisational climate and build social capital in the school. It also assumes that teachers alone create and shape the context in which children develop both the psychosocial competencies needed to navigate life experiences and the academic skills that are essential for navigating successful outcomes in their lives (Lemerle & Stewart 2005; WHO 1998; Withers & Russell 1998). However, the context in which many teachers work affects their capacity to contribute to a HPS environment, especially to their capacity to build on the socio-ecological principles of empowerment, engagement and social justice (Berlach 2004). A key context in the 2000's is the neoliberal policy context described in Chapter Two and its particular emphasis on outcomes that are measurable.

Ball (1999), Linden (2007), Mackey (1994) and Wheatley (2001) implicate the impact of neoliberalism's OBE's focus on student achievement in the difficulties that schools and teachers have in initiating and resourcing health promoting climates, cultures and policies. Renwick (2006), and Spratt et al. (2006) concur, adding that an unintended consequence of OBE overemphasis or policy bias towards student achievement distracts teachers away from a more holistic approach to health promotion. This, they go on to argue, creates a danger that health and health literacy remains or reverts to the traditional, biomedical approach of 'doing health promotion' that is, imparting health knowledge and treating specific health issues without addressing the socio-ecological circumstances that forward positive health. Adding impetus to these arguments is the IUHPE's twenty-year research and conference into the health, social, economic and political impacts of health promotion and the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council's (ANHMRC). Clift and Jensen's (2005) publication of the European Conference outcomes of IUHPE's conference into the health, social, economic and political impacts of health promotion noted that an unintended result of expecting teachers to implement both the OBE and HPS agendas simultaneously often compromises the effectiveness of the HPS agenda.

Ball (1999) describes this dilemma as situated in a fundamental and profound realignment in the ways in which teachers conduct themselves and their professional skills to suit the globalisation and marketisation of education. Ball maintains that this realignment turns teachers' attention towards outcomes rather than towards the formation of health promoting school environments that are empowering, collaborative, participative, multidisciplinary, capacity building and equitable (Lynch & Moran 2006; Papastephanou 2004; Wheatley 2001). McKay (1994) concurs with Ball, writing that teachers working are forced to design and create 'educational

environments which respond to hegemonic economic and cultural requirements rather than to the needs of individuals, groups, and classes who make up this society' (p. 36).

As argued in Chapter Two, teachers are not the sole contributors to student achievement and for teachers to forward effectively the HPS agenda they need to be able to acknowledge and address their students' socioeconomic circumstances. In disadvantaged schools turning the teachers' gaze away from, for example, unemployment and poverty and the link between social disadvantage and educational outcomes, teachers unwittingly become accomplices in entrenching the vulnerability and disadvantage of students who are already failing to meet academic standards (Australian Education Union 2004, 2008; Boxely 2003; Lynch & Moran 2006).

Further, by focussing on outcomes, positive and empowering health promoting relationships between teachers, students, and parent and carers are reduced to management mechanisms that elevate and promulgate individual purposes at the expense or exploitation of others, usually the most disadvantaged (Paulus 2009; Rowling 2009). Without the necessary structural supports and resources that assist teachers to balance properly a focus on student achievement alongside a focus on student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing is also compromised. Scholars have already researched the effects of this compromise. .

Lemerle and Stewart's (2005), Ball's (1997), Troman's (1998) and Winkworth and McArthur's (2005) research shows at both the meso and micro levels, teacher vulnerability includes: an increase in teacher workloads, burdens and expectations, greater levels of occupational stress and burnout, increased levels of teacher absenteeism, a rise in medical insurance claims and an increase in the numbers of teachers who report that they would leave teaching if their personal circumstances allowed. Consistent with these findings are Berlach's (2004), Dinham and Scott's (2004) and Troman's (1998) findings that teachers feel more absorbed in meeting OBE mandates and also feel more depersonalised and detached from their students, less and less connected and involved in child-centred pedagogy and more and more feeling like facilitators, guides, curriculum developers, child minders and bureaucrats. As one teacher of twenty-three years experience participating in this research expressed: 'I'm more and more result and less and less relationship' (Teacher M, 2003). Berlach's (2004) summation that teachers feel more like 'indentured servants to the OBE agenda' rather than enablers and educators seems to summarise the difficulties teachers feel in trying to balance the OBE and HPS discourses.

The challenges that are facing teachers and policy makers struggling to balance their place in the globalised world are twofold. Firstly, addressing the social, cultural and economic reality in which teachers and schools find themselves and secondly implementing and embedding health promoting actions in the relationships with all members of a school in spite of the social, cultural and economic realities. This said, in attempting to recognise at least at policy level, the importance of student wellbeing and its influence on student learning, Australian federal and state governments, despite consistent policy mandates to ensure a focus on student achievement, have recognised the need for schools to have formal and professional structures that attend to student wellbeing. Student wellbeing is therefore more than the biomedical model's approach of focussing on specific health issues, one by one, in classrooms by teachers. To this end both federal and state governments, responding to mental health trends documented by the WHO and national and state health departments, have legislated frameworks to assist in the implementation of school-based student wellbeing practices and programs. Following is an examination of the Victorian state government's student wellbeing policy initiatives.

### **Victorian schools: policies and frameworks of support for student wellbeing**

As a result of federal and state concern with the growing suicide rates amongst young people, the Victoria's Premier and the Minister for Health, Mr Andrews, took a proactive route towards a socio-ecological approach to student wellbeing and established, in 1997, the Suicide Prevention Task Force ('The Taskforce'). This Taskforce conducted an intensive public investigation into the nature and extent of suicide, particularly youth suicide. Focussing on the high documented incidence of youth suicide, particularly young men aged 15 to 24 years of age, the Taskforce had three goals: to map the prevalence of youth suicides in Victoria and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of suicide prevention responses and put forward approaches that would better respond to youth suicide. Finally, by reporting on how to optimise the collective responses of the service and broader community systems to the incidence of suicide, they were mandated to present an integrated suicide prevention framework, (Victorian Suicide Prevention Task Force 1997).

Amongst the Taskforce's findings was the overrepresentation of young people in suicide cohorts and evidence that young people were at risk of drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, dropping out of school and even violent behaviour. Moreover, the Taskforce singled out schools as playing a significant role in developing and providing supportive and responsive environments to promote and sustain student wellbeing. Additionally, the Taskforce found examples of school initiatives that supported young people in school systems and other

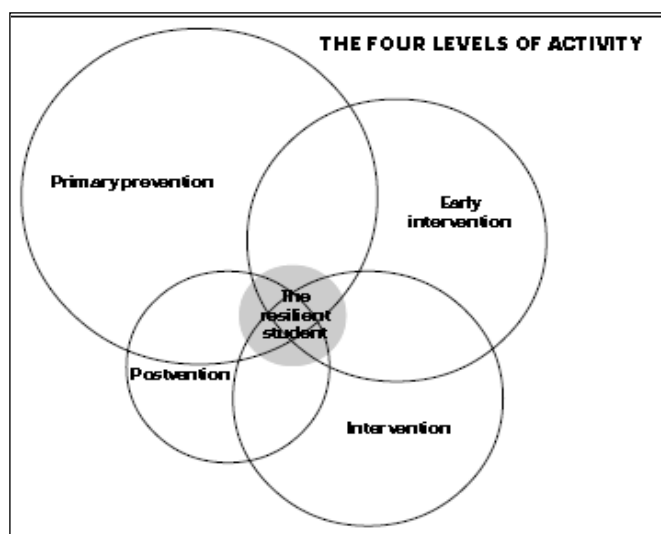


community settings. However, while acknowledging that student wellbeing and welfare initiatives had been put in place in some Victorian schools and describing positive examples of infrastructures that included community partnerships and service collaborations in pursuit of student wellbeing, the Taskforce found that these efforts were inconsistent, uncoordinated and patchy across the schooling system.

Consequently, echoing the findings of the 'Report of the Premier's Drug Advisory Council and our Community' (1996), the Taskforce recommended that a seamless continuum of mental health services should be established in schools to support vulnerable young people and retaining at-risk young people in the school system (Victorian Suicide Prevention Task Force 1997). The goal of the seamless continuum of mental health services was to include social services departments, for example, drug and alcohol and homelessness services that would work with schools to target young people who were at high risk of adverse social, emotional, physical and economic outcomes (DEET 1998, p. 4). This call paralleled calls from organisations like the NHMRCA and the ANHMRC for schools to be responsive to the growing body of international research suggesting that major depressive illness was becoming more widespread among the young in western societies and to the corpus of research emanating from WHO's that schools are well placed as sites for health promotion.

Acting on these recommendations and calls, Victorian government schools adopted a conceptual framework that was sufficiently broad in scope to incorporate strategies for primary prevention, early intervention, intervention and postvention (that is, restoring resilience) in a way that empowered individuals and involved the community. The framework that was developed from this Taskforce was DEET's 'Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools: Four Levels of Activity (1998)' (referred to as the 'Four Levels of Activity'). Although not mandated as student wellbeing policy, the DEET's Four Levels of Activity became the conceptual framework for how government schools addressed student wellbeing. Figure 3.2 represents DEET's framework. Thus, driven by the concerns of State health policy, the DEET framework entered the school site as another consideration, alongside the OBE mandates and under the umbrella of student health and wellbeing, for schools to include in their professional and formal arrangements.

Figure 3:2: Framework for student support services in Victorian government schools: *Four Levels of Activity*



Reproduced from DEET 1998

Each level of activity in the DEET framework is designed to assist school and school support services staff to work more collaboratively and effectively to respond to the different needs of students. These levels comprise:

1. Primary prevention programs and structures that facilitate belonging and promote wellbeing.
2. Early intervention programs that target students identified as being at risk.
3. Intervention programs that facilitate and access a range of support services for students at risk.
4. Post-intervention programs that are accessed following traumatic or out-of-the-ordinary experiences such as loss and grief (DEET 1998).

As Figure 3.2 shows, by representing spheres of different sizes, school-based effort is greater at the level of the preventative, whole school environment and whole school population and less so at the level of interventions targeting students who need specific psychosocial support and services.

The Four Levels of Activity acknowledges the impact that schools can have on their students' social life and ultimately on their students' completion of schooling if they engage the services of and form partnerships with outside agencies. A position consistent WHO's HPS theoretical

underpinning. The establishment of the School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) resourced the implementation of the DEET's Four Levels of Activity framework.

Advancing a collaborative and cross-sectoral approach to student wellbeing and health promotion the SFYS was the conduit for the continuum of services born of the Taskforce's recommendations. These services work across schools, community and welfare providers to operationalise the continuum of services the Taskforce recommended and that the DEET framework outlined. As a joint initiative of the DEET and Department of Human Services in partnership with the Association of Independent Schools Victoria and the CEOM<sup>16</sup>, the SFYS concentrates on brokering health promotion services to schools and continues to operate in 2009. In 2009, SFYS was managed through a range of community, local government and community health services in 41 clusters around Victoria. Each cluster has a coordinator who supports the development of collaborative approaches between schools and community agencies to address the needs of young people who are at risk.

Focussing on community capacity building, school–community linkages, partnerships between government and non-governmental organisations, and on early intervention and prevention, SFYS brings community, health and welfare sectors together with schools to implement health actions that reinforce the collaboration and partnerships required to operationalise effectively WHO HPS principles (WHO 1986, 1998). SFYS has two basic foci. The first is to implement preventative and intervention programs for students between the ages of ten and sixteen aimed at negotiating risk and developing resilience and increasing school connectedness amongst members of the school community as a protective factor against the development of other kinds of at risk behaviour, for example, school engagement programs that reduce truancy. The second is to address services gaps and develop a coordinated approach to service delivery by brokering negotiations and collaborations in the community service system (Department of Human Services 2001).

SFYS works from the underlying principle that the school has an opportunity unrivalled by any other social unit to identify young people at risk of, for example, suicide, homelessness, dropping out of school, to identify vulnerable young early in the young person's life and respond to this early identification of vulnerability with the provision of coordinated service delivery. Moreover, SFYS reinforces the notion that schools serve as early warning systems and

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<sup>16</sup> Although it is part of the SFYS initiative, the CEOM used the substantial amount of money available under the Youth Suicide Taskforce to fund its own systemic approach to student wellbeing and to provide credentials to its own teachers to become student wellbeing coordinators.

as prime locations for supporting vulnerable young people (Withers & Russell 1998). To do this early detection and intervention SFYS's work with schools includes:

1. Community mapping and the development of services available for vulnerable youth, for example, counselling, survivors of torture and trauma.
2. The enhancement of the effectiveness of existing services, for example, reviewing SFYS strategic plan and adjusting direction in line with the outcomes of reviews.
3. The provision of information about service availability for schools and students, for example, through SFYS newsletters, annual information sharing forums for schools who access SFYS funding and/or
4. The establishment of protocols, for example, assisting schools in establishing memorandums of understanding between schools and community services and health organisations. SFYS brokerage of services to schools and youth services results from the SFYS identification, via schools and community clusters, of the gaps in service availability, for example, lack of access to youth friendly services (DEECD 2009b; Department of Human Services 2001).

A 2001 summary and evaluation of SFYS strategy reported positive as well as negative aspects of the SFYS strategy and its operations across Victorian government schools (Department of Human Services 2001).

SFYS's positive achievements lay in the provision of intervention and prevention services and networks not previously available in schools as well as in the enabling of collaboration across the different disciplines that were targeting at-risk students. Examples of these programs included life skills programs, case management, homework programs, development of leadership skills and leisure events. Negatively, the evaluation found seven problematic areas. The program was too complex and the bureaucratic expectations of the program were too burdensome. The geographical boundaries of the SFYS cut across existing school networks, staffing was inadequate to service and successfully implement programs across the SFYS regions and funding only short-term projects was ineffectual. These limitations made it difficult for schools to implement systemic change and in effect the ideals were sabotaged by a lack of long term planning, resource allocation and servicing and finally, there was a lack of focus on students after grade five, when problems had already set in (Department of Human Services 2001).

An added limitation, based on my experience as a primary school principal and for a short while as a member of the SFYS Western Region Committee that focussed on the allocation of funding

to schools requesting financial support to implement student wellbeing programs, was its exclusion of funding for programs for children younger than ten years of age. I argue, that failing to fund programs that support students that are aged five to nine is counterproductive and certainly not in the interests of early intervention activities. Why wait until these children reach ten years old? If, as discussed in Chapter Two, student wellbeing is implicated in student achievement then it would seem to me that the earlier schools can intervene in students' lives to address the social, cultural and economic circumstance that militate against student achievement the better. My concern is that all children have the opportunity to be involved in programs that support their wellbeing and hence their ability to learn and was a key motivator to the inclusiveness of the St Paul's Model of all primary school children.

At the time of writing this thesis, there has been no further evaluation of the SFYS even though current federal and state government policies articulate the need to expand or promote school-based interventions and partnerships that strengthen school and community responses to student wellbeing and welfare issues. There is evidence though of the need to expand or promote school-based interventions and partnerships that strengthen school and community responses to student wellbeing and welfare issues. This evidence is found in new federal and state policy.

There are two Australian documents articulating how schools are to expand or promote school-based interventions and partnerships that strengthen school and community responses to the student wellbeing agenda. At federal level the 2008/2009 Australian Federal Government's 'Quality Education: The Case for an Education Revolution in our Schools' (Federal Government 2008) and at state level the Victorian State Government's 'Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development' (DEECD 2008c). Based on the experiences of the 'Teach First' program in the UK and Teach for America in the USA, schools is the called on to enter into sponsorship arrangements with businesses, community groups, agencies, business and philanthropic organisations to support projects in disadvantaged areas. The goal of these partnerships is to establish and broker school, community and business enterprise services and expertise (DEECD 2008a).

While recognising that schools on their own cannot overcome the disadvantage of their student body and that schools must to look to the wider community to provide skills, knowledge, support and services, this policy direction is problematic. Policy directions mandating schools to call on the social and cultural capital of the school community to source partnerships to provide and/or strengthen school and community responses to student wellbeing and welfare issues raises issues of justice, access and equity. As argued in Chapter Two, schools will have

differing access to resources, human and cultural, based on the social location of their parent and carer populations and the resources that their parent and carers cultural capital can make available to them by way of community and business enterprise services and expertise. For example, PISA (Lokan, Greenwood & Cresswell 2001) results and Australia's (Marks 2009) research into youth employment which investigated the link between socioeconomic status and school contribution, suggest that school resources may contribute to differences among schools in that middle class contexts are more likely than disadvantaged context to provide 'second chances' for students by way of extra resources. The scholarship of Apple (2004a, 2004b), Lynch and Moran (2006), Martin (2003) and Papastephanou (2004) highlight the consequence of situating the OBE student achievement mandates and HPS student wellbeing mandates in resource poor schools. Failing to recognise that each school has varying degrees of resources to contribute to schools assumes that class has no impact on how much schools can do to offset the negative impacts of student socioeconomic circumstances.

It would be reasonable to conclude, on the basis of the varying social, human and cultural capital capacity and the class differential of school communities (see Chapter Two), that some schools, in some communities, would struggle to make the connections and networks required to compensate for the human and cultural resource gaps evident in their school. It would also be reasonable to conclude that these same schools would need to locate and call on more health services and health professionals available in the community than resources rich schools.

What is critical to the regeneration of student wellbeing and welfare projects in disadvantaged areas (DEECD 2008c) is whether the impact of context is being sufficiently factored into student achievement and health literacy and promotion, policies and initiatives. Also critical is whether enough emphasis is being placed on all the factors that are integral to student achievement, of which teacher input is only one factor. I argue that the mandates and expectations encapsulated in current Australian education policies pull in different directions. Thus, while the OBE discourse pulls the development of human capital in one direction, the socio-ecological HPS discourse, situated in values of justice and equity and premised on the notion that all aspects of the school must reflect a determination to address any negative circumstances that will lead to compromised student wellbeing, pulls in the other direction.

Recognising and responding to what could be contradictory discourses – student achievement versus student wellbeing, the Victorian State Government has tried to implement policy that attempts to translate student wellbeing into action. While the WHO HPS framework focusses on where to implement health promotion and student wellbeing efforts while DEET's 'Four Levels

of Activity’ offers how to implement health promotion and student wellbeing efforts using the SFYS. Supplied with a framework and a strategy the next task is to consider is who in the staff and school community actions health promotion and student wellbeing?

To do this two formal and professional arrangements are considered. The first are the formal and professional arrangements operating in Victorian Government schools and the second are formal and professional arrangements operating in Victorian Catholic Schools. In Victorian government schools the arrangements involve DEECD<sup>17</sup> funding of wellbeing staff such as social workers, counsellors or psychologists from either Primary Welfare Initiative or School Services Officers (SSOs) funding. In Victorian Catholic schools the formal and professional student wellbeing arrangements involves the employment of Student Wellbeing Coordinators (SWC) who are responsible for student wellbeing in Victorian Catholic schools. The following section examines these two formal and professional arrangements.

### **School Services Officers and the Primary Welfare Initiative**

Following consultation between DEET’s Student Wellbeing Branch and central, regional and school-based student wellbeing personnel, the Victorian Government, in 2003, trying to reconcile its support for both student achievement and student wellbeing programs, launched the Primary Welfare Initiative. In this initiative, public schools are given the funding to employ a welfare officer (who may have youth work, psychologist or a social work qualification) to ‘inform the development of tailored programs to meet the individual needs, interest and abilities of at risk students’ (DEST 2005b, p. 3). Primary Welfare Officers may be employed to work in a single school, or across a number of schools, and they may form a network of welfare officers to support a number of schools or buy welfare support or time from a community agency (DEST 2005b).

Working within the Four Levels of Activity framework (DEET 1998), the Primary Welfare Officer Initiative was designed to enhance a school’s capacity to support students at risk and those not reaching the set benchmarks. Within this role Primary Welfare Officers are set five tasks:

1. Counselling students, families and/or teachers, for example, addressing issues of grief, bullying and helping individuals or access to community support services.

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<sup>17</sup> The DEECD brings together a range of services for young people from before birth to the beginning of adulthood. DEECD was preceded by the DEET.

2. Building opportunities for community involvement, for example, communicating to parents/cares how the school operates, organising activities that would bring families into the school to meet each other, be involved in school programs and/or establish links with outside agencies.
3. Facilitating special programs for vulnerable students and establishing links with other schools and focussing on students with special needs, for example, setting up friendship groups, running prosocial skills groups, identifying students with high absenteeism and then working with the family to reduce absenteeism.
4. Linking parents and carers to outside agencies and other schools, for example, linking families with agencies such as Austin CAMS, the psychologists and social workers of the Royal Children's Hospital and local groups such as ARDOCH or Kildonan Family Services to support families and/or schools to assist in effective primary to secondary school transition.
5. Focussing on students with special needs, for example, working with students whose family circumstances found it difficult to supply lunch and providing them with morning and afternoon lunches (Victorian Mental Health Branch & Victorian Student Wellbeing Branch 2004).

In 2004, the Victorian government provided funding to one hundred and ten primary schools for the appointment of sixty-five equivalent full-time primary welfare officers as the first stage of a three-year rollout of new positions in government primary schools across Victoria. By 2006, the equivalent of two hundred and fifty-six full-time primary welfare officer positions were funded in four hundred and fifty Victorian schools that were identified as having high needs that is, having a high number of students at risk of disengaging from school. In 2007, in the State budget the Government announced the second iteration of the Primary Welfare Officer Initiative. In 2008, five hundred and seventy-three high-need schools received Primary Welfare Officer funding, although not all a full time presence in schools (DEST 2005b).

In reality, in spite of the broad reach of the Primary Welfare Initiative, when the School Social Workers Special Interest Group (SSWSIG, 2007) tracked the tasks actually undertaken by welfare personnel employed in Victorian government schools they found that the initiative, contrary to its espoused aims, was concentrating on improving student outcomes and monitoring school attendance. They made this claim based on data that indicated that the opportunity to implement a school culture for the student wellbeing was either under resourced, was hampered by funds that were being redirected either to literacy and numeracy areas or by staff being deployed to work in areas linked to government accountability and benchmarking.



However, government reports present a different assessment. Positively, a 2007 State Government report, indicated that of five hundred School Services Officers (SSOs), that is, non teaching staff, in government schools varied. Fifty four (10.8%) were social workers, two hundred and forty were psychologists (48%), one hundred and twenty (24%) were speech pathologists and ninety (18%) were teachers who worked with specific students such as those who had newly arrived to Australia (Budget Estimates Committee 2008). Negatively, in 2008, there were four hundred and forty one SSOs, a decline of sixty SSOs, even though government funding and the demand for SSOs, specifically SWCs, subsequent to the introduction of the Primary Welfare Initiative, had substantially increased. The Federal Government's Labor Economics Office (2008) attributed this reduction in the numbers of Victoria's SSOs to the difficulty of attracting qualified candidates with practical school-based experience, the constraints of offering short-term or contract positions which compromise job tenure and to the reluctance of SSOs to work in regional Victoria (2008a).

In 2010, the number of school social workers has once again grown. Numbering seventy-three and representing twenty five per cent of the SSOs' numbers, this growth indicates the positive impact of the Primary Welfare Initiative. The introduction of the Primary Welfare Initiative by the State Labor government and the growth in school social workers reflects growing attempts to offset the impact of disadvantage on poor student achievement in government schools. Negatively, the SSWSIG (2007) continue to maintain that their that the numbers and types of disciplines employed in schools is directly linked to the emphasis on literacy and the introduction of benchmarking and OBE and also to those areas of school life that would benefit the outcomes of teaching and learning programs. The SSWSIG continue to point to the higher representation of psychologists and speech pathologists in the SSOs' cohort as evidence to support this claim.

Under the very public pressure to concentrate on literate and numerate students, the SSWSIG continues to argue, public reporting and testing regimes, schools are being forced to put all their resources into engaging professional support to bolster OBE results. Thus, the employment of psychologists and speech pathologists who could work individually with students in remediation learning programs, ultimately raising school achievement profiles. Continuing Chapter Two's that an overemphasis on outcomes actually reinforces social and cultural control and class differentiation, employing welfare staff whose focus is solely on students who are failing to reach state and federal literacy benchmarks reinforces the notion that a student's socioeconomic

status and cultural capital have no role to play in learning (Berlach 2004; Lynch & Moran 2006; Margison 2001).

From the perspective of the HPS discourse, targeting individual students and neglecting to change the adverse social determinants in the students' environment, runs contrary to socio-ecological principles. It reinforces the traditional biomedical approach and fails to tackle the social health determinants that adversely influence students or school programs and practices. Comber and Hill (2000), Baum (2006) and Renwick (2006) name labelling and stereotyping as being among the negative impacts of this approach on students whom these interventions claim to support.

Simultaneously the roles of the Primary Welfare Officers are also restricted. Focussing on individual students constrains their capacity to undertake the community development, empowerment and engagement activities that the DEECD's (2005b) role prescribes. So too are tasks that are intrinsic to the emancipatory ideals of the health promoting school and to the ideals that underpin the outcomes-based education discourse. Examples of these tasks include supporting and developing the HPS, focussing on and addressing student, family and school social health determinants, such as neighbourhood disadvantage, poverty, networking and other activities (Glover, Keleher, Butler & Patton 1998; Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007). How schools can make staff available to the demands of both OBE and HPS is the subject of this thesis but before the thesis progresses to examine the place of social workers in this task, I want to examine how the CEOM's SWC operates in Victorian Catholic schools within the context of the OBE and HPS debate. Student wellbeing policies and approaches are contained in the CEOM's Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010.

Underpinning student programs and practices and student wellbeing approaches is a call to Catholic schools to embed formally and professionally in its school structures frameworks that address its concerns for students and their families. The teachings and tradition of the CST stress concern for student wellbeing as a major attitude that must permeate the ethos and organisation of the Catholic school (Congregation of Catholic Education, 1977; CEOM, 2004; 2007). Moreover, as demanded by CST, this concern must be seen and felt in every aspect of school (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 1994; Congregation for Catholic Education 1988). The CEOM's Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006 to 2010 is the formal policy structure which formally and professionally embeds student wellbeing into school operations.

### **Victorian Catholic schools and the ‘Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010’**

CST uses the term ‘pastoral care’ to refer to student wellbeing approaches. Prior to the late 1980s when there were more religious staff in Catholic schools, student wellbeing and social and emotional support was separated from the core curriculum activities and academic programs. Typically, teachers were responsible for the academic learning and the non-teaching staff, characteristically religious priests and nuns, was responsible for the pastoral care of the students. Typically, pastoral care was offered to students and their families by priests and religious connected to the primary school (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 1994). Although teachers in Catholic schools (and indeed, all teachers, whatever education system they belonged to) demonstrated an ethic of care in their teaching, formal and professional arrangements addressing student wellbeing were divorced from the activities of the teacher. Student wellbeing interventions were therefore not necessarily embedded in the school organisation, curriculum or partnership initiatives as per the WHO’s HPS principles previously discussed (Thomas 2005). This changed with the introduction of the CEOM’s “Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010”.

In the latter part of the 1990s, the CEOM undertook a major restructure of its operations. Nominating five school improvement areas and constituting the CEOM’s policy and planning directions, the “One Body, Many Parts – Strategy Plan 2006–2010” gave renewed focus to the broader mission of the Catholic Church and to a holistic approach to improving the quality of educational outcomes for all students and for improved collaboration between the CEOM and school staff. The five areas were education in faith; leadership and management; school community; student wellbeing; and teaching and learning (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b). Amongst this restructure and drawing on the emerging socio-ecological discourse and the WHO’s whole school approach to student wellbeing, the CEOM moved to reorganise student wellbeing approaches in Victorian Catholic schools more strategically, formally and professionally. In 2006, the CEOM introduced its Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010, which restructured the way that it would support and drive student wellbeing approaches in Victorian Catholic schools. This plan was part of the broader CEOM ‘One Body, Many Parts – Strategy Plan 2006–2010’ (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b) that was adopted by all Victorian Catholic schools.

The key to understanding the implementation of the Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010 is through the way the CEOM has reframed how teachers in Catholic schools think about student

wellbeing and how the strategy structures its systemic and school based student wellbeing support.

### **Reframing how Victorian Catholic schools address student wellbeing**

Tracking the success of Catholic schools and their pastoral care approaches, programs and policies, Thomas (2005), found incongruence between schools' stated policy to pastorally care for students and the actual practice and structures in which pastoral care was given. According to Thomas (2005) responses to issues of student wellbeing were fragmented and uncoordinated; teachers lacked the knowledge or skill to implement the range of student wellbeing interventions and teachers' commitment varied according to their ability or willingness to attend to student wellbeing. These inconsistencies, Thomas (2005) claimed, accounted for a hit and miss approach to student wellbeing and the absence of evidence based practice to ascertain whether or not student wellbeing approaches were occurring at school and system levels. This led to growing support by educational and policy leaders in the CEOM for 'rhetoric to match reality' (Thomas 2005, p. 16), for student wellbeing practice to be grounded in theory and for systemic reviews to account for changes that would enhance and operationalise focussed, intentional and school based and CEOM supported whole school approaches to student wellbeing.

This groundswell of unease towards Catholic schools that talked pastoral care but that appeared to fall short of it in practice provided the opportunity for the CEOM to take action at policy and planning levels. In a discursive shift, teachers in Catholic schools were led to adjust their perceptions of student wellbeing. Student wellbeing was no longer to be conceived of as pastoral care that was the responsibility of people other than teachers, but the responsibility of all teachers. The CEOM replaced the term 'pastoral care' with 'student wellbeing' in all its policy documents and communiqués to its Victorian Catholic schools<sup>18</sup>.

This was principally because student wellbeing was intended to more accurately bring about an appreciation of the advantages to students of integrated HPS approaches to learning. The adoption of the term 'student wellbeing' at the school level was also meant to help staff recognise the importance of a dynamic interaction between children's cognitive development and their physical, social, emotional, spiritual, moral and social development. Further, the term located the responsibility for student care in the actions and attitudes of all staff and community

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<sup>18</sup> While the CEOM Student Wellbeing Unit consistently uses the term 'student wellbeing' in all its documents and centrally mandated procedural policies, the CEOM student wellbeing policy (2.6) continues to be named the 'Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools'.

members and in all the structures in the school environment and operations (Withers & Russell 1998). Catholic schools were mandated to form student wellbeing core teams, appoint qualified staff to the SWC position, meet CEOM program criteria or lose ongoing funding, submit annual reports and ensure the SWC's participation in CEOM professional development. Beginning 2006, the CEOM requires that principals allocate a dedicated weekly time of no less than two hours per week to their SWC.

Positively, by allocating funding for a dedicated SWC meant that for the first time in their history, Catholic schools had a systemically funded staff member who was dedicated to health promotion activities for at least two hours per week. Negatively, the funding requirements attached to the Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010 reflect the surveillance, compliance and accountability regimes of the OBE discourse discussed in Chapter Two and contradict the distinctive nature of Catholic schools which, if they are

preoccupied by the visible and measurable in education [they do so to the] detriment of the invisible and more intangible of education. The potential for Catholic schools to be incorporated into the secular marketplace of education [may] weaken their relation to the sacred and the spiritual and the distinctive culture of Catholicity itself. (Grace, G 2002, p. 32)

This said the CEOM Student Wellbeing Unit was restructured to support to the newly funded SWC. The next section expands on this restructuring.

### **Catholic schools: Restructuring support for student wellbeing**

At a systemic level, the CEOM undertook to restructure the way it delivered CEOM services and support to schools and sponsor the credentialing of classroom teachers in student wellbeing approaches.

The CEOM 'Pastoral Care Team' was rebadged as the 'Student Wellbeing Unit' and the roles that the Student Wellbeing Unit members played in supporting schools was expressed in new terms. Since 2006, the Unit's role is to manage critical incidents, help negotiate student wellbeing services with and on behalf of schools and provide consultation services. The Student Wellbeing Unit provides professional development activities to key leaders in schools, concentrates their professional development on skills and knowledge that promote student resilience, primary prevention (that is, programs that build resilience, facilitate belonging and promote wellbeing) and early intervention (that is, programs that target students identified as 'at risk') programs and provides services across sectoral and disciplinary divides. In this way, the CEOM Student Wellbeing Unit now steers and promotes the development of student wellbeing in Victorian Catholic schools towards health actions and health promotion self-management and

emphasises the perception and practice that student wellbeing belongs in the domain of intentional, purposeful and informed intervention in the school site.

This emphasis challenged the previously discussed hit and miss approach to student wellbeing (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b, 2007b, 2008; Thomas 2005). Improving teachers' skills in this area is critical to the CEOM's student wellbeing strategy. To make informed and skilled school-based personnel available for this purpose, the CEOM initiated the sponsored training of teachers in wellbeing. The CEOM sponsors teachers in Catholic schools to undertake a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Wellbeing in Inclusive Schooling) or a Master of Education (Student Wellbeing). Teachers with either of these qualifications are able to fill the CEOM-funded SWC positions in Victorian Catholic schools.

Improving the skills and qualifications of key school personnel is meant to introduce to school sites personnel who are conversant with evidence-based student wellbeing HPS programs and practices, and who have the expertise to implement whole school approaches that would enable all stakeholders at the school to take responsibility and ownership for student wellbeing (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b; Tobin 2008). It also institutionalises the adoption of CEOM and the CECV student wellbeing policies to support student wellbeing and welfare needs<sup>19</sup>.

Cahill et al.'s (2004) preliminary research into how successful schools perceived the SWC, found that SWCs undertaking the coordination of student wellbeing tasks on top of their teaching role reported that they were time poor and that their training was highly individualised. They also noted that scant attention was being given to the social, economic or political causes of student underachievement and that teachers' reported that they were unable to influence local structures and organisations. These findings raise concerns about the ability of SWCs to fulfil their role as health promotion facilitators when the structures that define their role restrict the time available to them, do not recognise gaps in their knowledge and skills and leave them at distance from the school-based mechanisms that can influence the decision-making processes (Nutbeam 1998). These issues are addressed further in the next chapters. To conclude this chapter the next section compares the HPS, DEET and CEOM student wellbeing strategies.

### **Student wellbeing frameworks and strategies – same or different?**

In summary, the socio-ecological approaches taken by the Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (1998), the CEOM's Student Wellbeing Strategy

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<sup>19</sup> A comprehensive list of policies can be located at [www.cecv.edu.au](http://www.cecv.edu.au) and [www.ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au)

2006–2010 and the WHO's HPS framework approaches have exposed differences and similarities.

The convergent points are that all the HPS frameworks

- Use the socio-ecological health approach to health and health actions
- Address the whole school environment with an emphasis on the individual
- Recognise the centrality of students and that their wellbeing is intertwined with a dynamic environment and community
- Recognise that the school environment should be conducive to and supportive of healthy behaviour and lifestyles and
- Recognise that a safe and healthy environment is conducive to improving students' academic and physical development.

The differences amongst these frameworks and strategies lie in the approaches they use to promote health promotion in the school:

- The WHO's HPS Framework (2000) draws attention to the three key areas in which health can be promoted but does not articulate the structures, policies and approaches in which this can be achieved.
- The Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (DEET 1998), incorporates the principles of the WHO whole-school approach to student wellbeing and focusses on primary intervention, early intervention, intervention and post-intervention. Australian Victorian public schools use the Victorian Government's SFYS structure to broker services for schools and the Primary Welfare Officers Initiative to employ school-based support. In the Primary Welfare Officers Initiative, government schools are able to employ social workers to contribute to or implement student wellbeing programs.
- In contrast to the WHO's HPS framework and Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools, the CEOM, also using the WHO's HPS principles for student wellbeing, concentrates on developing a systemic and strategic approach training its teachers to drive student wellbeing initiatives. Unlike the Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools, the CEOM's approach divides its intervention responsibilities. The school and SWC manage prevention and early intervention and intervention tasks. The CEOM's Student Wellbeing Unit manages post-

intervention tasks. either centrally or by directing schools to the appropriate agency or resource.

- The main difference between the DEET and CEOM's approach to student wellbeing and health promotion is the assignment of personnel to the HPS framework. In government schools SSOs and primary welfare officers, who may or may not be social workers, may be employed to contribute to school based student wellbeing programs. In contrast, the CEOM has trained its own teachers and assigned them SWC roles to drive student wellbeing programs in their schools.
- In both Victorian Government and Catholic schools the student wellbeing policies and arrangements parallel student achievement policies and mandates

### **Rest note**

This chapter, 'Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning':

1. Examined two approaches to public health policy: the traditional and the socio-ecological approaches. Literature showed that the socio-ecological approach attended to the structural antecedents of ill health and that public health policy works within and across social, political and economic structures that influence health and health outcomes for individuals and population groups.
2. Briefly examined the development of the health promoting school discourse. By examining key WHO conferences and charters and locating the importance of schools and the WHO HPS discourse in public health policy, this chapter also identified the development of the HPS and the HPS framework within the work of the WHO. This chapter discussed the differences between the two choices between the traditional, knowledge-based biomedical health discourse towards a socio-ecological discourse which focusses on context as much as content.
3. Examined the transfer of health promotion to the Australian School site. Reviewing the policy debates associated with the development of the Australian health promoting school, this chapter traced the history of health promotion in Australian schools. This chapter examined the difference between schools that 'do health promoting' and schools that 'are health promoting' , showing how the latter is embedded in Australia's policy and curriculum statements and in statements published by peak bodies such as the AHPSA and NHMRC.
4. Examined how teachers, critical contributors to the HPS, were faring in adopting the parallel responsibilities of the OBE and HPS discourses. Literature argued that



the teachers HPS role is being limited by a lack of resources, human and cultural, as it is by the outcomes demands of OBE was presented in this chapter. These limitations were argued as attributing further injustice and inequities being delivered to students, families and schools. This chapter also considered how teachers, balancing OBE alongside HPS imperatives, struggle to negotiate both and that the demands of the former for standards and results compromise the values of the latter towards relationships and social justice. This chapter also argued that the demands of the OBE discourse distracts from both relational and communitarian attributes needed to effectively manage and promote HPS environment.

5. Examined DEET's 'Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (Four Levels of Activity)' followed by Victorian government schools and, the CEOM Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010 in Victorian Catholic schools. This included the history of the policies and structures that support student wellbeing practices in both systems. In both the Victorian government and CEOM schools there was recognition that OBE had had a negative impact on teachers' health actions and health promotion. The literature showed that, in practice, the student wellbeing task was difficult. The requirement to realise student performance, time constraints, skills and knowledge gaps and school structures and local priorities worked against the implementation of student wellbeing programs and the realisation of an HPS setting.
6. Compared the HPS frameworks and strategies employed with Victorian government and Catholic primary schools. Comparison of both approaches found that both concentrated on a primary prevention to post-intervention continuum and both frameworks acknowledge that health actions and health promotion must target the most vulnerable as well as support and sustain health promoting environments. However, while both frameworks placed student wellbeing at the centre of health promotion and health action and emphasised the interconnectedness of school operations and structures, the responsibility for implementing student wellbeing structures were allocated differently. In Victorian Catholic schools the CEOM, reviewing and restructuring its systemic operations, trained teachers as Student Welfare Coordinators while in Victorian State Government Schools Primary Welfare Officer could assume the role.

To this point then, this and preceding chapters have argued that schools exist in a policy environment that mandates attention to both student health and student achievement. However,

this and preceding chapters have also documented the difficulties and challenges associated with locating both the demands of OBE and HPS student wellbeing tasks in the teacher's role. From a socio-ecological HPS discourse perspective, these difficulties cluster around such matters as the fact that school communities have access to differential cultural capital, the role conflict embedded in teaching and SWC roles which makes it necessary to focus on student learning instead of student wellbeing; and the skills and knowledge gaps reported by school staff responsible for student wellbeing.

I argue that what is needed is a reconsideration of teachers' roles and their responsibility in the HPS. Further, I want to argue that, while some health actions and health promotion activities are the core business of teachers, such as teaching health literacy, building a positive school ethos, establishing positive relationships with students, parents, carers and the wider community, other health actions and health promotion tasks are the official mandate and discourse of health professionals. Intrinsic to the health profession discourse are the values, skills and expert knowledge that are embedded in the socio-ecological health discourse and provide an obvious nexus between the domains of teaching and the health professionals. Social workers are numbered amongst these health professionals.

The next chapter examines the social worker's core business and opportunities presented in the school for early intervention, family support and community engagement and how social work in schools can inform, strengthen and promote, in collaborative partnerships with teachers, student wellbeing programs and the HPS framework.

## Chapter 4: Compositions of social work

In the previous chapters, literature reviewed twenty-first century schools, their role and agency in developing student human and cultural capital and how these are implicated in student wellbeing and student achievement. Literature indicated that all of these are driven by global, national and local policy mandates. Students' life chances are greatly influenced by how their wellbeing and ability to achieve are developed and nurtured by and within the significant areas of their life. The school site was shown as having significant input into student wellbeing.

Chapter Three established that the health promoting school (HPS) framework, which had its genesis in the WHO's sites approach to health promotion, makes a contribution to how school structures and arrangements can pursue student wellbeing as part of their educational mandate. Examining Victoria's response to the emerging public health issue of youth suicide, literature indicated that Victoria's government policies formalised how schools responded, particularly by the specially the adoption of DEET's 'Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (Four Levels of Activity)', to this public health concern. Chapter Three also examined the parallel adoption and institutionalisation of WHO's health promotion policies and the WHO's HPS framework. Chapter Three concluded by examining the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne's (CEOM) approach to student wellbeing and the formal and professional arrangements of the CEOM 'Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010' and argued that these policies and frameworks are underpinned by the socio-ecological approach to health. Chapter Three also argued that the school must address both student wellbeing and student achievement if students are to have successful passage through schooling and eventual participation in the social and economic fabric of society. Examining student wellbeing being structures in Victorian Catholic schools literature indicated that in Catholic schools, this student welfare role is almost exclusively assigned to teachers rather than to psychologists, social workers or counsellors as in state-supported schools. This role is performed in conjunction with their responsibility to secure each student's academic success. Literature indicated that this dual role has had a huge impact for teachers in Victorian Catholic schools particularly on the teachers' ability to perform as well as they would like and on their personal wellbeing. Literature indicated that many teachers are experiencing stress associated with the complexity

and sometime contradictory nature of these roles. This chapter introduces the contribution that social work can make to the student wellbeing discourse and the relevance of such a professional partnership. This partnership can assist teachers to develop the best possible options for students to learn and achieve while at school and enable teachers to be free to teach rather than split their role across the welfare and academic responsibilities.

There is no shortage of literature dedicated to the contribution and practice of social work in various settings from hospital to Government organisations and small community-based centres (Alston & McKinnon 2001; Fook 2002; Harris & Ranson 2005; Harris, J 2003). Nor is there a shortage of literature addressing the roles of social workers, ranging from individual casework to group and community work, to research and policy analysis to program development, from management to advising government ministers (Alston & McKinnon 2001). Further while there are many themes and debates that can be examined within the broader landscape of social work with children for example: the history of the social work with children, communication and methods of practice with children, the history of child welfare and care in Australia, there is limited knowledge about social work in schools. The focus of this chapter is, then, school social workers and their contribution to the HPS as new area of practice and research. Specifically the focus of this chapter is Victorian schools, the Victorian state policies that have shaped school social work, the future possibilities for more formalised contributions of school social workers to student wellbeing, and then the opportunities and challenges confronting school social workers, particularly those working the Catholic schools, in this emerging new area of practice. This chapter will argue that the skills and expert knowledge that construct the social work profession, and specially the field of school social work, are the logical and complementary skills and expert knowledge that can be used to collaborate with teachers in pursuit of student wellbeing and the HPS. Thus, focussing on school social work in Victoria this chapter will:

1. Briefly examine the genesis of social welfare and its relationship to government welfare provision, specifically social inclusion policies.
2. Briefly examine social work as a field of practice in Australia.
3. Examine one particular field of social work – school social work – locating school social work within the broader policy landscape of Victorian child welfare policies. Victorian school social work practice will be shown to have had three practice themes: community links, the full service school and school and health and wellbeing. This chapter will examine how Victorian school social work has had to negotiate the political and professional restructuring of the neoconservative

governments, the impact of managerialism and the dual responsibilities of balancing outcome-based education (OBE) and HPS mandates and that this negotiation has hampered the presence, practice and development of the social work discourse in schools.

4. Examine cross disciplinary<sup>20</sup> collaborations within the health services sector. This chapter will argue that social workers are not new to cross-disciplinary collaborations and that such collaborations in the school can positively impact on the development of student wellbeing and the development of the HPS.
5. Examine cross-disciplinary collaboration in Victorian Catholic schools. Literature will indicate why it is within the ambit of the Catholic school's mandate to foster and promote cross-disciplinary collaborations and that the inclusion of social workers to the CEOM's student wellbeing strategy has synergy with the depth and breadth of the Catholic school's religious role and purpose. Literature will also indicate the complementary of social work values and CST and how social workers can be introduced to Catholic schools strategically and purposefully as collaborative partners to teachers working with them to improve the educational and health outcomes for students, teachers, parent and carers and the school community.
6. Argue that social workers have an opportunity to form cross-disciplinary collaborations with teachers and lend their expert skills and knowledge to the development of the HPS. This chapter will also explore the challenges facing school social workers, principally how the professional and systemic barriers that are placed on them while working within school and current policy structures.

This chapter is relevant to RQ (c) in that it provides an understanding of the policy context in which school social work developed as well as an understanding of the efficacy and agency of the social work contribution to the St Paul's Model.

### **Australian social welfare, social work and government business**

Ife (1997) argues that social work's historical beginnings are situated in a number of events. Amongst these he cites as charitable movements, the need to maintain political and social stability by exercising social control and regulation of the poor, the societal development ideals of settlement houses, the peace movement of Jane Addams and the 'enlightened' socialism of a social administration of the British Fabian societies. Ife goes on to argue that while social work has developed differently in different countries, the construction of social work world wide has

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<sup>20</sup> The term 'cross-disciplinary' will be used to refer to the collaboration between different professionals. The literature also refers to this collaboration as 'multidisciplinary'.

in common six characteristics. These being: the provision of services, practice located within the context of a welfare state, the status of a profession, a generalist rather a specialist approach, a secular orientation and practice which integrates knowledge, skills and values (Ife 1997). However while these constructs are applicable in many welfare settings Australian scholar McDonald (2006) draws attention to the need to reflect on how context shapes practice. McDonald argues that the everyday context of twentieth century social work practice was shaped by institutional policies and programs specifically aimed at managing the problems that modern society created in the early part of the twentieth century. Western social welfare was, she goes on, constructed by governments' perceptions of and responses to social instability in Australia that is, high unemployment, homelessness, drug abuse and crime, and the disintegration of the family unit. Jamrozik, (2001) agrees adding that also underpinning the context in which twenty-first century social work is practiced is the ideological context of globalisation, the unleashing of free market individualism and the introduction of neoliberal politics. Further he argues that within this ideological context governments, facing a decline in the traditional sources of tax revenue, need to navigate the implementation of welfare policies with reduced revenue streams and a neoliberal ideology premised on participation and productivist employment policies (Jamrozik, 2001). Thus the context of social work practice was and is situated within the need to balance welfare delivery with productivity.

In Australia, as in the UK and the USA, federal and state governments navigating these dual responsibilities – welfare and employment and productivity – and trying to contain welfare expenditure have introduced welfare policies that emphasise personal responsibility while simultaneously addressing social exclusion and poverty. The consequence of this is an expectation that welfare recipients comply with the conditions that accompany the benefits extended to them (Beare 1998; Shaver 2002). For example, even as this thesis is being written, the Australian Federal Labor Government's 'Compact, with Young Australians' has tied youth welfare payment to the completion of schooling (Council of Australian Governments 2009). Similarly the Victorian Government's recent amendment to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (DEECD 2009a) has increased the school leaving age to seventeen from sixteen. Both these policies are exemplars of the contemporary connection that is being made between participation and productivity policies. With a rhetoric of 'learn or earn', the Compact and legislative amendment have restated the ongoing negative effects from leaving school early – not just for the individual but also for the economy and society as a whole. For welfare recipients, access to social welfare is available but it comes at a price.

O'Brien and Penna's (2008) reflection on American social inclusion policies are just as relevant to the Australian context. They argue that there is a tension between the desire to tackle social exclusion at a national level and the pressure from the global economic governance to adopt more neoliberal policies emphasising individual economic achievement. They go on to argue that the neoliberal polity actually creates social exclusion in classes of people because of the inherent socio, economic and cultural structures that conspire against an individual's ability to negotiate the multidimensional nature of poverty and the dynamics of disadvantage (Gordon 2000). International studies show that although levels of poverty have fallen marginally, poverty is still almost double that of twenty years ago. In Australia today about one in every seven Australians live in a financially disadvantaged family, where financial disadvantage, or poverty, is defined as living in a family whose income is less than half of average family income (Harding & Szukalska 2000). It could be argued that welfare policies which focus on the individual and the individual's obligation to the nation state without an accompanying focus on the social and cultural capacity of the individual's family and neighbourhood, overlooks the capacity of individuals' social networks. It is these capacities that help that help the individual to develop their own and their neighbourhoods' social, economic and cultural capacity influence an individual's participation into the social, economic life of the nation state. It can also be argued, that this shift to mutual obligation and this focus on the disadvantaged and on what the disadvantaged must do to access social and economic opportunities may reinforce social and cultural control and class differentiation mechanisms and compromise government aspirations of social inclusion welfare policies, rather than addressing structural links to inequality (Adams, Dominelli & Payne 2005; MacDonald 2006). So what and how can the social work discipline contribute to a political landscape underpinned by both a neoliberal and social inclusion agenda? The next section examines twenty-first century social work practice.

### **Social work in the Australian context**

Whatever the context, or specific social work field of practice or social work role we might identify what differentiates social work from any other profession is its singular focus on individuals in their environment. Social work is always defined as a practice that operates from a clear and explicit value base and as a discipline that uses its political and social base to work towards a more just, socially inclusive and equitable society (AASW 1999, 2006). However, this mandate is more difficult (though not insurmountable) as the neoliberalisation of the welfare sector presents its own dilemmas for social work, including school social work. In the twenty-first century a social worker's pursuit of social justice and social reform must navigate the more conservative neoliberal government agendas that bounds her/his practice (MacDonald

2006). At the same time, the more conservative neoliberal context does not need to limit the pursuit of social justice and social reform. For example, by actively pursuing social inclusion the social worker's advocacy role can work towards ensuring that the restraining and regulatory mechanisms of the nation and state does not marginalise groups and classes of people, for example, the unemployed who must satisfy welfare criteria before they receive welfare benefits (Adams, Dominelli & Payne 2005).

By helping individuals play a full role in Australian life social workers can use their skills and knowledge to help individuals secure jobs, access services, connect with others, deal with personal crises such as ill health and/or assist in giving voice to those whose voices are traditionally silenced. It can be argued that such a focus on social inclusion both forwards Government's social inclusion agenda and fulfils social work's discipline mandates, particularly that which is concerned with social inclusion and social justice (Australian Council of Social Services 2008). It can also be argued that social workers have an opportunity to reconfigure their professional practice. They can not only to satisfy the regulatory requirements of managerial discourses but they can also use these requirements as a means to confidently articulate 'what' social inclusion and socially inclusive policy is and 'how' social inclusion and socially inclusive policy advantages both individuals and cost conscious bureaucrats (Adams, Dominelli & Payne 2005; Ife 1997; O'Connor, Wilson & Setterlund 2003). Social workers can be vital in supporting, encouraging, and helping communities who are seeking creative alternatives to mainstream economic and social structures. Within an ideology that increasingly has social workers located in diverse settings and alongside practitioners with different types of qualifications and training, the establishment of cross-disciplinary collaboration provides opportunities for social workers to contribute their specialist skills and knowledge with and across social agencies (Adams, Dominelli & Payne 2005; Chenoweth & McAuliffe 2008).

Cross-disciplinary collaborations with and across social agencies can achieve social changes that enhance social solidarity and reduce or remove inequalities in society (Adams 2005). For example, health care and education can provide opportunities for social workers to contribute their own distinct views to the welfare discourse and an avenue to engage in reflexive and critical practice with individuals, families and groups.

The next section examines one area of cross-disciplinary collaboration, social workers and teachers, one setting, the school and one field of practice, school social work. The next section also examines school social work in one geographical location wherein social workers can collaborate to further the social inclusion agenda and further improve outcomes for services



users and communities. This setting is schools with an emphasis on Victoria and more specifically Catholic schools in Victoria as sites that are well placed to further both the social inclusion and health agendas, already identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 1978 1986, 1991) regarding social workers in Victorian schools. This is particularly relevant to this thesis since the contribution of social work to the St Paul's Model, a Victorian primary Catholic school, needs to be situated within the historical development of school social work as a specific field of practice. I will argue that school social work has an important role in society in promoting access to resources, supporting social cohesion, strengthening social inclusion and promoting interdisciplinary cooperation between all professionals that are located in or have contact with the school.

### **Victorian school social work: policy context and practice implications**

Social workers have been involved in Victorian schools for a little over sixty years. In fact, the first Victorian government school social worker was employed in 1949. Even with the first appointment, school social workers have had to negotiate the different political ideologies of government since their location within school welfare policy. Appendix 2 summarises the key historical events.

During the late 1940s and 1960s, mirroring the approaches of the USA and England and situated within a biomedical model of health policy. The primary purpose of health professionals, including social workers, who worked in Victorian schools was to provide services that addressed family poverty, responded to human needs, provided services to the school community and ensured that students attended school (Barrett 2003; Rimmer, Pettit, Morgan & Hodgson 1984; Winkworth & McArthur 2005). These interventions, driven by welfare departments, centralised the control and management of 'failing' students and used a mental health model to guide interventions on behalf of the school or state and health professionals to deliver health services (Winkworth & McArthur 2005). For example, the interventions of school health professionals included dental health programs and visiting nurses who could address 'failing health' and psychologists or counsellors who dealt with troubled or truant students. Social workers were counted amongst these professionals, primarily as assistants to psychologists who were the professional leaders in this service.

Assigned the role of assistant to psychologists, during the years 1949 and the late 1960s, social workers were located in a regional office. They accompanied psychologists to schools to manage student problems. Barrett (2003), answering the accusation that the characterisation of the first social workers as 'assistants to psychologists' implying they had a lower status and a

secondary role, argues that rather than implying a lower status and secondary role, the social worker's attachment to the work of psychologists cleverly circumvented structural arrangements that precluded social workers from school sites. Barrett (2003) goes on to argue that, even if it was as assistants to psychologists, instead of accepting their preclusion by welfare departments, gaining entry to the school site position enabled school social workers to advocate for children and families and gave them the legitimacy to criticise the practices that alienated their clients from schooling. Albeit their historical inclusion in schools as assistants to psychologists, the school social worker's presence in schools has followed three significant child welfare and family themes each of which will be examined in the next sections. The first of these themes is the social reform agenda of the Whitlam government and policies that encouraged links between and within communities and which were based in the values of justice, access and equity (Johnston 1993). Following on from an examination of the first theme is a discussion of the full service schools model and Victoria's Kennett Liberal Government's 1990s reform agenda that severely impacted on the retainment of social workers within the government school system. Finally, this section will conclude with an examination of the third theme: the increasing recognition of the school's role in developing social capital, health and wellbeing.

### **Forging community links**

During the late 1960s and early 1970s as greater awareness of and sensitivity to social inequities and a period of social change, the school social worker's social control role was broadened. The catalyst for the broadening of this role was growing sensitisation at global, national and local levels of the link between national competitiveness in the international arena and the development of the country's human capital. As this link sharpened and began to take hold working with students and families and addressing their social disadvantage was regarded as a way of benefiting both individuals and their potential employers. Using a compensatory logic, educational disadvantage was viewed as something that needed to be compensated for but not eliminated and schools became attractive targets for reformers seeking to improve the health and welfare of children as well as the wealth of nation-states (Henry 2005). Subsequently, the aim of major policy directives during these years was to ensure that disadvantage was addressed so that individual and national prosperity was advanced (McKinnon, Kearns & Crockett 2004). Nevertheless, Victorian social workers did not work from within the school until the social reform agenda of the Whitlam Labor (1972 to 1975) government, particularly the national education policies that exhorted social justice and equity for all students in Australian schools. Within this policy context the DSP was the main vehicle for school-based social welfare services (Teese 2006; Williamson 1991).

Underpinned by the compensatory logic articulated in the Australian Schools Commission's 1973 Interim School Commission's Report, referred to as the 'Karmel Report', education and welfare policy was directed at reducing disadvantage and minimising inequality among students, their families and school communities. Locating the structural roots of educational disadvantage in social, economic and educational structures, the concept of empowerment and the 'power over circumstances' arguments involved schools in actions that increased the social power of students, families and schools alike (Wilkinson, Caldwell, Selleck, Harris & Dettman 2006). Money flowed to schools from federal and state programs and educators expanded services for the disadvantaged. This balanced – somewhat – the uneven distribution of social and health services between the haves and the have-nots. Linking socioeconomic and familial circumstances, the DSP set about funding school-based initiatives that worked to both lessen the impact of this disadvantage on students' academic achievement as well as to secure the necessary skill and employment base needed for in a globalised economy (Gilligan 1998; Goldschmidt & Eyermann 1999; Teasley 2004). During this time, schools typically forged links with communities and created effective working relationships with community agencies. Importantly, using an ideology of empowerment and community connectedness, schools could shape their own programs and design their own outcomes, targeting school culture and curriculum changes. Examples of these links and working relationships were home and school liaison programs, excursion programs, breakfast clubs, peer support programs and adult literacy classes (National Board of Education Employment and Training 1990).

Henry (2001) singles out the DSP as having made a significant contribution to ameliorating social disadvantage to student, school and community, because of its longevity – twenty-three years – and because it remains a reference point against which all other programs that address disadvantage are judged. This structural approach to social policy developed in parallel with the HPS policy that was beginning to sharpen its understandings of the influence of structural determinants on health and health outcomes in, for example, the Alma Ata Declaration (WHO 1978). Not specifically underpinned by a socio-ecological health agenda but addressing the social determinants of health, the DSP intended to assist all children to gain the fundamental skills necessary to participate meaningfully in society, and to do so in schools that were pleasant, relevant and open to the wider community – all of which are substantive characteristics of the HPS framework.

It is within this period that the Victorian State Education Department sponsored a two-year full-time social work degree for experienced teachers. Melbourne University delivered this degree.

Teachers newly trained as social workers were available to contribute their specialist skills and knowledge in schools. Winkworth and McArthur (2005) argue that this systemic approach enabled teacher-trained social workers to gain a foothold in schools before social workers were able to establish a professional niche in education<sup>21</sup>. This said, the next piece of literature that addressed social work in schools was Rimmer, Pettit, Morgan and Hodgson's (1984) research, the only research on social work involvement in schools during the DSP policy years. Their research was on a program referred to as the 'Doveton Cluster' (1975–1984). The Doveton Cluster comprised of seven disadvantaged schools located in Victoria's impoverished Doveton, Dandenong, and Westall areas in the outlying south-eastern area of Melbourne. Organised into three groups the participating schools voluntarily formed an association and combined with local service agencies and the community to respond to common concerns with students and students' parents in their geographical area.

Acting from a structural perspective and the accompanying belief that these issues could not be resolved by schools operating independently of each other and of the local welfare agencies, the Doveton Cluster shared the goal of improving students' educational outcomes by focussing their interventions on concerns that were common across their schools and communities (Rimmer et al. 1984). Sharing the cost of employing social workers schools in the Doveton Cluster developed working relationships with human services agencies in their areas to design and deliver targeted welfare programs to students and their families in their social environment (Rimmer et al. 1984). Together teachers and social workers focussed on whole school change and improved school–community relations rather than on fixing up the deficiencies of individual students. Thus, rejecting the deficiency discourse, their programs for individual students were framed by broader considerations. Instead of blaming an individual's pathology and the victim, schools in the Doveton Cluster focused on ways in which school structures, curricula and pedagogies contributed to the reproduction of educational disadvantage across generations (Lingard 2005).

While the scope of this thesis does not allow for a comprehensive analysis of the success or otherwise of the Doveton Cluster, what is relevant are the outcomes of Rimmer et al.'s research. Rimmer et al.'s research, drawing on the corpus of school social work literature developed by international scholars Allen-Meares (1990a), Costin (1981), Dryfoos (1991) and Franklin

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<sup>21</sup> In the Victorian Catholic schools this policy of credentialing teachers was replicated by the CEOM in its *Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006 – 2010*. As I will argue in a later section, adopting this policy approach in Victorian Catholic schools has excluded an opportunity for a cross-disciplinary collaboration between social workers and teachers

(1990) describes the tasks, roles and models of social work undertaken during that period. Rimmer et al.'s research outcomes may provide direction to the contribution of social work to present day student wellbeing programs. Rimmer et al.'s findings also give a reference point against which to 'map' social work's contribution the St Paul's Model. In summary, these Rimmer et al found that social work intervention in schools was successful because:

1. The philosophy underpinning the provision of social work and interdisciplinary intervention in schools was social justice. Principally the promotion of equality of educational opportunity, openness to the input of the wider community, acknowledgement of the expectations being made of schools by stakeholders beyond the school gates from, for example, governments, employers, the participation of parents and the wider community and examination and accommodation of these stakeholders in school activities and processes.
2. Social work intervention addressed individual, familial or societal risk. Practices underpinned by values that promoted justice, the equality of educational opportunity, and self-determination and fostered the inherent growth potential in all.
3. Student underachievement was conceived as stemming from a home base, school base, local community base or societal base or from a combination of all four aspects and all children must be seen and catered for in the context of their local environment.
4. Social workers employed a variety of interventions models, for example, the traditional clinical model the school change model, the community development model, the social interaction model and the indirect services model, to forge links between schools and the local community (see Appendix 3).
5. Social workers could assist all members in the school community to deal with structural injustices, develop the power to influence their social environment and their communities, and assist the school community secure the community resources most suitable to address and enhance student, family and community social functioning.
6. Social workers in schools could successfully collaborate with other professionals and work towards socially just practices.

In the 1990s, a change in government and a shift in education and welfare agenda saw the demise of the DSP social reform agenda, its focus on children's broader social environment and its reappraisal of the school social worker role. Economic reform agendas and new public management discourses introduced the full service school model as the principle framework

through which student services and human service professionals were engaged in schools. The next section examines the full service school and the place of the social worker in full service school.

### **Full Service School**

In Victoria, the policy context for the full service school model was Kennett's Liberal government years (see Chapter Two). During the late 1980s and early 1990s, in contrast to the initiatives of the DSP years, the initiatives that had taken schools and cross-disciplinary collaborations beyond the school gate were modified. These modification skewed interventions towards classroom-focussed interventions.

Drawing on the shifts in US education and welfare policy Victoria adopted a model of practice that spanned a number of discipline domains and interventions with students, families, groups, classrooms and local communities. This model, referred to as the 'school-linked', 'wrap around', 'community schools' or the 'full services school' model, became the new policy response to child welfare. The term adopted in Victoria for this initiative was the 'full service school' and it had a life span of two years from 1999 to 2000 before the marketisation and managerial discourse further changed the direction of state policies away from student welfare models of schooling (O'Dowd, Ryan & Broadbent 2001).

The goals of a full service school were to engage health professionals to deliver seamless welfare services from the school site and to support students to attain successful educational outcomes irrespective of their structural, familial or personal circumstances. Full service schools were to be one-stop shops provided with inputs from a number of welfare services, since 'to meet the challenge of an advanced industrial society, no one group of professionals can function in isolation from another' (Dryfoos 1999, p. 4). Cross-disciplinary collaboration provided the impetus for the full service school to evolve in theory, if not in practice (Winkworth & McArthur 2005).

In contrast to the DSP's focus on the structural antecedents of disadvantage, the full service school model returned welfare provision to the deficit discourse and a focus on individually constructed intervention programmes (Winkworth & McArthur 2005). Stokes and Tyler (1997) and McLeod and Stokes (1999) criticise the full service school model as being used by teachers to remediate that is, change difficult-to-deal with students to make them easier to teach and as redefining schools as welfare service providers that now had to forge links and find funding from outside agencies in marketplace terms. Riddell and Tett (2004), writing on the UK

experience of full service schools, agree with this criticism, arguing that the full service school model was responsive to the growing outcomes-based education (OBE) discourse and the paradigm shift away from equality of outcome to equality of opportunity. Where social workers partnered teachers in the full service school model the expectation was that their focus would be on the non-school issues that affect the performance of educational institutions and by implications on the individual student's academic achievements (Mahony 1995; Morrill 1992).

Where, and if, social workers were invited into multi-agency partnerships and networks, social work tasks became more school centred and less family oriented by focussing on, for instance, improving school attendance, school retention and school completion. Their involvement in schools became skewed towards remediation rather than prevention and on providing comprehensive primary care and specialised services that were directed at high-risk behaviour such as drug abuse, sexual activity and teenage pregnancy (Morrill 1992; Smyth 2002). Students and their families became objects of enquiry and school social workers became the conduit of intrusive authoritarian intervention (Winkworth & McArthur 2005). School social workers found it difficult to address the 'complex mix of factors which lie behind poor literacy and poor school performance' (Henry 2001, p. 53), that is, the structural factors that disadvantage students, families and schools.

Kemmis (2000), reviewing initiatives taken by Victorian schools in the development of full service schools and the multi-agency partnerships formed by these schools, concluded that a number of conflicts compromised the success of full service schools. These factors included inter-organisational, intra-organisational, inter-professional and intra-personal. For example, a lack of appropriate accommodation and resources, the lack of processes that facilitated new inter professional perspectives, oppositional attitudes and common understandings and approaches, retention of structures that reinforced traditional professional hierarchies and stereotypes and professional bodies and profession-specific training that did little to assist different professionals working in proximity to each other with the same client groups to synchronise their professional competence (Kemmis 2000).

These themes are repeated in studies by Australian scholars James, Leger and Ward (2001) and Boyd (1998), as well as by international scholars Dryfoos (1999) and Allen-Meares (1993). Riddell and Tett (2004) add that the inability of full service school initiatives to attract suitably qualified social workers and health workers and their inability to offer long-term appointments also comprised the effectiveness of the full service school. Against this backdrop the involvement of social workers in Victorian schools faced another conflict and challenge: the

Kennett Liberal government's neoliberal, managerialist restructuring of government departments in the 1990s and the bureaucratic upheaval that accompanied it.

This restructuring reflected the ideology of the market-driven economy and government programs that aimed to produce leaner and meaner government bureaucracies. Also becoming policy during this time was the deployment of school social workers from regional offices and districts to clusters of schools and making them accountable to school principals who may or may not have understood the role of social work (Beare 1998; Harris & Ranson 2005; Pascoe & Pascoe 1998). For Victorian government school principals working in financially strapped school contexts and in a period of retrenchments, the school social worker was often amongst the first to be retrenched as talk of social justice was discouraged amongst all state employed staff, marginalising the work of school social workers.

Victorian school social workers, facing the outsourcing of social work services, agitated against being prevented from providing social welfare services and the abandonment of student support centres (Grace 1996). Joining teachers who were fighting school closures and teacher retrenchments and the Community Public Sector Union, social workers took industrial action and lobbied for the survival of their discipline in the schools. During this time the School Social Workers Special Interest Group (SSWSIG) was formed. Barrett (2003) argues that, while the public action and protest was able to turn around the destructive effects of market-driven approaches to education and led to the re-establishment of regionally located school support centres in which a number of other health professionals, social workers included, were also located, it did not reverse the practice of cash-strapped principals in self-managing schools from shifting their focus from welfare programs to learning programs.

In 2008, with the disappearance of the full service school discourse from education policy, the renewed policy stressing outcomes and benchmarks and in a policy context emphasising efficiency, economy, effectiveness, social workers have managed to maintain a presence, however tenuous, within Victorian government schools (AASW 2006; Mahony 1995; SSWSIG 2007). In 2010, the full-time equivalent number of school social workers employed in Victorian government schools is seventy three Victorian social workers. Representing twenty five per cent of School Support Officers employed in Victorian government schools, ninety-two per cent are located in regional offices in multidisciplinary teams and eight per cent are employed by individual schools (Labour Economics Office 2008; SSWSIG 2010). Victorian school social workers have demonstrated adaptability, determination and commitment to their goals and values of practitioners who work within a changing education and welfare policy environment.



Social workers continue to be excluded in Victorian Catholic schools by the CEOM policy of training its teachers as School Welfare Coordinators.

The next section addresses the third theme that encapsulates the trajectory that social work in Australian schools has taken: schools, social capital and wellbeing.

### **Schools, social capital health and wellbeing**

Coleman's (1987, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 2007) corpus of work on the relationship between social capital, human capital and school achievement traced the positive links between health and wellbeing and learning and renewed efforts to concentrate welfare interventions in the school. As international, national and local scholarship continued to build on Coleman's work and as the socio-ecological discourse underpinning and flowing from WHO's health promotion charters<sup>22</sup> advanced public health policies and agendas, the school was recognised as ideally placed to connect families with community resources (Weare 2002; Whitehead 2006; WHO 2000; Wise & Signal 2000). Reasons included: families find schools more approachable than human services agencies, schools have the structure to deliver a seamless suite of human services on the one site and schools have an ethic of care that they extend to disadvantaged students and families (Brennan 1997; Cahill & Freeman 2006; Dryfoos 1999; Franklin & Streeter 1995).

Even as this thesis is being written, Rudd's Federal Labor Government is releasing its National Preventative Health Taskforce (2009) report that highlights the agency that schools have in building social capital and developing wellbeing in individuals. This report sets out a strategy and policy course that aims to improve the health of all Australians. It prioritises disadvantaged groups, and health, not illness and, stressing the socio-ecological health model, reiterates that health does not happen in hospital and, overall, does not have much to do with health professionals. Instead, the Report argues that health happens when one is not poor, when one has a good education, and when one lives in a safe and healthy environment (Preventative Health Taskforce 2009). By implication, health and wellbeing are intrinsically connected to social structures, specifically the economic, social, emotional educational and cultural structures and to values of justice, access and equity. For schools acknowledging these structures will go some way to intervening in the social health determinants that impact on their students' health, which in turn will have an impact on their students' academic achievements (Barnard 1997; Rowling 2007).

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<sup>22</sup> See Chapter Three '*Compositions of Student Wellbeing: Preconditions to Learning*' for a more detailed examination of the HPS discourse.

In the school, health practitioners delivering intervention and prevention programs are regarded as at once enhancing the responsiveness of health services to families, positively facilitating community connectedness and engagement and addressing and fostering the social health determinants that lead to wellbeing and positive student achievement (Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Weare 2002; WHO 2000; Winkworth & McArthur 2005). Given this school social workers, health practitioners historically situated in Victorian government schools, the time is auspicious for them to contribute their skill and expertise. The emerging relevance of the socio ecological discourse provides opportunity for social workers to gain an even firmer foothold in the school landscape, unlike during the initial missed opportunities of the 1960s when social workers were first employed as assistants to psychologists and 1970s during the Kennett Liberal years. Federal and state legislatures have incorporated an overlapping professional discourse of wellbeing in their OBE discourse. Their policy pronouncements highlight the need for schools to focus on disadvantage and on the development of human capital. Governments at both levels urge schools to ensure that 'schooling is socially just so that students' outcomes from schooling are free from differences arising from students socioeconomic background or geographic location' (MCEETYA 2008, p. 11), themes consistently repeated in federal and state education blueprints (DEECD 2008c; MCEETYA 2000, 2008).

This being the case social workers, using the socio-ecological imperatives of the HPS, are well placed to rearticulate their concern that when injustice and disadvantage are present in student, family, school and community lives, students are unable to develop their human, social and cultural capital and subsequently to develop healthy lifestyles (Brosio 2003; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 2004). The formation of cross-disciplinary collaborations is advantaged by calls from Australia's teacher unions for a return to the DSP's focus on structural disadvantage alongside an emphasis on OBE and the development of human capital (March 2003).

However, before I appraise the place of social workers in the HPS I need to examine briefly cross-disciplinary collaborations in the human service with a view to exploring their relevance to both the development of student wellbeing programs and to Catholic schools.

While there are many aspects of cross-disciplinary collaborations that can be examined, for example, cross-disciplinary collaborations and professionalisation, cross-disciplinary collaborations and non profit organisations, the public management discourse and its impact on cross-disciplinary collaborations, the following section will deal briefly with cross-disciplinary

collaboration and the contribution that such collaborations can make to the development of student wellbeing. Such an examination is important to this thesis because establishing the nature of cross-disciplinary collaboration and the strengths and barriers of such cross-disciplinary collaborations are a vital starting point in understanding the St Paul's Model.

### **Collaboration across the human services sector**

In the literature, human service organisations and collaboration refers to the formal joining of structures and processes between organisations (Scott 2005). Cross-disciplinary collaboration refers to human services workers who have entered into collaborations to provide a range of services to their service users. It is not unusual for human services workers to work with people from other agencies and/or from other disciplines. In Australia, as in other countries, human services workers have entered into cross-disciplinary collaborations to provide a range of services to their service users. For example in Melbourne's Western Suburbs the Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) service, a service which treats people with a mental illness and assists in their recovery, has a cross-disciplinary team comprising of social worker, psychologists, nurses and doctors. The extent of cross-disciplinary collaboration can vary depending on the level of shared skills, knowledge and practice ranging from the informal to the formal, beginning with cooperation (as in informal information exchange), through coordination (as in the development of formal protocols) to collaboration and ultimately, integration, which involves the formation of new organisational structures (Garrett 2006; Lewis 1998; Welsh 1991).

Walther-Thomas, Korkinek, McLaughlin and Williams (2000) argue that effective cross-disciplinary collaboration emerges out of concerns by individuals who are like-minded in some ways and very different in others. In the public health arena Whiteside (2004) has argued that the improvement of health outcomes for all individuals requires inter sectoral collaborations. Using the socio-ecological discourse as her reference point, she argues that these collaborations must work at many levels. They must be multifaceted, incorporate changes to macro level social and economic policies, improve living and working conditions, strengthen communities for health, improve behavioural risk factors, empower individuals, strengthen social networks and improve responses from the health care systems and associated treatment services.

Whiteside (2002), using the work of Mullaly (2002), though, also acknowledges that such a collaborative approach is difficult within a context of often oppositional economic and biomedical discourses. Encouragingly, she argues that even amidst oppositional discourses social workers, with their specialist skills and knowledge, can still make a significant

contribution and offset the opposition that may come from the economic and biomedical systems. Whiteside writes that social workers can provide an analysis of power relations, have strategies for building coalitions with others who are working toward similar ends, process and issues associated with change and have strategies for addressing systemic constraints. Ife (1997) concurs arguing that 'far from being marginalised social workers have the opportunity to move centre stage' (p. 207), and that it is an opportune time for social workers to seize on the public health discourse and form cross-disciplinary collaborations and help define and redefine the structural impediments to justice. The next section briefly examines Catholic schools and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

### **Catholic schools and cross-disciplinary collaborations**

While it is not the intention of this thesis to discuss in depth the distinctive nature of the Catholic school it is relevant to point out that Catholic education in Australia, as well as globally, has been built upon common good philosophies and assumptions. In short, this means that Catholic schools differentiate between what is meant by public good from common good schooling intentions. Simply put, in Catholic education, common good values actively pursue community over individualism, cooperation over competition, idealism and diversity over market forces and client satisfaction (Ebear, Csiernik & Bechard 2006). This being the case, social work practice is a good fit with social work since core social work values are congruent with CST. For example both CST and social work emphasise human dignity, rights and responsibilities, justice and human rights (Ebear, Csiernik & Bechard 2006) (Appendix 4). Additionally, Catholic school documents stress that the Catholic schools must enter into 'dialogue and collaboration with States and civil authorities [recognising] each other's role and common service to humankind' (Congregation for Catholic Education 1988, p. 21). More recently, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria's (CECV) own findings highlighted the need for Catholic schools to build 'bridges and doorways within and across government departments, school sectors and community service providers' (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2004, p. 3).

From the perspective of this thesis, for Catholic schools cross-disciplinary collaboration is central to CST since central to Catholic doctrine is the belief that revelation (that is, finding God in life experience) is situated within a personal and communal context. Partnerships are intrinsic to the expression of Catholic faith (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006b; Congregation for Catholic Education 1988) and therefore the intersection between the Catholic school and community is the Catholic school's intention to develop family and community partnerships.

From this perspective, cross-disciplinary collaborations are essential for Catholic schools if they want to both strengthen the nature of the Catholic school and actively contribute to the development of social capital, health and student wellbeing. The HPS emphasis on cross-disciplinary collaborations (articulated in the ‘partnerships and services’ ellipses of the HPS framework, see Chapter Three), specifically the cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers, can make a significant impact on the Catholic school’s capacity to address student wellbeing and to further the social justice agenda of the HPS discourse.

The next section expands on the cross-disciplinary collaboration between social workers in schools and teachers.

### **Victoria, school social workers, teachers, collaboration and the HPS**

In the twenty-first century, with governments at both levels inviting, even mandating cross-disciplinary collaborations and partnerships with families, there is a new opportunity for social work knowledge and skills to assist teachers in balancing the OBE and HPS student wellbeing policy imperatives (AASW 2006; Angelico 1993; MCEETYA 2000; McInerney 2004). Further, with DEECD welfare policies and wellbeing frameworks emphasising a whole school approach to student wellbeing the social work discourse and HPS discourse health promotion initiatives have an obvious synergy (Allen-Meaers 1990b; Berrick & Barth 1991; Dryfoos 1991).

Grounded in the ideological principle of social justice, access and equity, input from school social workers to the HPS can lead to ‘education and health outcomes which help to provide the individual with the opportunity to lead productive and satisfying lives’ (National and Medical Research Council 1996, p. 2). Sharing with educators a concern for the social problems that confront children and families school social workers can provide a broad range of services other than just providing casework to students and their families (Briskman 2005; Whiteside 2004). These services include advocacy, service coordination and development, community development and involvement in processes of school change (Grace 1996). Additionally social workers can use the DEET’s (1998) ‘Four Levels of Activity’ Framework to develop preventative programs, carry out professional and administrative tasks associated with early intervention, intervention, prevention programs and contribute to child welfare and health policy pursuing health promoting activities that facilitate the ‘relief and removal of barriers and inequities’ (AASW 2006, p. 6). Not only can school social workers work towards individual change within their school’s organisational structure, but they can also work within the school’s context in the local community to help facilitate broader change (AASW 2006; Horner & Krawczyk 2006; Jaquiere 2002). At every level, social workers have the potential to influence

changes that maximise students' learning and social development, parental involvement in schooling, and community participation and development. I know of no other setting in which a seamless approach to health promotion can so readily be blended.

In partnership with teachers, social workers can use their respective disciplines to promote social functioning, ameliorate environmental conditions that impede the learning process, and advocate for the development of services before the need becomes critical (AASW 2006; Allen-Meares 1990b). Social workers can actively further the socio-ecological HPS discourse. They can do this by promoting growth in students, expanding teachers' narrow perceptions of certain groups of pupils which can confine students' academic performance to the teacher's limited view and empowering parents to take an active role in their child's schooling or question the school's policies and practices. School social workers by articulating their knowledge, skills and the profession's social justice values, can also advocate structural change in ways that teachers cannot. In addition, teachers have neither the time nor, more importantly, the expert knowledge and skills to attend ecologically, critically or holistically to student wellbeing concerns and issues. Black's (2006) qualitative case study on the way Melbourne schools are attempting to engage students, staff and community to improve educational outcomes and student wellbeing supports teachers' experiences. He points both to the difficulties that teachers face and to the opportunity this provides cross disciplinary collaboration. Issues of teacher confidence, expertise and skills in dealing with the social determinants of student health figured prominently in Black's research. She (2006) found that principals and teachers recognised the gap in their knowledge and skill that hampers their health promotion efforts. They noted, for instance their skills and knowledge gaps and the structural impediments that teachers faced in assuming a welfare role:

At the end of the day, we're teachers, not social facilitators. (Black 2006, p. 35)

If governments were serious about this, every school would have a dedicated welfare coordinator. (Black 2006, p. 36)

We would have a three day a week counsellor in here and still not meet all of our students' needs. (Black 2006, p. 36)

We do get funding for a trained student welfare officer from amongst the staff, but that's my assistant principal. When she is wearing her welfare hat, I lose her support in running the school. (Black 2006, p. 36)

In Victorian Catholic schools, CECV (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria 2004) and CEOM sponsored research (Cahill et al. 2004) documents also highlight the skill and expertise gap that teachers, albeit teachers credentialed with basic counselling skills gained in CEOM sponsored courses, face when student wellbeing issues require a greater level of expertise. These same documents argue that additional access to welfare practitioners who can provide

management plans, referral processes, networking and who can draw on external supports and free teachers to focus on curriculum and pedagogy, provide additional impetus for social workers to be included in cross-disciplinary collaborations. It can also be argued that a teacher taking on social work roles misrepresents the expert skills and knowledge that social work has to offer to the Catholic school and thereby undervalues the social work discipline and its potential contribution to student wellbeing programs.

With a unique role in the school system and their ecological, critical and holistic perspectives, school social workers are particularly well placed to fill the knowledge and skill gaps that teachers have recognised as central to student wellbeing (Mahony 1995). However, as with any cross-disciplinary collaboration challenges do confront the school social worker. While there is no current research or literature into social work roles vis-à-vis the HPS or its status in current education policy and practice, a situation that Winkworth and McArthur (2003) have noted as a major impediment to the legitimacy of the social worker's presence in schools, there has been one Master's thesis into Victorian school based social work. This work, entitled 'A Study of School Social Work Services in the Victorian Directorate of School Education' was completed by Mahony (1995). In his Victorian research into school social work and cross-disciplinary collaboration Mahony (1995) provided some insight into the challenges that collaboration between teachers and social workers must face if the collaboration is to progress.

Mahony's qualitative research findings on the roles undertaken by forty Victorian government school social workers, the only research undertaken on this topic since Rimmer et al.'s (1984) evaluation of the Doveton Cluster, is consistent with that of Huxtable's (1998) international research findings. Mahony found that school social workers addressed the spectrum of behavioural, emotional, family and community problems that interfered with students' schooling, such as improving student attendance, counselling and liaison with families, consultation with teachers, prevention activities, intervention and advocacy for students. Mahony also found that teachers were hesitant to embrace social work knowledge and skill when such skills and knowledge were socio-ecologically focussed interventions, preferring social workers to engage in individual casework with students. Mahony found that teachers preferred social workers to provide direct casework – counselling, casework and the development of behaviour management programs, reinforces a biomedical model of intervention. Mahony (1995) concluded that there were four challenges to the school social worker/teacher collaboration: policy and organisational barriers, resource-related barriers, professional and cultural barriers and school-related barriers (Appendix 5), as such social

workers in schools had no influence on school culture, ethos and environment the antithesis of HPS principles.

This teacher preference and a reliance on expert-led individual and group work compounds the unequal relationships between school and social workers rather than involving teachers in health promotion and creating a school environment that addresses health determinants (Jaquier 2002; Mahony 1995; St Leger 1998). Winkworth and McArthur (2005) attribute this narrow focus to teachers' confusion about the human services sector and to the inherent difficulties of forming cross-disciplinary collaborations. If the barriers to cross-disciplinary collaboration are to be blunted there is a need for teachers and social workers to abandon their traditional boundaries if they are to develop effective cross-disciplinary collaborations which play 'a part in the redefinition of power, justice and social reality' (Whiteside 2004, p. 384).

St Leger (2006), Garrett (2006), Hernandez (2002) and Allan-Meares (1990), writing from an international perspective, write that cross-disciplinary barriers can be somewhat minimised. They write that minimising barriers depends on how successfully each discipline is able to understand the other's work and functions; the level of human and financial resources that supports the collaboration between both disciplines; and the level of support and commitment of the school principal to breaking through the barriers. However, breaking through these barriers also entails using a service philosophy that has its roots in the principles of the socio-ecological approach to health promotion and that is embedded in the HPS framework. Barriers could also be dampened by increasing the visibility of school social workers and actively in promoting the contribution of social work to the HPS. On the profession's visibility, Garrett (2006) argues that school social workers must 'demonstrate that they contribute to the mission and goals of the school they serve' (p. 115).

Further, discipline silos need not be the reality in schools attempting to address student wellbeing programs. It is within the scope of the social work discourse to promote the work and value of school social work and that unless this is actively pursued school social workers will continue to be narrowly defined as case managers rather than embraced as collaborative partners in developing a health promoting school. Also from the perspective of this research it could be argued that the CEOM, by credentialing its own teachers to undertake and then be responsible for student wellbeing has structured another barrier for teachers. Signalling an inability or unwillingness to involve the skills and knowledge that a human services practitioner, in this consideration a social worker, can bring to the student wellbeing strategy, the CEOM has both constrained its teachers' student wellbeing capacity and limited the development of a HPS and



student wellbeing programs. These barriers and constraints include: the teacher's lessened capacity to be responsive to its community needs and the potential for teachers and social workers to apply a cross-disciplinary knowledge to student wellbeing in a professional, methodical and creative way. They also include an opportunity to work for teachers and social workers, who have similar goals and are working towards similar ends that is, a more just society, to combine their expertise in pursuit of a broader transformation of society by combining with social workers.

How a cross-disciplinary collaboration between social workers and teachers, both pursuing student wellbeing agendas, both contributing their expert and specialised knowledge and skills to the HPS might work is the subject of this thesis. St Paul's Model is examined as to whether social workers and teachers combined their skills successfully to focus attention on the HPS. Prior to introducing the method and methodology used to research the St Paul's Model a summary of this chapter's content is offered.

### **Rest note**

This chapter, 'Compositions of Social Work' considered the role of social workers in the school, as the logical partners to teachers in health promoting schools. To do this, this chapter:

1. Examined the historical and current place of social welfare in and argued that context influences social work practice. The literature indicated that the dual concerns of productivity and welfare have evolved to both underplay the structural impediments to disadvantage while also attempting to address the social isolation that disadvantage visits on individuals and classes of people.
2. Situated social work within the political landscape of welfare provision and examined how social workers have consistently and successfully negotiated the political landscape of school based social work.
3. Examined social work in Victorian schools and the trajectories that located social work in schools. Three routes were examined, all linked to the welfare discourse of the Australian Federal or State governments. Firstly forging links with the community with particular attention to the DSP and the role of school social workers. Secondly the full service schools model and the tenuous survival of school social work during the introduction of the managerial discourse introduced by Victoria's Kennett's Liberal government. Thirdly, this chapter examined schools as key sites for the development of health and wellbeing. Literature in this chapter also examined why school social workers have relevance

and agency in the current social inclusion and social health agendas and why it is timely for social workers to re-establish and refocus their presence in schools.

4. Examined cross-disciplinary collaboration within the human services sector and, argued its relevance to effective service delivery and health outcomes for services users. The difficulties of cross-disciplinary collaboration were examined and the position was argued that these difficulties are not insurmountable.
5. Examined briefly why cross collaboration is suited to the Catholic school context. Literature explored why the formation of cross-disciplinary partnerships is responsive to CST and why cross disciplinary partnerships must be encouraged and supported in Victorian Catholic schools.
6. Examined how and why social workers can collaborate with teachers in pursuit of student wellbeing and the development of the HPS discourse. The social work discourse, with its expert skills and knowledge, was shown as having values and practices of the socio-ecological approach to wellbeing resonant with the student wellbeing agendas of schools.

The next chapter outlines the method and methodology used in the case study. Chapter Five discusses the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning the research, the theoretical lens used in the research and the methodology and method employed to carry out the research.

## Chapter 5: Gathering the ensemble: research methodology and method

The primary goal of this research was to examine the social work contribution to student wellbeing programs in a Victorian, Catholic primary school. As such the research question was *RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; and (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing? Finally, (c) can the St Paul's model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?* To do this I needed to understand the global, national and local political context in which schooling is delivered and the socio-ecological discourses that impact on student wellbeing. These understandings would underpin the examination the St Paul's Model, the subject of this research.

The first step, understanding the global, national and local political schooling and socio-ecological discourses that impact on student wellbeing, was addressed in Chapters Two and Three of the literature review. These chapters started by examining student wellbeing and student learning policies and their practical application in schools. Specifically examined was literature on the significance, role and function of the outcome-based education (OBE) discourse, CST and Catholic schooling. Secondly, these chapters explored student wellbeing and the World Health Organisation's (WHO) socio-ecological health promoting school (HPS) discourse, how the health promoting school framework is reflected in the Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET) and the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne's (CEOM) policy approaches to student wellbeing. The history of each approach was examined and comparisons were drawn between the Victorian Government's and the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne's student wellbeing policies and framework approaches. Differences turn on how each sector staffs their student wellbeing frameworks: the appointment of Primary Welfare Coordinators and/or School Services Officers in Victorian Government schools and the appointment of CEOM teachers who are sponsored to become credentialed Student Wellbeing Coordinators (SWC) in Victorian Catholic schools.

Chapter Four of the literature review examined how Victorian schools could accommodate the mandates of both OBE and HPS policies without compromising the goals of either. School

social work, a historical contributor to Victorian government school welfare, was examined as one discipline among the allied health disciplines that could help schools accommodate the mandates of both OBE and HPS policies without compromising the goals of either. Chapter Four argued that teaching and social work share similar philosophies, ethos, values and beliefs and both are concerned with addressing individual and community disadvantage. Addressing the advantages and challenges of cross-disciplinary collaboration this chapter argued that collaboration between teaching and social work are a logical fit but not without challenges when forming a cross-disciplinary collaboration in pursuit of positive outcomes for school students. Further, it was argued that in the Catholic school, social work values resonate with both CST and the role of Catholic schools. This chapter proposed that this resonance added further impetus for Catholic schools to include social workers in student wellbeing health promoting environments, structures and alliances. Next, Chapter Four tracing the historical presence of social work Victorian government examined how the role of school social work was shaped by the welfare policies of the day. Three themes were examined: community links, full service schools, and social capital and student wellbeing. Chapter Four argued that the school social workers' 1980s' pursuit of social justice and social equity and their 1990s' pursuit of a social inclusion agenda remain relevant in the 2000s. In the 2000s, school social workers can collaborate with teachers to negotiate the twin discourses of OBE and the HPS, rearticulating the link between student, family, school and community disadvantage and collaborating with teachers to offset the circumstances that frustrate the structural determinants of student wellbeing. What is missing from these developments and arguments is whether in practice teachers and social workers can work collaboratively in addressing student wellbeing especially in Catholic schools where the burden of teaching and welfare fall upon teaching staff who have to split their roles and time accordingly. As indicated in the previous chapters, it is difficult for resource poor schools to manage the teaching and welfare responsibilities. The St Pauls Model was an attempt to address these challenges. Subsequently the case study analysis of St Pauls was undertaken in the hope that the learning that would evolve from the case study could inform future practice.

This chapter, then, is concerned with research and the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods employed to examine the St Paul's Model. The aim of this chapter is to explain how the ontological, epistemological and methodological choices made by me in conjunction with my supervisor resonate with my religious and socio political worldview as outlined in Chapter One, and the ways in which these choices inform the use of a case study to generate evidence for theory development. As such this chapter examines phases 1 to 4 of the research

process as well as addressing issue of reflexivity, trustworthiness, validity and reliability. Phase 5 is addressed in Chapter Eight:

1. Phase 1: Personal and professional perspectives, ontology and epistemology
2. Phase 2: choosing the methodology and ethics
3. Phase 3: methods: research design and development
4. Phase 4: data analysis.

Figure 5. over the page presents research pathway phases 1 to 5 in schematic form.

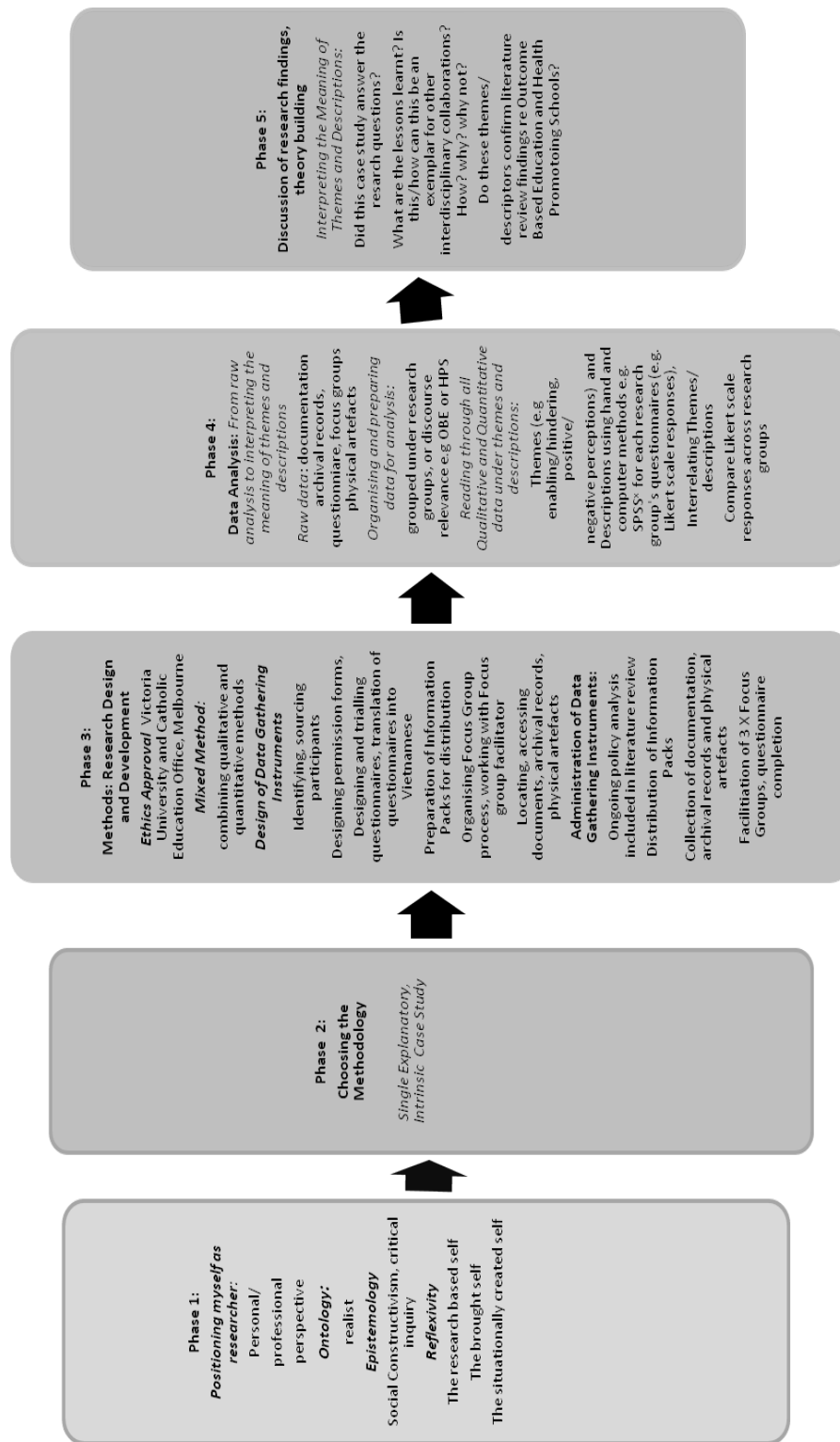
## **Phase 1: Positioning myself in the research**

### **Personal and professional perspective**

Consistent with the journey to this thesis, the research design had to resonate with the values, beliefs and practices that defined who I was and what I did as a religious sister, educator and social work practitioner. These values include a belief in respect, human dignity, justice and cooperative solidarity, that action and reflection can liberate and empower the most vulnerable in society and that the structural inequities operating in schooling policy and practice can be changed. A parallel personal belief was a belief in the possibility that professionals could loosen their control of social institutions, a control that is defined by professional boundaries, by sharing their information and skills. Finally, the research and research design had to reflect a personal and professional commitment to practices that were collaborative in nature and were inclusive of all voices (including teachers, students, parents and carers, social work students and field education coordinators).

To bring possible research designs into harmony with my personal journey, beliefs and values, my attention was drawn anew to the scholars who had initially shaped my understanding of the relationship between citizen and state. These scholars include Freire (1970), Nouwen (1971), Dewey (1929) and Holland and Henriot (1995). These scholars described two possible relationships between the citizen and the state. On the one hand, these relationships can be violent, competitive, unilateral and alienating and undermine democracy, and, on the other hand, they can be visionary, bilateral and actualising, free individuals, communities and societies and develop democracies. Added to these influences were the Papal encyclicals and the Brigidine Sisters' core documents, which urged me to engage in structural analysis and therefore to adopt a deeper cultural vision, to act justly and make visible an option for the

Figure 5.1-: St Paul's Model



poor (Brigidine Secondary Schools Council 2005b; Brigidine Sisters 1988; Pope John Paul VI 1965; 1975; Pope John Paul VI 1963; Pope John Paul VI 1981). All these scholars and documents reawakened in my mind and heart a vision of how I knew I wanted to live my life in both the public and private arena; that is, justly, collaboratively and non-violently.

Consequently, as a researcher, the ontological and epistemological framework chosen had to pay attention to the wider picture. It had to link the sphere of micro actions to macro-economic, political, social and religious structures and processes that frame student learning and student wellbeing as well have the theoretical and research rigour that would effectively and appropriately manage the gathering and analysis of the data. I believed that a social constructivist ontology which views 'what is as historically and culturally effected interpretations rather than eternal truths' (Crotty 1998, p. 64) and the critical inquiry epistemological framework provided paradigms capable of informing the choices of methodology and method since both resonated with my religious, socio political world views. The next sections examine the social constructivism ontology and critical inquiry epistemology.

### **Ontological position: social constructivism**

Ontological questions and positions are concerned with the form and nature of reality (Neuman 2006; Stake 2000). The axiology of research paradigms is differentiated according to inquiry aim, nature of knowledge, the way knowledge is accumulated, rigor and validity, values, ethics, voice, training accommodation and hegemony (Lincoln & Guba 2000). The ontological position chosen for this research is social constructivism. Distinguishing social constructivism from other ontological research paradigms, for example, positivism and its 'naive realism' (Guba & Lincoln 1991, p. 193) is its belief that the world is complex and dynamic, is constructed, interpreted and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems. In this sense reality and meaning is subjective, created and recreated between and amongst individuals and referenced in the social, political, religious, economic and cultural context(s) that individuals inhabit (Crotty 1998; Marlow 2001). Subjectivity, therefore, is not fixed and social order is a human invention constituted by the meanings ascribed to it by social actors (Bronson 1995; Corbin & Strauss 1990; Crotty 1998). Further, since knowledge is bounded by space and time, the subjective reality seen or understood at one particular point may shift significantly across contexts and across time. Consequently a social constructivism perspective identifies the various ways in which social reality is constructed and made available to a culture, the conditions under which this reality is used and the implications of this for human experience and social practice (Willig 2001).

Researchers using a social constructivism ontology when researching teaching and learning, for example, have critically examined sociological categories such as gender and race (Glenn 1999), and concepts such as learning, teacher, learning task and learning context (Williams & Burden 1997) to show they provide a way of constructing reality rather than simply reflecting it.

For this reason, choosing a social constructivism paradigm offered a mechanism for exploring how the main actors and targets of OBE and HPS policies made sense of the policies formulated and implemented at the school site. This ontology could also be used to make sense of the notions that St Paul's teachers, students, staff, parents, social workers and field education coordinators had formed about the social work contribution to student wellbeing programs. It is they who could answer the 'what is there to know?' questions; for example, what did students, teachers, Parent Partnership Team (PPT), social workers and field education coordinators know about student wellbeing? What did they know about the St Paul's Model, What did they know about the HPS? What did they know about OBE? What did they know about the effectiveness or otherwise of the St Paul's Model?

Another reason for choosing the social constructivism paradigm was its potential to analyse the global, national and local OBE and HPS legislative pronouncements that over time have survived or resurfaced in subsequent debates (Yanow 1999). This aspect was particularly useful when reviewing the impact of neoliberal ideologies on student wellbeing and student learning, particularly the return to performance driven and student wellbeing policies characterised by the slogan, 'back to basics' since it provided insight into the political processes and orientations of government student wellbeing and student achievement social policy and programs (MacDonald 2006). The social constructivism paradigm could also be used to examine how the cross-disciplinary collaborations between teachers and social workers are shaped by the different realities that they brought to the collaboration. By using, collecting and examining data from both teachers and social workers knowledge could be generated as to how both constructed and co constructed their practice realities in response to Victoria's public health and student wellbeing policies (Stake 2000). An additional strength of social constructivism was its privileging of dialogical relationships.

A focus on the relational self is another important feature of social constructivism (Crotty 1998; Neuman 2006). This means that dialogue in a social constructivism paradigm identifies and pursues the knowledge that is developed within the interpretative or communal traditions. Social constructivism resonated strongly with the emancipatory values of the socio-ecological health discourse discussed in Chapter Three and the visionary, bilateral and actualising structures and



processes that I wanted to bring to the research (Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Payne 1997).

Conducting research is also contingent upon the theoretical underpinnings chosen for the research inquiry. The next section presents the defining features of the theories chosen for the research.

### **Epistemological position: critical inquiry**

Discussing critical inquiry Crotty (1998) writes that being ready to call the machinations of society into question is not a new phenomenon. Social criticism embodied in revolutionaries, dissidents and agitators has existed since the time of Socrates and has extended to the time of Marx and beyond. However, Crotty (1998) notes that social critics exercise their critical powers in different ways in the present. It no longer comes from the use of force but from the power of ideas, from the way in which these ideas gain currency in society and from the effectiveness with which these critics organise themselves. The social critic has become one critic alongside others. For example Freire, Camus, de Beauvoir, Marcuse and Day, have at one time or another, all used the power of ideas to engage in inquiry in the expectation that their work would be instrumental in bringing about societal change (Crotty 1998; Neuman 2006; Schram 2006).

Smith (1992) and Kemmis (1995) argue that the moral imperative of critical inquiry is human emancipation and social justice and that critical inquiry, emancipation and social justice are irrevocably linked. Thus applying a critical lens to issues, policies, systems and structures offers the researcher and the research participants an opportunity to unmask the underlying values, perspectives and power relationships that shape the social institution or phenomenon being researched. With such insight, the research participants can consider these structures and relationships, how they originated and how they may and can be changed to bring about more socially just structures (Crotty 1998; Ferguson, Lavalette & Whitmore 2005).

In this research critical inquiry was particularly important since the socio-ecological paradigm underpinning the student wellbeing discourse highlights empowerment and participation as central to people's control over their life circumstances and their health and wellbeing. Therefore participants' experience of the St Paul's Model could unmask the underlying values, perspectives and power relationships embedded in the St Paul's Model while also offering a vehicle for shaping and reshaping the St Paul's Model into the future (Crotty 1998). In contrast to, for example, empirical researchers who believe that subjective experience must be omitted from research and that scientific knowledge and truth about reality reside in testing and

measurement critical inquiry had efficacy for this research. In particular, when needing to explore how context influenced the St Paul's Model, how and where power imbalances and vested interests were embedded in the St Paul's Model. The use of critical inquiry in this research is also useful in exploring and identifying the background noises that is, the social policies and programs that impacted on the school social worker's and teachers' cross-disciplinary collaboration contribution to student St Paul's student wellbeing programs (Crotty 1998).

Of importance to this research is my privileged position as researcher. I do not claim to be apart from the research. I was both inside (as both the Model's architect and principal) and outside (as past employee and researcher) the research, thus a commitment to personal reflexivity was an essential component to this research (Creswell 1994; Fox, Martin & Green 2007). Being aware of how I engaged reflexively with firstly the literature review contained in Chapters Two to four and secondly, the case study, required that I plan for reflexivity to be part of the research process. The next section outlines this planning.

### **On reflexivity**

Reflexivity is 'the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher' (Stake 2000, p. 202). Reinharz, in Stake (2000), writes that those undertaking qualitative research must be cognisant of the three selves that the researcher brings to the research process: the research based self, the brought self (that is, the historical, social, and personal views that are brought to the research) and the situationally created self. These 'selves' are particularly pertinent to this research since, having designed and implemented the St Paul's Model and having been principal of St Paul's School between 1994 and 2005. Reflexivity therefore required that I focus on the how I brought myself to the research, how I engaged as both 'inquirer and respondent' (Stake 2000, p. 210) and how I carried out the research. The next section discusses how I managed these multiple roles and multiple 'selves'.

### **The research-based self**

It was critical to this research to understand my relationship to the research process. Reflexivity required that the role I assumed in the research balanced the passivity of receiving data with the activity of pursuing and generating the data (Schram 2006). For example, I, as researcher needed to navigate the ethical practices that bounded the research method and methodology and how I kept any anxiety about receiving 'enough data' and/or identified sources of data in check. Thus, using my supervisor and another colleague, also undertaking PhD studies, as sounding boards,

and a personal journal to record my feelings, I was able to clarify how the research was creating me and how I was creating the research.

### **The brought self**

My historical ties to the St Paul's Model as employer, educational leader, facilitator and co-leader of school committees and social work supervisor also required reflexivity. I needed to ensure that my historical association with the St Paul's Model and St Paul's School did not influence the way in which participants participated in or contributed their knowledge to the research. To do this I ensured that I was always 'one step removed' from the data collection, engaging the assistance of the current St Paul's principal and student wellbeing coordinator and my PhD supervisor, Professor Carolyn Noble, to identify research participants who would, for example, without feelings of loyalty, inferiority or duress, agree to participate in the research. Further, to ensure that, as designer and animator of the St Paul's Model, the research results were not undermined by an uncritical and/or unconscious bias that the Model was, for example, successful and/or effective (Creswell 1994). To do this, I remained open to my supervisor's questioning, direction and assessment of how I gathered and interpreted data, the data sets I chose to include or exclude in the collection of data and the assumptions that I brought to the interpretation of the data. Additionally obtaining ethics approval from Victoria University Ethics Committee was critical in determining that the research process maintained ethical standards throughout the research process.

### **The situationally created self**

To ensure that I would remain aware of what the research was creating in me, how my research was creating me and my responses to the feelings that the research were evoking within in me as I, for example, transcribed and read the focus group transcripts, settled on coding and themes and/or established 'one step' removed relationships between the participants and me, two strategies were used. Firstly, there was ongoing supervision from my supervisor who directed, redirected, examined and re-examined my negotiation of the research phases. Secondly, I kept a journal and used this as a basis of my reflection. Using Taylor's (2000) critical reflection framework as a guide assisted me in constructing, deconstructing, confronting and reconstructing what was happening to me within the research. These two strategies were particularly useful when negotiating the relationship between research participants, the research process and myself and when issues of power, distance and subjectivity needed to be interrogated (Sarantakos 2005; Stake 2000). Such a process allowed me to think more freely

about the participant responses and about the biases that I had brought to the research, for example, that the Paul's Model was effective. It was also used to expose and clarify any ethical dilemmas that might have arisen from research into the St Paul's Model.

## **Phase 2: Methodology**

This research used critical inquiry to inform a case study analysis. Using the critical inquiry lens to examine global, local and national OBE and HPS policies, the literature review was essential to examining and understanding the case study. In this way both components of the methodology, the literature review and case study were interdependent. The next sections explain the links between the two.

## **Literature review**

Analyses of the global, national and local policy factors impacting on student learning and student wellbeing would ultimately contribute to an understanding of how the St Paul's Model implemented, or did not implement, policy imperatives for student wellbeing. Since literature addressed *RQ(a): 'Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse?'* Chapters Two to Four shed critical light on the case study question of 'what's going on' (Grbich 1999), in schooling, in health promotion the policy analysis and in social work. Paralleling, rather than preceding the collection of data, the focus of the literature review emerged as data and the merging themes signalled the directions that the literature review needed to take.

Advised by my supervisor, these directions were typically driven by the question, 'what else do I need to know?' Answers to this question complemented the question, 'what's going on?' with regard to global, national and local student wellbeing and student achievement policy. The 'what do I need to know?' questions directed my literature review to information resources such as books, journals, data bases and E-journals, E-books, government documents and the like. The key words I chose to serve the context and emerging knowledge were: policy, global, national, state, outcomes-based education, student wellbeing, student achievement, human capital, social capital, cultural capital, Catholic schools, social health, HPS, social work and cross-disciplinary collaboration. Over the time of the research, as predicted by advocates of iterative research, the literature search and review was repeated throughout the study, allowing for new, related and developing concepts to be included in the existing literature review (Grbich 1999; Grinnell & Unrau 2007). This would include literature about, but not confined to, neoliberalism,

managerialism, globalisation, the Kennett years and the Millennium Goals, school social work, collaboration and Catholic schools. In addition to this literature were the documents sourced and retrieved, with permission from the CEOM and the St Paul's principal, archival records, documents and communications. Next, as answers were emerging to the questions, 'what's going on?' and 'what else do I need to know?' other questions were emerging. These questions were contextual and were issue based and learning based.

These questions had to do largely with schooling and social health policy at global, national and state levels. The analysis of WHO and HPS policies focussed on the social, economic and political mechanisms impacting on student wellbeing, student achievement and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The issues concerned schooling and social health and the power imbalances, overt or hidden, that are the consequence of global, national and state policies. Associated issues concerned the diverse social, economic and political perspectives that participants had on the impact of these policies.

Questions relating to the lessons learned had to do with research participants' experiences and views regarding the context: the formal and professional arrangements to student wellbeing and the collaboration between teachers and social workers as experienced in St Paul's Model. The method employed to answer these questions was a mixed method that is, the research used both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The following section examines the mixed method.

## **On quantitative and qualitative methods**

Pertti (2010) writes that although quantitative research dates back to the seventeenth century, the rise of qualitative research as a category and as a set of practices began to be considered roughly in the 1960s or 1970s onward because of 'two intertwined developments' (Pertti 2010, p. 143). On the one hand, there was growing disappointment and a discontent with the results and promise of survey methods and with the scientific approach in which social reality was reduced to causal chains. On the other hand, there was pressure both from within and outside the research community to retain and develop sociology as an empirically grounded social science. The proposition of combining both qualitative and quantitative methods in research was also being argued in the research community (Niglas 1999).

It was argued that the central problem of combining quantitative and qualitative methods is that philosophically there is conflict between the two paradigms, principally that there are different assumptions about the nature of knowledge and how to obtain knowledge through research

(Neuman 2006). For example positivists that is, those who generally use quantitative research methods subscribe to the worldview that the world can be objectively observed, measured, and tested and that ideas can be reduced to discrete sets of ideas (variables) that can comprise hypothesis and research questions. For positivists quantitative research methods are scientific, logical, deductive and controlled. They begin with theory, collect data that either supports, refines or refutes the theory or hypothesis. In contrast, for interpretivist researchers that is, those who generally use qualitative research methods, research is inductive and responsive to the research participants' context, lived realities and experiences. For interpretivists research begins with the assumption that reality is subjective and created by individuals in their social and historical contexts (Berg 2001; Burns 1997; Guba & Lincoln 1991; Marlow 2001; Neuman 2006). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) describe qualitative inquiry as a method that attempts to capture people's subjective definitions, descriptions and understandings of events.

Debates about the appropriateness of each method, the rigour each requires and the applicability and transferability of the findings that result from the method polarise academics as to whether quantitative and qualitative approaches can be combined (Crotty 1998; Gergen & Gergen 2001; Niglas 1999; Sarantakos 2005). For example, Shrag (1992), amongst the purists argues that quantitative and qualitative research methodologies are tightly bound to different and mutually exclusive epistemological positions and that only one of those approaches is appropriate, good enough and scientific enough for social inquiry and that therefore they should not be combined. Pertti (2010) in contrast argues that, there is no reason to treat epistemology and method as being synonymous since epistemology does not dictate which specific data collection and data analytical methods should be used by researchers. Of combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to bring about social change, Grace (2007) argues that representing both approaches as mutually exclusive and competing paradigms risks not capturing the usefulness and emancipatory potential of combining both approaches. She goes on to argue that in social research we need to 'quantify issues as well as describe them' (2007, p. 17) if we are contribute to the understanding of social issues.

Situationalists, write Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), see the applicability of either approach in different situations and context but argue that qualitative and quantitative research must not be used together. Pragmatists Alston and Bowles (2003) and Sarantakos (2005), represented in Australian research texts, are tolerant of both approaches. They recognise the complementarities of quantitative and qualitative methods and regard both as useful and proper ways of studying

the social world. They also advocate the integrated use of both approaches if this can advance understanding about the phenomenon under the investigation. Additionally, Fisher and Ziviani (2004), Marlow (2001), Neuman (2006), Sarantakos (2005) have pointed out that quantitative and qualitative research can be combined at different stages of the research process. These stages can be at the formulation of research questions; sampling; data collection; and data analysis. They go on to argue insist that quantitative data can be an important adjunct to qualitative information validating, supplementing and complementing each other in a research project. In particular, Neuman (2006) and Sarantakos (2005) write that quantitative data can supplement or complement qualitative data, providing a form of triangulation and thus increasing the opportunity for more knowledge generation, the comparison of participant perspectives and thus greater research utility.

From the critical inquiry perspective, combining quantitative with qualitative inquiry predisposes the researcher more readily to action, reflection and theorising because ‘such a combination helps the critical researcher engage in praxis’ (Neuman 2006, p. 336) and commits the researcher to ‘thoroughness, the desire to be open-ended (in approach) and to take risks’ (Sarantakos 2005, p. 146).

## **Case study as the chosen method**

Taking the pragmatist position and mindful of the type and scope of the case study and the various components of the St Paul’s Model, combining qualitative research with quantitative research was seen as having benefits, since each could be used to enhance the contribution of the other strategy (Niglas 2000). Quantitative methods provided a way to document the number of stakeholders involved in and conversant with the program components of the St Paul’s Model and their level of satisfaction with it. Information regarding how stakeholders experienced the St Paul’s Model programs was best collected using a qualitative method; that is, using focus groups and open-ended questions.

Having decided that both qualitative and quantitative data are relevant to the case study method, I also needed to become conversant with the different aspects of the case study.

## **The case study**

The case study answered *RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul’s Model (a) congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse and (b) effective in addressing and promoting*

*student wellbeing? and (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

Gerring (2007 p. 65) refers to a case study (sometimes referred to as an in-depth case study) as 'the study of a single case (or a small set of cases) with an aim to generalise across a larger set of cases of the same general type'. Single case studies are used where no other cases are available for replication. In multiple case designs a multiple design must follow to replicate the first rather than using the logic of sampling (Sarantakos 2005; Schram 2006). This research is a single case study. It studies one unit; that is, the St Paul's Model and fulfils the critical features of a case study, according to Yin (2009), in that the St Paul's Model is a contemporary phenomenon, is studied in its own context, using multiple sources of evidence and has more than one variable of interest.

Describing the quintessential characteristic of case studies, Yin goes on to argue that they strive towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action; that is, the sets of interrelated activities engaged in by actors in a social situation. Yin (2009) notes that case studies give the researcher a method for retaining 'the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events,' (p. 2). Schram (2006) concurs, writing that whether you consider case study as a way of conceptualising human social behaviour or merely as a way of encapsulating it, its 'strategic value lies in its ability to draw attention to what can be learnt from the single case' (p 107).

Not all researchers, however, are convinced of the case study as a legitimate research method. Boyce (1993) is amongst those who criticise case studies as lacking scientific rigour. In response to such criticism, Yin (2009) counters that the methodological qualities and the rigour with which the case study is constructed satisfies the three tenets of qualitative research methods: describing, understanding and explaining. Table 5.1 over the page summarises the arguments for and against case studies.

Stake (1995) also argues that case studies are effective and appropriate. He cites case studies as offering a more intuitive, empirically grounded, naturalistic research method than other approaches and maintains that the data generated by case studies often resonate experientially with a broad cross-section of readers of the research, thereby facilitating a greater understanding of the phenomenon.



Table 5.1: Traditional prejudices against the case study method, based on Yin (2009)

Claim	Counter claim
Lack of rigour, possibility of researcher bias	All research methods have a potential for bias and lack of rigour. The problem is not unique to case study methods but it is more visible and encountered more often. Case validity, accuracy and alternative explanations using triangulation and multiple sources of data, can address accusations of bias and lack of rigour
Case studies provide little basis for scientific generalisation	Case studies are generalisable to theoretical propositions. The goal is to expand and generalise theories. Each case can be considered as a single experiment and can form the basis of ongoing hypothesis generation. The generalisations are thus analytical generalisation, not scientific
Case studies are time-consuming and return large amounts of incomprehensible data	This confuses case studies with particular methods of data collection method; that is, ethnography or participant observation. Case studies are not solely dependent on ethnographic or participant observation. Valid and high quality case studies can use other methods for example, telephone and internet surveys
Case studies are unable to establish evidence of causal relationships	Case studies can be used to complement other research methods.

Further affirming my choice of the case study method was its fit with Sarantakos' (2005) three criteria for when to use case studies. The first criterion advocates the use of the case study when it is necessary to study the phenomenon in its natural setting. This fitted with my intention of studying the St Paul's Model in its natural setting, the school site. The second criterion states that a case study can be used when the researcher can ask 'how' and 'why' questions to understand the nature and complexity of the processes taking place within that setting. This conformed to my need to know how the OBE and the HPS discourses influenced both the St Paul's Model and cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers. The third criterion is that a case study can be used when the research is in an area where few, if any, previous studies have been undertaken. In this research, no previous research existed into the St Paul's Model or any such model in Victorian Catholic primary schools, since the St Paul's Model was unique to St Paul's School. Table 5.2 over the page illustrates how the case study met Sarantakos' criteria. Therefore, the knowledge generated or deduced about the St Paul's Model could serve as an exemplar for other Victorian Catholic primary schools.

Table 5.2: Congruence: case studies and research questions based on Sarantakos (2005)

Criteria for using case studies	Criteria and research	Criteria, research and research questions
When it is necessary to study the phenomenon in its natural setting	Research conducted in its natural setting, St Paul's School.	RQ (b): Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing?
When the researcher can ask how and why questions to understand the nature and complexity of the processes taking place within that setting.	How and why do the OBE and the HPS discourses influence the St Paul's Model	RQ (a): Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies?
When the research is in an area where few, if any, previous studies have been undertaken	The St Paul's Model was unique. The research could serve as a template or exemplar for other cross-disciplinary collaborations. There has been no research into school social work in Victorian government schools, since 1985 or Victorian Catholic schools. The potential to generate new knowledge from the case study in the field of social work in Victorian government schools	RQ (c): Can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?

Stake's argument that case studies are effective and appropriate, offer a more intuitive, empirically grounded, naturalistic research method than other approaches is also consistent with the social constructivism stance taken in this research. This is so since teachers and social workers who read the research may find that their experiences in trying to develop student wellbeing and student learning programs in the one school site are influenced just as much, either positively or negatively by global, national and local policies. Teachers and social workers may also find familiar the enabling and hindering elements described in the St Paul's Model that influenced the teacher and social worker cross-disciplinary relationships.

Hence, new knowledge that could be generated from the case study was viewed as a contribution to scholarship about school social work in both Victorian government and Catholic schools (Dyer & Wilkens 1991; Sarantakos 2005). Further, the characteristics and conditions described in the case studies of Yin, Stake and Sarantakos were relevant to the research questions. I had yet another reason to choose the case study method: its potential to impact positively on the research participants. The case study was compatible with the social constructivism and critical inquiry positions chosen for the research. Respectful of critical inquiry, the traditionally silenced stakeholders participating in the St Paul's Model research

could offer their voices and perspectives to the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions of the St Paul’s Model (Crotty 1998; Johnson & Grant 2005; Kemmis 1995; McTaggart 1993). Participants could be their advocates and activists constructing and reconstructing the shape of future student wellbeing models and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

Having chosen the case study as the research method that matched the researcher’s ontological and epistemological positions, the next decision was whether to choose a descriptive, exploratory or explanatory study (Yin 2009).

Descriptive case studies hypothesise about causal relationships. Exploratory case studies explore situations where there is no single outcome, typically as pilot studies used as a prelude to some other social research. The explanatory case study explains the causal relationships and in these studies, theory either directs the study or is the goal of the study. Yin (2009) argues that the explanatory case study is useful when pursuing how and why answers and when controlling events within the bounded system is challenging.

This research method includes both descriptive and explanatory aspects as outlined by Yin (2009). It is a descriptive case study in that its goal is to describe the interventions and processes used in the St Paul’s Model. The goal was to understand how the St Paul’s Model manifested itself in concrete form. The data collected identified the cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers on the school site that furthered the HPS agenda alongside the OBE agenda. Descriptions of the program components were gathered, including student wellbeing programs and the actors in the program as well as the processes used to shape the St Paul’s Model such as the formal and professional arrangements used to facilitate student wellbeing programs. Ultimately, these descriptions would explain the causal relationships set up by the St Paul’s Model.

This case study also has some of the characteristics of Yin’s explanatory case study. The research was intended to yield an understanding of what effective cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers situated in an HPS site might entail. An answer to this question might generate knowledge that is, theorise about future student wellbeing models but this was not the prime purpose of the research.

This case study was not an exploratory case study since the St Paul’s Model never was a pilot study or was intended to be a prelude to other research into cross-disciplinary collaborations in a HPS.

Stake's (2000) typology of case studies enriches Yin's case study types in another direction, according to the generalisability or uniqueness of each case study. The first category is the intrinsic case study conducted for its own sake with no intention of replicating its findings and outcomes. The second is the instrumental case study inquiring into a social issue or used to refine a theory. The third is the collective case study that combines and jointly investigates a number of single cases. In terms of this typology, the case study described here is an intrinsic one since the intention is to inquire into a specific social phenomenon with no intention to replicate the findings and outcomes although both may serve as an exemplar for other models of student wellbeing.

As shown in Table 5.3, the case study type described here using Yin's typology is a single case study and, using Stake's typology, it is an intrinsic case study.

Table 5.3: St Paul's Model: case study type

		Yin (2009)		Stake (2000)	
Single case	X	Descriptive	X	Intrinsic	X
Multiple case		Exploratory		Instrumental	
		Explanatory	X	Collective	

Having explored the applicability of a case study to the present research next is a consideration of the methods, design and development.

### Phase 3: Methods, design and development

Phase three was driven by three questions; who was to be included in the research; what are the ethical considerations for this research? What sources were to be included in the research and how would data emerging from identified research participants and research sources be collected; and would the method, design and development answer the research questions? The following subsections answer these questions.

#### Identifying sources of data

The data gathering and literature review were intentionally iterative. That is, the research process involved going into the field, collecting information, reflecting on it, subjecting it to an initial analysis to determine 'what's going on', then using the information to guide the next step of the research (Yanow 1999).

Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) identify six primary sources of evidence available to case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical

artefacts. While it is not essential to have each type of source material in every case study, multiple sources of data corroborate findings and can add to the reliability of the study (Stake 2000; Yin 2009). As indicated in Table 5.4 below this research utilised four of Yin's six sources of evidence.

Table 5.4: Types of evidence used based on Yin (2009 p. 102)

Source of evidence: what was collected	Strengths
Documentation Letters, memorandums, agendas, study reports, policy documents, school reviews	Stable, unobtrusive, exact, broad coverage Past association with school allowed it to be easily collected Researcher had permission to access documentation
Archival records Charts, lists, survey data, personal records	Stable, unobtrusive, exact, broad coverage, precise Extensive source of quantitative documentation Access to archives via school and personal sources available
Physical artefacts Photos, art works, notebooks, webpage data, diaries, St Paul's School production publications, school choir CD-ROMs, newsletters, letters to principal and students, parent and carers	Insight into cultural features, insight into technical operations Access to artefacts via school and personal sources
Surveys, focus groups	Targeted, focused on case study topic, insightful Provided for perceived causal influences to be analysed Used focus group facilitator other than myself

Appendix 6 summarises the archival and primary data sources used during the research. What follows is an explanation of each source of evidence used in this research.

*Documentation.* Yin (2009) writes that documents, used purposefully and with reason, are useful in corroborating and augmenting evidence in other sources and when drawing inferences and setting up signposts for further investigation. For example, the newsletters accessed for this research were written for a particular audience; that is, the St Paul's School community, and for a particular purpose; to communicate information about school matters. These newsletters could lead to inferences or corroborate and provide evidence of the formal and professional HPS structures in St Paul's School and the St Paul's Model. In doing so, such documentation answered RQ; 'Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse?; (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing? and (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?'

Thus, the documentation for answering RQ was gathered from the literature review and the school site, the CEOM and the DEET. It included St Paul's School records, policies and

procedures manuals, school reviews, and reports. The CEOM and DEET publications and reports located St Paul's student wellbeing policy and practice within the wider schooling system; that is, in global, national, state and Catholic policies and practices. These documents contributed key evidence about St Paul's School's organisation, ethos and environment, partnerships and services, also serving as a form of triangulation technique and validity test.

*Archival records.* Yin (2009), although cautioning on the need to check the accuracy of archival documents, alerts the researcher to the richness that archival records contribute to data collection. Used in conjunction with documents, archival records provided data on the profile of the school community, the programs associated with the St Paul's Model and its historical development. Data of this kind provided an insight into the organisation, ethos and environment, partnerships and services and the curriculum teaching and learning of the St Paul's Model thus addressing *RQ,(a) 'Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse?'* The archival records included staff and student demographic profiles, school newsletters, personal communications between stakeholders and professional journal entries.

*Physical artefacts.* Another source of data used in this research was physical artefacts. Artefacts were central to revealing how student wellbeing programs actually looked on the ground and allowed for insight into the cultural operations of St Paul's School. Such artefacts were easily accessible and were used to verify the practical application or lack of application of student wellbeing policies and practices. They also gave insight into the ethos and organisation of the school. More importantly, from a critical inquiry perspective, by making or using these artefacts the research participants contributed items that were important to them at a particular time, in a particular context and using their own voice. Added to the other sources of evidence, they offered a chain of evidence and a vehicle for multiple sources of evidence to converge (Yin 2009).

The artefacts gathered during this research, with the permission of the principal, were photos, art works, audio productions, St Paul's School electronic web pages, St Paul's School production publications, the school choir and letters to and from St Paul's community members. I accessed these artefacts by field trips to the school site (after hours) and via school personnel. The personal resources and data collected during the years 1993 to 2005 added to my collection of physical artefacts. These included personal diaries, letters received from families, students, staff and social work students, as well as photos, artworks and publications.

*Surveys and focus groups.* During this research three focus groups were held. One for each of the school based groups: primary school students, teachers and Parent Partnership Team members. As will described in a later section, participation in the focus groups was open to those who fulfilled the time, place and experience criteria. These criteria eventuated in the participation of twenty primary school students, eighteen staff and ten Parent Partnership Team participants across the respective focus groups. This research departed from Yin's (2009) schema of case study data in one respect. The research combined the facilitation of focus groups with the distribution of a single survey to the focus group participants. The surveys were distributed to each of the research participants prior to the focus group, the questionnaire complemented the focus group sessions. Therefore, the survey was a current rather than an archival record. It was the main quantitative source used in the research and was used to support the descriptive and explanatory character of the case study (Yin, 2009).

*Designing the survey.* The design and preparation of the survey took account of the instructions of Neuman (2006) and Schram (2006). Consistent with the social constructivism and critical inquiry principles underpinning the research, it was anticipated that the survey design would offer participants an understanding of the current socio political context underpinning students' achievements, wellbeing and self-determination, and give them an opportunity to contribute to the future shape and sustainability of the St Paul's Model (Foster-Fishman, Perkins & Davidson 1997; Glaser 1998, 2002, 2004; Karadimos 2005).

The questions posed in the design fitted the criteria set by Neuman and Schram that is, How well did they document real events, asking, for example, 'what do you see as the strengths of the [St Paul's Model]? How successful were they in understanding how participants make sense of and give meaning to their lives and experiences; for example, 'Did the Playground Program make your time at school easier'? Could the questions identify unanticipated or taken for granted influences and phenomena, for example, 'Are there other comments that you would like to make?' Were they oriented to learning whether the participants could understand the processes by which events and actions take place, for example, 'Thinking about the program, what factor or condition facilitated its implementation'? Finally, did the questions discover whether the participants understood the relationship between a particular context and the wider environment, for example, 'What do you see are the main stressors in school/family life?'' Importantly, the questionnaires had also to address *RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies; (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing?*

Three teachers and two social workers who had firsthand knowledge of the St Paul's Model were asked to test whether the questionnaire did, in fact, concern themselves with the St Paul's Model and whether the survey covered the research dimensions of student wellbeing, student achievement and cross-disciplinary collaboration (Burns 1997; Neuman 2006). Both groups gave their feedback on the formulation of the questions and added suggestions on how best to present the information to primary school-aged students, the Parent Partnership Team, staff, social work students and field education coordinators (Burns 1997; Yin 2009).

The surveys for each cohort group had some commonalities but also some questions specific to them. As shown in Appendices 7 to 11, the surveys had the following sections:

1. Information about participants and their involvement in the St Paul's Model.
2. Using a five-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree', or a child friendly Likert scale format representing the same.
3. Ranking the program components for importance in the St Paul's Model.
4. opportunity to express their personal views on factors that they perceived to have enabled or constrained the St Paul's Model HPS structures and/or other comments.
5. Opportunity to comment rate the effectiveness of the St Paul's Model as a field education program.<sup>23</sup>

As indicated above some sections of the survey were specific to the cohort group, for example, the section on Field Education theory and practice, was specific to the social work students and field education coordinators. Table 5.5 over the page illustrates the points of similarities and differences.

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<sup>23</sup> As indicated in the introduction this data was omitted from the final data set following a refocussing of the research direction.



Table 5.5: Survey design by cohort – differences and similarities

	St Paul's Students	St Paul's Staff	St Paul's Parent Partnership Team	Social Work Students	Field Ed. Coordinators
Background Information	✓	✓		✓	✓
Program Participation/knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Likert Scale: satisfaction with program components	✓				
Social work student contribution	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comments re effectiveness/constraints of Model	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Program Ranking		✓			
Field Education – theory to practice				✓	✓
Comment on the enabling/facilitating and hindering/ frustrating aspects of the Model		✓	✓	✓	✓

Mirror questions, that is, the same questions asked of each participant group was consistent regarding participation in, satisfaction with and effectiveness of the St Paul's Model were asked of teachers, Parent Partnership Team, social work students and field education coordinators. Ranking of the Model components was indicated either in a child-friendly Likert Scale response for the St Paul's students or a one to twelve ranking by the teachers.

Mirror questions were designed to provide data needed to answer RQ (b): *Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed within the St Paul's Model effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing?* These mirror questions, and a question inviting participants to add other thoughts and ideas about the St Paul's Model, in line with the social constructivism paradigm, were designed specifically to collect data from each participant's perspective and each participant's position within the partnership between St Paul's School, staff, students, Parent Partnership Team, social work students and field education coordinators. The mirror questions also served as a triangulation technique, providing construct validity and reliability by gathering accounts from different points of view (Burns 1997; Stake 2000; Yin 2009).

*Focus groups.* Consistent with the use of the critical inquiry, focus groups were seen as providing opportunity for participant to voice their views and experiences (Appendix 12). Further, the data gathered from the focus groups addressed RQ (a), (b) and (c), and supplemented the findings in the survey and documentary data. Thus this research had three focus groups, one each for primary school students, teachers and Parent Partnership Team. Each focus group was facilitated by the St Paul's student wellbeing coordinator (SWC) and each was conducted for forty five minutes to sixty minutes.

This method of conducting research has gained currency over the past twenty years. Yin refers to focus groups as 'guided conversation' (2009, p. 106). Neuman (2006) describes them as a 'loosely constructed discussion with a group of people brought together for the purposes of the study, guided by the researcher and addressed as a group' (p. 194). There are four ways of using focus groups (Neuman 2006). The first two are for preliminary (pre-research) studies to collect information about the object of study and which lead to quantitative research; and as a principal and self-contained research tool, providing insights into the group processes and feelings, and the reasons and explanations for their attitudes and behaviour. They are also used as supplementary ways of explaining trends and variances, reasons and causes, attitudes and opinions; and as part of a multi-method study, in which case they can contribute information to other data collected in the course of the research. Typically, the focus group facilitator gathers a selection of people in the venue introduces them to the research and encourages discussion among and between the focus group members. The facilitator observes and records the essence of their discussions (Sarantakos 2005; Yin 2009).

How voices are heard in the focus groups raises questions of the weaknesses and limitations inherent in the use of focus groups. Both Sarantakos (2005) and Neuman (2006) note that the success of focus groups relies both on the group and the facilitator. The facilitators' knowledge of the research method, their ability to create an encouraging and warm environment and facilitate open and free discussion among the participants and their ability to guide the discussion may either limit or work to the advantage of the focus group processes and outcomes (Yin 2009). As far as the group members participating in the focus group are concerned, strongly held opinions may polarise the views expressed by participants, reduce the possibility of their sharing opinions and ideas and limit the group contributions to notions that are less likely to affect personal or professional careers.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, given the time restraints and the desire to collect quality unstructured data, focus groups were nonetheless included in research design. The focus group

facilitator was known to the focus group participants and, as part of her role description, had facilitated student, parent and staff other group sessions. The venue for each focus group was the school and thus both the environment and the facilitator was familiar to the primary school students, teachers and Parent Partnership Team members. The teachers and Parent Partnership focus groups were co led with another St Paul's school teacher. This second experienced teacher assisted the main facilitator in ensuring that all participants had opportunity to contribute to their focus group session. To address the facilitator's clarity around the purpose and procedural steps of facilitating the focus groups, the researcher met with the focus groups facilitator prior to and following each session. Reviewing the tape recording of each of the focus groups sessions, the researcher and facilitator reviewed the focus group process, clarified any concerns that the facilitator may have had and discussed the procedure for other focus group sessions.

#### *Identifying the research participants*

The question, 'who is best placed to give me the data I require?' would determine who would comprise the research participants. Bronson (1995), Corbin and Strauss (1990) and Kushner and Morrow (2003) write that research participants need to be bound by place, time and experience. While many participants may have been identified as relevant to the research, for example, all St Paul's students, all parents and carers, all staff, social work students from every partner university or all field educators, pragmatically the participant group needed to be contained and manageable and bounded by place, time and experience. Thus, the participants in this research fulfilled these criteria:

- *The place:* research participants had attended St Paul's School as either student, staff member, Parent Partnership Team member, social work student or field education coordinator.
- *The time:* the St Paul's Model 1994 to 2005.
- *Experience:* research participants had participated in or had knowledge of the St Paul's Model from 1994 to 2005, from its infancy to a more advanced stage of development. This participation needed to include any or all of the following: the Breakfast Club, the Homework Club and the SEASONS program, the Social Skills (Classroom) Program, the Playground Program, the Lunch Program, the Transition Program, the Swimming Program, Policy Writing audits and/or program development (Bullying Audit, Out of Hours School Care Program), the Welfare Program, the Special Events and other programs. Such data would provide information about the organic development of the St

Paul's Model and yield information about the success or otherwise of the way in which the St Paul's Model.

The numbers to be included in the research were not predetermined. Participation was open to any person who fulfilled the place, time and experience criteria. Thus using the above criteria and using St Paul's School and Victoria University data bases to identify the possible participants the following steps were taken to invite participation in the research:

1. General invitation to school population issued through the school Newsletter explaining the research.
2. The St Paul's School student wellbeing coordinator visited grades three to six, explaining the research, identifying any students who had participated in any of the student wellbeing programs (1994 to 2005) and gave them an Information Pack to seek parental permission for their participation in the research. Twenty Information Packs were distributed.
3. Thirty-five Information Packs were distributed to current school staff, 1994 to 2005, explaining research and inviting participation in a focus group.
4. Twenty-five Information Packs were distributed to Partnership Team Members, 1994 to 2005, identified via the use of school data base , explaining research and inviting participation in a group.
5. Forty-one Information Pack were mailed to all social work students, 1994 to 2005, identified via Victoria University base, explaining research and inviting participation.
6. Four Information Pack mailed to all social work field education coordinators, 1994 to 2005, identified via Victoria University base, explaining research and inviting participation.

Seventy-two stakeholders agreed to participate in the research. Table 5.6 summarises the participants by cohort group and participation type. Staff members who chose to participate in the research attended a specially timetabled meeting. Eighteen staff members chose to participate in the specially timetabled meeting and two staff members submitted the survey without attending the focus group.

Table 5.6: Research participants by cohort group

Cohort group	Survey		3 X focus group	
	Returned (no.)	Per cent of Packs distributed	Number of participants who agreed to participate	per cent
Primary school students, seven to eleven years old	20	100	20	100
School staff	20	57.1	18	90
Parent partnership team	10	40.0	10	100
Social work students	18	43.9	N/A	
Field education coordinators	4	100	N/A	
	72		48	

In the focus group there were seventeen staff members who were employed at the school and two staff members who were on maternity leave from the school. One staff member on maternity leave chose to return the survey but not participate in the focus group. As indicated in Table 5.7 below, all teaching levels were represented at the staff focus group.

Table 5.7: Staff participants, by position

Teaching level	Staff (n)	Staff (%)
Junior (prep–grade 2)	6	20
Middle (grade 3–4)	5	16
Senior (grade 5–6)	4	13
Other (support staff)	3	10
Total	18	59

Twenty primary school students participated in the research, aged from seven to eleven years, and enrolled in grades three to six. Reflecting the NESB demographic of the St Paul's student population, 80 per cent of the student participants had a NESB. Table 5.8 below summarises their language background.

Table 5.8: Student participants, by language background

Grade	English-speaking background		Non-English speaking background		
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)		(%)
3	1	13	Vietnamese (4)	Sudanese (3)	87
4	1	34	Vietnamese (2)		66
5	2	40	Maltese (1)	Vietnamese (2)	60
6	0	0	Sudanese (2)	Vietnamese (2)	100
Total	4		16		

Ten (40%) Parent Partnership Team members agreed to participate in the focus group and all completed surveys. Of these participants, three had been associated with the school for one to four years, two for between five and ten years and five for ten or more years. This permitted a range of experiences of the St Paul's Model to be incorporated, from its earliest introduction to the later years when the model had expanded to include a number of programs and initiatives and the involvement of more social work students. The significance of this representation was their experience of the St Paul's Model as it developed organically over time, producing data that could answer *RQ (b): are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed within the St Paul's Model effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing?*

To gain access to social work students and field education coordinators (from 1994 to 2005), Professor Carolyn Noble, Head of Unit, Social Work, gave the researcher permission to obtain lists of Victoria University social work student alumni. From these lists of the names of social work students on field education placements at St Paul's were extracted. Forty-one Victoria University social work students and four Victoria University field education coordinators were sent information packs inviting them to complete and return the consent form and survey. Eighteen (49.3%) of the Victoria University social work students returned the survey. As indicated in Table 5.9 below seven students were alone on placement and eleven students were on placement with others who may or may not have been from VU. Sixteen students were completing their second and final placement while two were completing their first placement.

Table 5.9: Victoria University social work student by placement type 1994–2005 (*N*=18)

Alone	Group
7	11
First placement	Final placement
2	16

The field education coordinators participating in this research were those who had supported the Victoria University social work students. Four field (100%) education coordinators were invited to participate in the research; all four chose to complete the survey.

Potential research participants were sent or given An Information Pack. The pack included a plain language statement (Appendix 13); a consent form (in English and Vietnamese for St Paul's students and their parent and carers) (Appendices 14a,b); the surveys (Appendices 7 to 11), an invitation to attend a focus group for St Paul's students, St Paul's staff and St Paul's parent partnership team; and a self-addressed envelope for the return of the survey (for all research participants).

#### *Access to the identified research participants*

As noted earlier, seventy-two stakeholders agreed to participate in the research. Forty-eight of these participants agreed to participate in focus groups. Three focus groups were included in the research: one for each of the cohort groups: primary school students, teachers and Parent Partnership Team. To gain access to the research participants, as described in an earlier section, the principal agreed to make available school administration records and databases. The names of students aged from seven to eleven years, staff (from 1994 to 2005) and Parent Partnership Team members (from 1994 to 2005) were given to the researcher as potential participants. The SWC, with the principal's permission, agreed to canvass students in grades three to six, staff and Parent Partnership Team members and provide them with information about the research.

To ensure that the integrity of the data collection was not biased by the historical connections of the researcher with the St Paul's Model maintaining a distance from the data collection was critical. Issues of objectivity and distance were managed through initial and ongoing conversations with my supervisor, the principal at St Paul's and the St Paul's School SWC. The process for maintaining a distance from the data gathering stage was discussed at a preliminary meeting with the principal and the SWC. At this meeting, we explored the inappropriateness of the researcher leading information sessions, distributing survey and conducting focus groups with staff, students and parents and carers at St Paul's School. It was agreed that these stages would be conducted by the SWC (and co-led by senior staff when necessary) with advice and management of the process occurring in background, via meetings at VU and telephone conversations when and if necessary. It was agreed that school documents, archival records and physical artefacts would be accessed via school-based personnel and exchanged with the researcher during meetings with the SWC or collected after school hours.

#### **Phase 4: Data analysis**

Consistent with an iterative approach, data analysis occurred throughout the case study research process as the researcher examined the data collected. One of the advantages of case study research and the iterative nature of the approach is its flexibility, allowing the researcher to pursue new lines of inquiry that are suggested by a research participant's evidence or a piece of documentation. However the itinerate approach is not pursued haphazardly. Strategic decisions based on the purpose of data analysis, are necessary to guide this analysis (Yin 2009). Importantly, this process of connecting, describing and classifying allows the researcher to constantly and simultaneously question the evidence and her/his own interpretation of the evidence (Berg 2001; Creswell 1994; Guba & Lincoln 1991). Anastas and MacDonald (1994)

argue that the analysis process in qualitative research includes three functions: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing.

Data reduction engages the researcher in selecting parts of the data for ‘intensive analysis’ (Anastas & MacDonald 1994, p. 416). The selected parts are those that have particular relevance to the purpose of the research. The ‘parts’, that is, the data, that were selected for analysis in this research were those that made reference to the research purpose that is, examining the contribution of social work to student wellbeing in a Victorian Catholic school. For example the wide range of initial responses gathered in the focus groups had to be reduced to core or essential themes. This process, termed the constant comparative method of data analysis (Creswell 1994), is integral to both the continuing process of data analysis through the refinement of large bodies of data into manageable and meaningful elements for further research as well as to the discovery of eventual outcomes and conclusions. Given the large amount of data that was gathered during the research, seventy two questionnaires and three, forty-five minute audio transcripts, archival records, documents and physical artefacts, a systematic analytical approach had to be employed.

Multiple approaches were employed to distil the data collected during the research: electronic files, assembling boxes containing ‘themed’ data, transcribing focus group recordings in long hand which had the added advantage of keeping the researcher ‘close to the data’, listening and re listening to the recordings, reading and rereading transcripts and surveys. Memos and notes were kept in a number of exercise books and concept maps were drawn as ideas, themes and category codes emerged (Guba & Lincoln 1991; Padgett 2004a, 2004b).

Also, for the focus group transcripts and the open ended questionnaire responses a four column template was designed. The template noted the referent, the source (open ended survey responses or focus group’s transcript entry) and the assigned theme or code. Table 5.10 on the next page is an example of template used for the transcripts.



Table 5.10: Example of template used for the transcripts and open ended survey responses

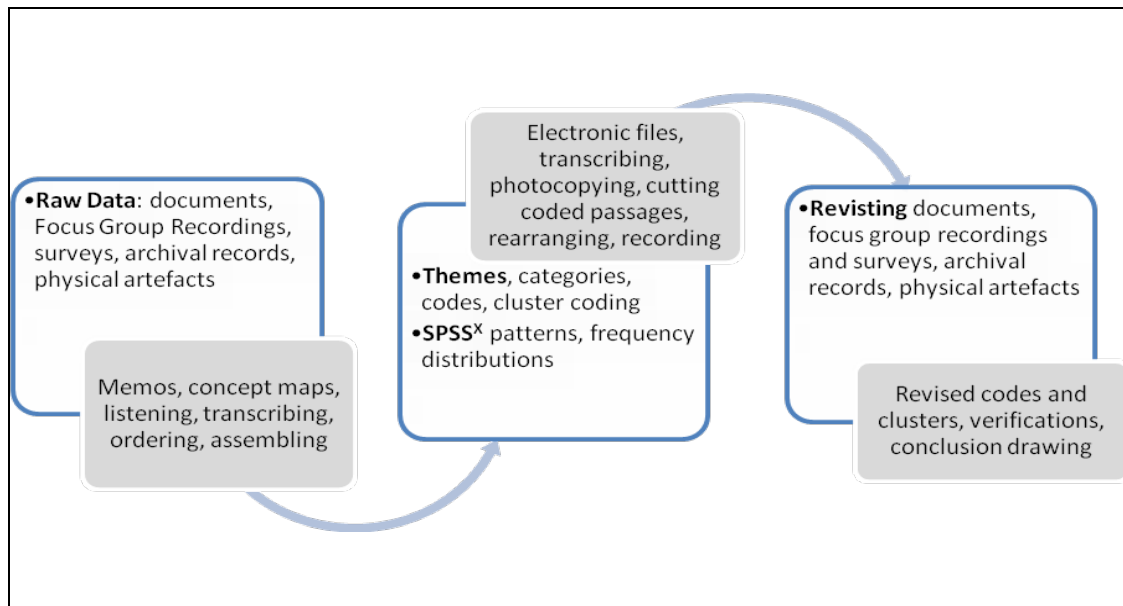
Referent	Source	Verbatim	Theme
MM	Focus group – staff	Too much to do and not enough time, the quality of time has gone	Time poor, relationships
K	Focus group – staff	I suppose a lot of admin time that takes you away from focussing on your teaching	Managerialism, time poor, teaching
M	Questionnaire – staff	Our kids have needs – but having to concentrate on the work – that takes you away from the kids lives	Relationships, time poor, student wellbeing

Source: Research notes

The quantitative data collected in the questionnaires was ordered using the SPSS<sup>x</sup> program. The SPSS<sup>x</sup> coding had two parts: codes that profiled research participants and Likert scale codes of each group participant's rating of the effectiveness of the St Paul's Model. The Likert variables were analysed using frequency distributions. The ordinal items in the questionnaires were analysed using the mean (Burns 1997; Creswell 1994; Crotty 1998; Rubin & Babbie 2009). This provided generalised patterns of participation in and satisfaction with the St Paul's Model (Burns 1997; Glaser 1998).

Throughout the data reduction phase themes were emerging and codes and clusters of codes (that is, subdivisions in the code) became apparent. Anastas and MacDonald (1994) argue that coding is used to 'demonstrate the meaning of and to display the data collected' (p. 417) and reduce the data to conceptual categories. These codes and code clusters were initially set by the researcher and were heuristic that is, they were useful to the aims of the research (Guba & Lincoln 1991). For example data was first assembled using the literature review concepts: schooling, health promotion, social work. Secondly, data was coded to reflect themes identified in the literature review, for example, HPS, OBE, CST, Catholic, cross-disciplinary collaboration, ethos, environment, partnerships and services, human, cultural and social capital; global, national and local policies. Thirdly, as the data was revisited, codes were organised in clusters, for example, to the broad category of 'Cross-disciplinary collaboration', a sub category was assigned: 'barriers' (Berg 2001; Stake 2000; Yin 2009). The coding and cluster coding involved the use of electronic files, photocopying the data and cutting coded passages and rearranging them according to the assigned code and/or cluster (Burns 1997; Creswell 1994). Figure 5.2 illustrates the data analysis process used in this research.

Figure 5.2: Data analysis process



Using an analysis approach that used data reduction, coding (that is, data display) and verification or conclusion drawing enabled the researcher to address *RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with national and global student wellbeing policies as articulated in the HPS discourse; (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing? and (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

### Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is related to the concepts of reliability and validity within the research. Reliability is concerned with the accuracy of the data or its fit with what the researcher records (Burns 1997). The concept however needs to be qualified within the context of qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (2000) write that the analysis of data can be distorted by how the researcher engages with the data. They name the need to manage large volumes of data, potentially overlooking hard to retrieve data, the bias that may occur when, in the first interaction with the data, the researcher gives greater importance and relevance than necessary to the initial data, undervaluing or overvaluing novel explanations or causes or the misinterpretation of co occurrences of codes amongst the difficulties.

Both Lincoln and Guba (2000) and Padgett (2004a) argue that to ensure the trustworthiness and hence reliability of the research a researcher requires self discipline and rigorous approaches. Padgett (2004a) suggests six techniques, not all relevant or feasible for any given research, that

could be employed to ensure trustworthiness. These are: prolonged engagement, peer debriefing/support, triangulation, member checking, negative case analysis and audit trail.

Trustworthiness is particularly important when using a case study method since they have been criticised as weak and thus unreliable (Yin 2009) and thus may be sensitive to more rigorous scrutiny. To overcome accusations of untrustworthiness and weakness, Yin proposes the engagement of three principles that will increase 'the quality of your case study tremendously and overcome(s) traditional criticisms of the weakness of case study research' (2009 p. 242). These are using of multiple sources of evidence to corroborate data; creating a case study database to include case study notes, case study documents and tabular material; and maintaining a chain of evidence that an external observer, can easily trace backwards and forwards, that is, to and from the case study report.

Ultimately the researcher must be able to show how 'he or she has represented the multiple constructions of reality adequately, that is that the reconstructions that have been arrived at via the inquiry are credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities' (Lincoln & Guba 2000, p. 296). Since case study (interpretivist) research studies the way in which people construct the world, these constructions must be represented validly and authentically. Therefore issues of trustworthiness are also linked to the integrity and authenticity in the processes and to the instruments and techniques used in the research. Triangulation or qualitative cross validation of data through a range of measures is, therefore, of some importance.

#### *Triangulation, validity and reliability*

The triangulation techniques used to ensure the trustworthiness of the research were person-triangulation, methodological triangulation and data triangulation. Person triangulation was achieved by having more than one participant survey and more than one exploratory and confirmatory focus groups responding that is, recreating/reimagining their experiences of the one program that is, St Paul's Model. Methodological triangulation involved the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in tandem. Using the same data collection procedure and a consistent set of initial questions for each focus group, the researcher was able to detect patterns of corroborative response. Data triangulation was achieved through use of more than one data source: documents, archival records, physical artefacts, surveys and three focus groups.

Validity was also pursued through the terms of the research clearance granted by the CEOM and the Victoria University Ethics Committee whose approval was gained to conduct the research.

Under these terms a copy of the completed research plan, including copies of the surveys and focus group session outlines, was submitted. In this way validity through accountability was enhanced (Padgett 2004a). Validity through accountability was also enhanced through the recruitment of a ‘panel of experts’. Two teachers and two social workers agreed to review, and subsequently approved, the surveys for both face validity and content validity (Neuman 2006; Sarantakos 2005) and who also agreed to meet with the researcher on a monthly basis providing peer support, reviewing the researcher’s field notes and journal and also providing feedback on emerging themes, oversights and future directions (Padgett 2004a). Table 5.11 summarises the techniques used to safeguard trustworthiness.

Table 5.11: Safeguarding trustworthiness: techniques

Strategies to ensure trustworthiness		
Triangulation	Person	More than one participant surveys and more than one exploratory and confirmatory focus group
	Method	Mixed method: qualitative and quantitative
	Data	Multiple sources of evidence
Peer support	Monthly meetings	panel of experts reviewing the questionnaires for both face validity and content validity, providing feedback, and direction
Accountability	CEOM research clearance	Approval from CEOM, St Paul’s School and Victoria University

Based on Padgett (2004a)

Safeguarding trustworthiness also ensured that reactivity, researcher bias and respondent bias were consistently addressed (Padgett 2004a). Along with validity, reliability that is, dependability and consistency of techniques was another consideration. Sarantakos (2005) and Creswell (1994), highlight that qualitative research is less concerned with the replicability of the results and more with exploring the complexity of the relationship between the researcher and the subject.

In this case study I was required to engage meaningfully, purposefully and critically with the range of data that was collected. As discussed in earlier sections, the use of reflexivity and the methods used to engage in reflexivity was critical to how I kept exploring the relationship between the research and myself. Therefore the challenge of reliability was not, for example, concerned with the quantitative positive matters of using standard, fixed measures (Lincoln & Guba 2000) to ‘prove’ the transferability and replicability of the research, rather the challenge was ensuring the comprehensiveness of the documentation and of the data collection process. So, while other case studies will not return the same results as the case study in this research, the comprehensive documentation of how the case study evolved and generated the data, how,

for example, the themes, coding and conclusions were arrived at, the processes used to ensure trustworthiness and how I interacted with the research data support the 'believability of the observations made and reported' (Lincoln & Guba 2000, p. 310). Therefore the case study may be useful for others researching student wellbeing models. Finally any research process involves another critical aspect that is, ethics. The next section examines how the research process conformed to ethical requirements.

### *Ethics*

Ethical concerns are an important aspect of any research and need to be addressed continuously throughout the research process (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005). Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) argue that ethics need to be addressed in two ways. Firstly, ethical approval must be obtained from the relevant authorities according to the laid-out procedures. Secondly, the researcher must engage in reflexive practices, making explicit their position and politics throughout the duration of the research. Schram (2006) names four aspects that need to be addressed for ethical research: where researchers position themselves; issues of disclosure and exchanging the information gathered; the disclosure of private information gained in trust; and disengaging from the research.

In this research the procedural steps of gaining ethics approval adhered to Victoria University ethical guidelines. Approval to undertake research in a Victorian Catholic primary school was sought firstly from the Victoria University Ethics Committee. Secondly from the governing bodies of CEOM, from the Director of the CEOM and then from the principal of St Paul's Catholic Primary School, West Sunshine (Appendices 13 a, b, c, d), All permissions were granted and thus the next step of assembling information packs was undertaken.

The information pack included the plain language statement (Appendices 14, 15 a, b), consent forms and the survey. Aware of my historical links with the school and the St Paul's Model the administration and collection of the data gathering instruments was managed by the St Paul's Student Welfare Coordinator (Patton 1990). Further, to maximise the opportunity for Non English Speaking Background (NESB) students, parent and carers to participate, and consistent with St Paul's policy on communication, the survey, the Plain Language Statement and the Consent Forms were translated into Vietnamese, the major NESB group in the school. Respecting the cultural differences that existed in the school population by translating the survey was also consistent with critical inquiry because it allowed those who may have been restricted from participating in the research project because of language barriers, access to the research process and thus opportunity to shape the future direction of the St Paul's Model.

To guard against any discomfort or power issues that may have been associated with my historical links to the participants and the St Paul's Model, I exempted myself from the facilitation of the focus groups. Instead the facilitator of the focus groups was a St Paul's staff member skilled in facilitation and group work skills who could employ listening and clarifying techniques to ensure that any distress or discomfort could be immediately addressed. Other mechanisms for managing any distress and discomfort that may have arisen during the research were the provision of the contact details of the researcher, the research supervisor and the counselling services. Key St Paul's staff members also agreed to be available should participants need to discuss any uncomfortable or distressing experiences that may have arisen during the focus group sessions. Also, to minimise any potential risks to participants, the data gathered was not of a personal or intimate nature; rather the focus of the surveys was on the effectiveness of the St Paul's Model program components. Additionally research participants could withdraw at any stage of the research process and were reminded of this point at the beginning of the focus group sessions and in the written documentation that accompanied the surveys. With regards issues of confidentiality and privacy, participant responses were deidentified by way of attaching a pseudonym, a letter of the alphabet, to the responses.

#### *Ethics and children*

The issue of informed consent is particularly important in this research given that some participants are under eighteen years of age. In accordance with Chapter 4.2: Children and Young People of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), consent to the participation of young people in research must be obtained from one parent or guardian as well as the young person wherever he or she has the capacity to make this decision. To meet these guidelines the Plain Language Statement and Consent Forms required parent/carer permission. Further, since the major language grouping in the school was identified as Vietnamese and to ensure that parents/carers were clear about the research and its purpose the Consent Form was translated into Vietnamese and attached to the English/Vietnamese version. As with the staff and Parent Partnership Team members who participated in the research, children could withdraw at any stage of the research process and were reminded of this point at the beginning of the focus group session. Also, the facilitator of the focus group was well known to students thereby creating a level of familiarity and comfort for the primary aged students. These students also had the opportunity to seek out another staff member who had agreed to be available should any student wish to discuss any distressing or uncomfortable issues that may have arisen during or after the focus group session.

### *Ethics and the use of photos*

This research included the use of photos that were available on the St Paul's, the CEOM and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) websites and publications. For photos that were located in St Paul's school archives permission was granted via the St Paul's Enrolment Form in which parents and carers annually agree to the use of photos in videos, newspapers and other publications by school authorities or those authorised by the school authorities (St Paul's School 2005a). As such the permission to use the two photos included in this research was covered by St Paul's school policy and the CEOM and CECV copyright policies. The photos used in this research did not disclose any sensitive information and as such adhered to National and Medical Research Council policy (2007 section 4.2.11).

### **Rest note**

In this chapter, the focus was on research paradigms and frameworks best suited to the research questions. As such the chapter examined different phases of research:

1. Ontological and epistemological positions: Beginning by outlining my professional and personal perspective, I argued social constructivism and critical inquiry as best reflecting the personal, religious and political frameworks that inform my world. I also argued that social constructivism and critical inquiry resonated with the emancipatory intent and actions of the socio-ecological approach to health promotion and health actions and thus were appropriate paradigms for the research. Further, I discussed how I engaged reflexively with the research process and argued that this was critical since my historical and personal links to the case study raised extra issues of trustworthiness and reliability.
2. Methodology: I argued that the mixed method, contested in literature as philosophically opposed by some and as complementary by others, was chosen because its use in critical inquiry afforded more agency in the research process. I argued that the mixed method could provide more opportunity for reflection, triangulation and theorising. Difficult to quantify participant input is gathered through focus groups, documents, archival records, interviews and physical artefact, and quantifiable data is gathered through questionnaires.
3. Methods: examining literature on case study research, this section argued the appropriateness of the case study. I argued that the case study method would best answer the 'how' and 'what' of the St Paul's Model and provide for theory to be generated from the learning that would come from data analysis. The section on

methods also identified and described the types of data that would be collected during the research process and how research participants were identified and accessed.

4. Data analysis: I argued that multiple strategies were used to analyse the data collected. This included the use of electronic programs, coding, transcribing and memos, all aimed at data reduction, verification and/or conclusion drawing.
5. Trustworthiness, validity and reliability. This chapter also addressed and examined the rigour and discipline necessary for research and also examined how they contribute to the trustworthiness, validity and reliability of the research process. I argued that the triangulation, peer support and accountability strategies used during the research process added to the trustworthiness of the research.
6. Ethics: I argued that while ethics is important in any research, it was especially important to this research since children were involved and thus a higher duty of care and informed consent was needed. Obtaining ethics approval from the relevant bodies, I described how ethics clearance was obtained and the different stages of the ethics process.

Chapter Six, 'St Paul's Model: Silos to Symphonies', examines the St Paul's Model. Chapter Six analyses the data collected and assembled in the research. Data collected from the research participants, provides for the research participant voices to signify the harmony or dissonance in the St Paul's Model. Data is examined in light of the literature reviewed regarding the capacity of schools and cross-disciplinary discourses to establish and contribute to a health promoting school.



## Chapter 6: St Paul's Model data: silos to symphonies

Chapter Six presents the case study data. As stated in Chapter One, this case study, and hence this chapter, is **not** concerned with student achievement, it is concerned with student wellbeing, a precondition to student achievement. The case study is the method chosen as most suitable to answer RQ: *Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; (b) effective in addressing and promoting wellbeing? And (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

As per the description of the case study methodology in the previous chapter, this case study is a single, descriptive, explanatory, intrinsic case study and is employed to understand the nature and complexity of the processes used to study a phenomenon not previously researched that is, the St Paul's Model (Stake 2000; Yin 2009). The data presented in this chapter includes archival and primary data that was retrieved using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Both the archival and primary data was used to answer the 'how' and 'what' and 'why' of the St Paul's Model and the Model's fit with the health promoting school discourse. Archival data included official minutes and records, reports from educational bodies, census information, school newsletters, publications, school production programs, letters, diaries, school photo repository, research reports and personal journals and communications. Primary data included the data collected from the administration of the surveys and the focus groups. Research participants, as described in the previous chapter, fulfilled the time, place and experience criteria which bounded the research design that is, staff, student, Parent Partnership Team Members, social work students and field education coordinators who had participated in any of the St Paul's Model's (the 'Model') programs during 1994 to 2005.

Using a concurrent strategy, the data analysis quantified stakeholders' participation in, experience of and judgements on the effectiveness of the Model. Secondly, the quantitative data was used to qualify stakeholder contributions. For example, did the teacher ranking<sup>24</sup> of the importance of the Breakfast Club correlate with other stakeholders' experiences? Or did survey results located in archival records regarding St Paul's school ethos and environment reflect health promoting school principles? Consequently this chapter:

1. Describes St Paul's School by stakeholder group. Using archival data including official minutes and records, reports from educational bodies, census information, school newsletters, publications, school production programs, letters, diaries, school photo repository and research reports, personal journals and communications with school stakeholders, data will show the socioeconomic and cultural profile and circumstances that may impact on St Paul's capacity to provide student wellbeing programs and resources.
2. Describes the ethos, environment and organisation of St Paul's School. Using archival data including official minutes and records, reports from educational bodies, census information, school newsletters, publications, school production programs, letters, diaries, school photo repository and research reports, personal journals and communications with school stakeholders, data will show that the Model reflects in structure and approach the socio-ecological discourse to health promotion in that it addresses factors that may compromise positive health.
3. Describes the impact of outcome-based education on teachers' ability to focus on student wellbeing issues. Using quantitative and qualitative data gathered from surveys and focus groups, this chapter will evidence that teachers find it difficult to balance the expectations of the outcomes-based and health promoting schools discourses.
4. Describes the Model's program components with particular attention to the contribution of social work to those components. Using qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the stakeholders in focus groups and surveys the effectiveness or otherwise of the Model will be shown to be judged differently by the different stakeholders.

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<sup>24</sup> It is recognised that asking research participants to rank the St Paul's Model program components forces them to make choices between programs that they see as having equal value. However, ranking has been used to indicate the type of social work contribution that the participants preferred. These choices, added to the qualitative data, were seen as providing valuable insights into the ways in which the stakeholders viewed social work skills and knowledge, and how and if cross-disciplinary boundaries were created and maintained.

5. Describes the contribution of social work to the Model and present focus group and survey data that stakeholders expressed as crucial to if, how, and under what conditions this contribution was seen as effective or otherwise.

This chapter has particular relevance to the *RQ (a) are the formal and collaborative professional arrangement employed in the St Paul's Model congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse? and (b) effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing?* By using the archival and primary sources of data, it is possible to determine the effectiveness or otherwise of the Model and to examine the cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers in the Model so as to gain insight into what may frustrate such a cross-disciplinary collaboration.

### **St Paul's School – stakeholder profiles**

The term 'stakeholder' best describes the school members and is used deliberately to describe the groups or entities in the school that have a legitimate interest in the structures, purposes and outcomes of the activities carried out there. At St Paul's school, the key stakeholders are identified as: St Paul's School itself, St Paul's parent and carers, St Paul's students, St Paul's teaching and non-teaching staff, St Paul's Parent Partnership Team, the Victoria University social work students and the Victoria University field education coordinators. Using archival and primary sources retrieved from St Paul's School, the next section examines the key stakeholder groups in turn.

### **St Paul's School**

St Paul's school is one of many small Catholic schools that were established in response to the influx of Catholic post-war immigrants to Australia and particularly to Victoria (Sturrock 1994), and more specifically to the Western suburbs of Melbourne. This influx of mainly migrants from southern Europe who, once settled, wanted to send their children to a Catholic school close to where they set up their residences (Pascoe 2004; Pope John Paul VI 1965). Situated in the municipality of Brimbank, West Sunshine, in a western suburb of Melbourne, St Paul's School opened in 1955 under the care of the Brigidine Sisters.

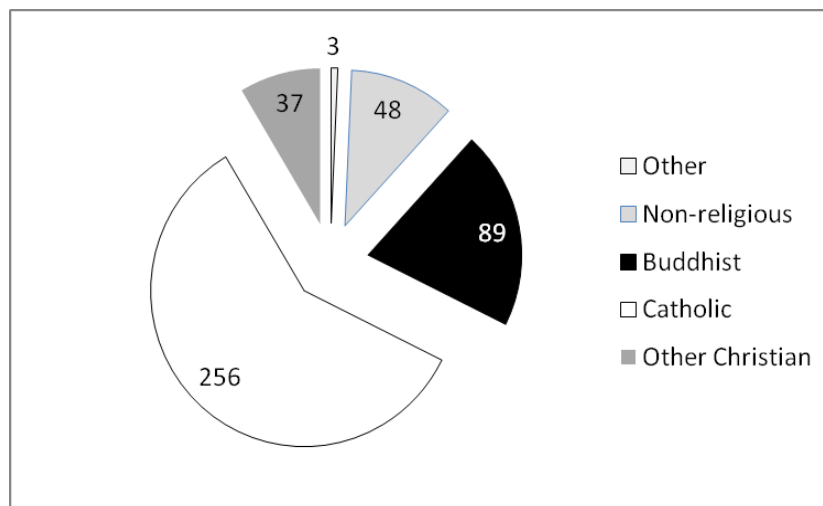
Of the establishment of St Paul's School, the historian Sturrock (1994) wrote that the

Brigidines found themselves with one week's notice at [St Paul's school] in the Western suburbs. Frantic Marist priests ... had sought worldwide for teachers, then found four Brigidines who were prepared to face migrant children, most of whom had never been in a classroom before. (p. 105)

From its inception, the school consciously sought to serve a community that had few educational and economic resources. In the years 1994 to 2005, the St Paul's student population

ranged between 376 and 453 and served between 201 and 328 families.<sup>25</sup> Twenty-eight cultural backgrounds were represented in school's family background profile between 1994 and 2005 (St Paul's 2005d). The school population profile indicates that the school has not confined itself to schooling only Catholic children, showing a capacity to build connections across religious and cultural differences, thus enhancing the social capital of the school community. Actively promoting social harmony and social engagement, the school systematically avoids using religious exclusivity to alienate or privilege sections of the school community or the wider community (2002). As indicated in Figure 6.1, the religious profile of the school includes 44 per cent of children from faith traditions other than Catholic, reflecting a school ethos and culture that accepts and pursues a multi-faith, multicultural community.

Figure 6.1: Religious background profile of the St Paul's community, 2004, in numbers of students (reproduced from St Paul's 2005d) (N=453)



Further, this enrolment of other faith traditions is consistent with Brigidine core values (Brigidine Sisters 1988), as discussed in earlier chapters as it is with CST:

A Catholic school in itself is far from being divisive or presumptuous. It does not exacerbate differences, but rather aids cooperation and contact with others. It opens itself to others and respects their way of thinking and of living. It wants to share their anxieties and their hopes as it, indeed, share their present and future lot in this world. (Congregation for Catholic Education 1988, p. para 57)

The Brigidine Criteria for Mission and Brigidine Core Values and CST documents, as discussed in earlier chapters, also encourage the enrolment of students from a particular social profile; that is, embracing those who are poor and marginalised (Brigidine Secondary Schools Council 2005b; Brigidine Sisters 1988; Pope John Paul VI 1965). This is sustained by values such as inclusivity and justice and peace to the poor, as articulated by the school community and as

<sup>25</sup> All statistics used in this chapter are sourced from school census records 1994–2005. Unless otherwise indicated the statistics are aggregated for all twelve years from 1994 and 2005.

expressed in, for example the school song (Appendix 16). From the socio-ecological perspective, these values affirm the empowerment and the community structures necessary to attain positive health determinants and those underpinning the characteristics of HPS: a positive ethos and values embedded in social justice (Keleher & Armstrong 2005; Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007). These values also reflect the values of access and equity championed by the AASW Practice Standards for School Social Workers (AASW 2006). The importance of these values is their impact on a community with low socioeconomic status in that they address the socioeconomic dislocation caused by low socioeconomic status. The next section examines the socioeconomic circumstance of the St Paul's school community. This information was gathered from school archives, census documents and School Reports and provides a full picture of the parent and carers of the students and their role and expectations of St Paul's School. This data also provides insight into the social, economic and cultural capital resources available to the School.

#### *Parent and carer profile*

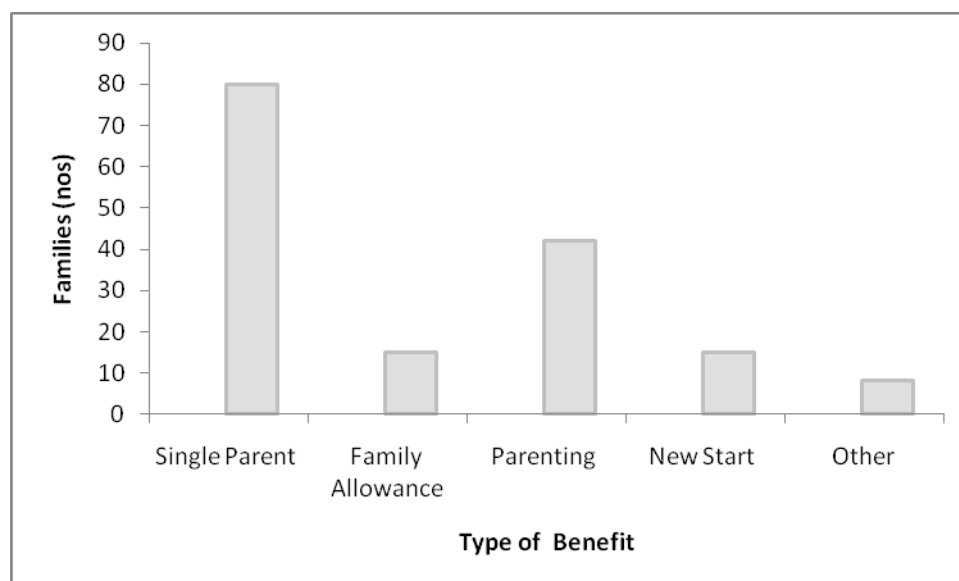
Rev Pius Jones, St Paul's parish priest, 2002 to 2005, acknowledged the disadvantage of the school community when he wrote:

The St Paul's School Community faces particular challenges because of the socio-economic situation of the area it serves. This situation, rather than being a problem only, has been taken up by the school as 'needs' to which the leadership has responded with professionalism and generosity. [St Paul's leadership] has been particularly visionary in the whole social needs of the children as well as ensuring that St Paul's School provides sound academic and spiritual faith formation. (St Paul's 2005d, p. 6)

The challenge that the above quotation highlights is indicated in the unemployment and low incomes that typify the parent and carer profile (Victorian Government 2002). In 2004, the school parent and carer household income averaged \$15,000 per annum, which reached only 66 per cent of the benchmark set for low income earners during 2004 and was 36 per cent less than the average Brimbank total of wages and salaries (Brimbank City Council 2009; St Paul's 2005d). The 2005 Validation Report (2005d) reported that 60 per cent of parent and carer typically belonged to the unemployed, unskilled or hospitality occupations, 21 per cent were named as tradesmen/women or working in administrative positions, 8 per cent were managers of small business or were professionals working in, for example, schools and 8 per cent were managers who worked within large government or non government organisations.

With such disadvantage in the school community, it was no surprise to find that 45 per cent of the school families qualified for and received some kind of government benefit<sup>26</sup>. School records indicated that in the years 1994 to 2005 the average income was low enough for households to qualify for the Education Maintenance Allowance<sup>27</sup> (St Paul's 2005d) and/or other welfare benefits. For example, in the 2004 period, family benefits were received by 34 per cent of St Paul's families. Figure 6.2 shows the numbers and type of benefits received in 2004.

Figure 6.2: Family benefit 2004 (reproduced from St Paul's 2005d) (N=108)



Note: some families received more than one kind of benefit

For some families whose main income was derived from outwork,<sup>28</sup> children were a major contributor to earning capacity. This was particularly true for families of Vietnamese background that comprised 19 per cent of the school population. Overall 62 per cent of students from a Vietnamese background reported that they assisted their parents and carers with outwork

<sup>26</sup> A government benefit is a tax benefit paid by the Australian Commonwealth Government to assist with the cost of living. A family benefit is given to assist in raising children. Family assistance benefits give extra assistance to families with one main income (including sole parents), a low income, a disability, who are unemployed and seeking employment or retraining.

<sup>27</sup> The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a Victorian State Government allowance that assists low-income families by helping with the costs associated with the education of their children. The total annual payment for primary school students in 2005 was \$215 per annum. In addition to holding a valid Health Care Card or a Pensioner Concession Card, the parent and guardian must also be in receipt of a valid benefit from Centrelink.

<sup>28</sup> Outworkers work from home, mainly in the textiles and clothing industries, typically earn low wages and work long hours and are often of Asian (Vietnamese) background.

during the weekends and after school hours so that textile and manufacturing contract demands could be met in a timely manner (St Paul's 2005d). The next section uses school census documents and local government statistics to describe the student profile.

### *Student profile*

In 2005, the school had an index of relative socioeconomic disadvantage<sup>29</sup> of 930.05, making it the second most disadvantaged municipality in Melbourne (Brimbank City Council 2009). West Sunshine was ranked as the third most disadvantaged area of the seventy-nine local government areas in Victoria. In terms of developmental vulnerability, West Sunshine children were ranked as amongst the most vulnerable in all of Melbourne's municipalities. They were more developmentally vulnerable than children in other municipalities in the following areas: 55.8 per cent were less likely to reach their physical milestones, 18.4 per cent were at risk socially, 6.9 per cent were more likely to be at emotional risk, 33 per cent were less likely to reach English language proficiency and 25 per cent were less likely to be engaged in their community (Brimbank City Council 2009).

St Paul's needed to adjust their organisational structures to accommodate the complexity of their population's social and cultural circumstances was recognised in school review documentation:

St Paul's School has a long tradition of partnerships with families and with the community. However, St. Paul's School recognises that there are many competing interests in a family's life and that language barriers may dislocate families further from their children's schooling and schooling from children. (Victorian Government 2002)

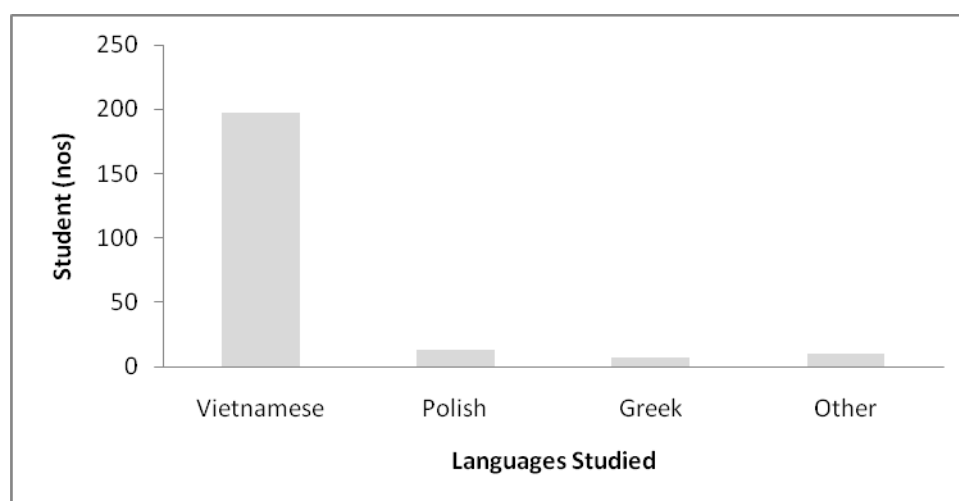
Documentation also indicated that Non English Speaking Background (NESB) parents and carers gave a high priority to Mother Tongue Maintenance<sup>30</sup> An aggregated calculation found that 227 (51%) of the St Paul's students spent at least five hours per weekend at language school (St Paul's 2005d; Victorian Government 2002). Figure 6.3 overleaf illustrates the numbers of St Paul's students who attended mother tongue maintenance programs for the year 2002.

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<sup>29</sup> The index of relative socioeconomic disadvantage is made up from attributes such as a low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, jobs in relatively unskilled occupations and variables that reflect disadvantage, rather than measuring specific aspects of disadvantage.

<sup>30</sup> 'Mother tongue maintenance' refers to NESB students' attempts to learn or maintain fluency in the first language.

Figure 6.3: Languages studied by St Paul's students ( $N=227$ )



Source: St Paul's Registered Schools Board Review (2005d)

Along with attendance at mother tongue maintenance classes, school census documents also indicated that some students also attended extra tuition classes. Overall 23 per cent of St Paul's students reported attending, at least one afternoon per week after school, typically numeracy classes, to enhance their success in sitting entrance exams to exclusive private schools, (St Paul's 2005d; Victorian Government 2002). The next section uses school census documents and School Review and Validation documents to describe the staff profile.

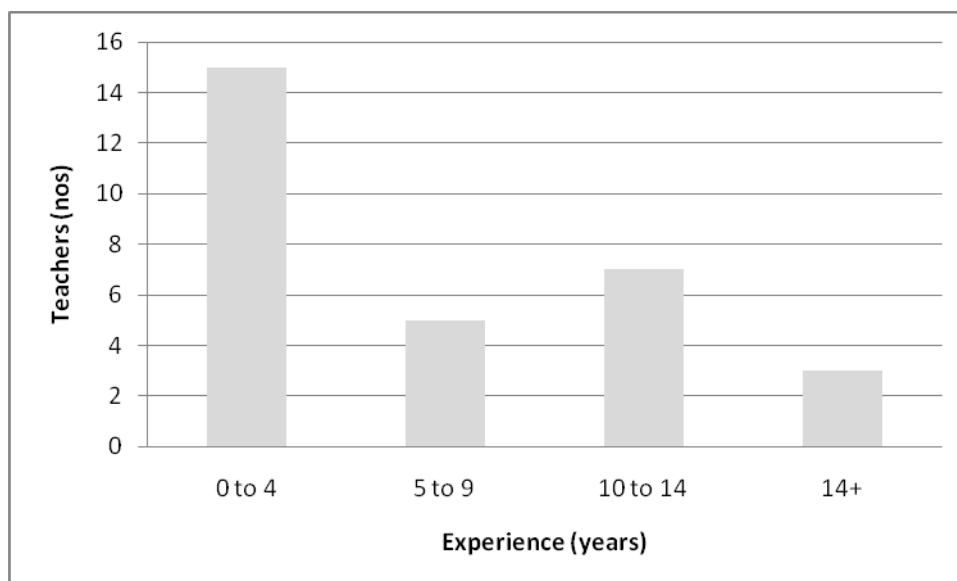
#### *Staff profile*

In 2004 to 2005, there were thirty teaching staff and four non teaching staff employed at St Paul's school. The school staff profile showed a range of experience and exposure to the outcome-based education political landscape. Figure 6.4 illustrates teacher experience by year.

As shown in Figure 6.4 over the page, in the data assembled for this research, the staff profile showed that twenty (66%) of the teaching staff had less than 10 years of teaching experience. The next section presents data gathered from census documents, Parent Partnership Team Meeting Minutes, St Paul's Review Documents and Validation documents relating to the Parent Partnership Team.



Figure 6.4: St Paul's staff by teaching experience (N=30)



Source: Validation review (St Paul's 2005d)

#### *Parent Partnership Team profile*

Introduced in 1994, during 1994 and 2005, the Parent Partnership Team was the main consulting group in the school governance structure. This team comprised two parent representatives from each level of the school – junior, middle and senior – the principal, the deputy principal, a parent and carer nominee of the principal and a teacher representative. The tenure of each parent/carers and teacher was two years, with half the team replaced annually. The parent and carers community elected the parent representative.. The teachers elected the teacher nominee. Meeting twice per term, the team addressed issues of curriculum and wellbeing, provided input to policy matters and served as a forum in which the school community could raise and discuss matters impacting on home and school. Parent Partnership Team members partnered staff at school meetings with the purpose of providing a parent and carers input and perspective (St Paul's 1994–2005b). They also led task groups and monitored parent and carers involvement in school activities. An audit of school census records regarding the educational attainment of the Parent Partnership Team, 1994 to 2005, participants indicated that 70 per cent had completed secondary schooling or less, one parent representative held a technical and further education qualification and one held a degree. Table 6.1 summarises the educational qualifications of the Parent Partnership Team.

Table 6.1: Parent Partnership Team by educational attainment (responses in percentages, N=20)

Educational level attained	No.	Per cent
Completed year 10	6	60
Completed year 12	1	10
Completed a TAFE qualification	2	20
Completed an undergraduate degree	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Parent Partnership Team minutes 1994–2005 (1994–2005b)

While this is a small group, the educational background is representative of the entire parent and carer educational background that is, less than 10 per cent of the parent and carer population had completed university education (St Paul's 2005d). The next section describes the social work students who participated in the Model. Data to describe the social work student profile was compiled using the archival document 'Audit: social work students St Paul's School'.

#### *Social work student profile*

The Model included amongst its stakeholders the social work students obtaining field education experience. The social work students were drawn from six Victorian universities and were completing either their first or final seventy-day social work placement. Between the years 1994 and 2005 seventy-nine social work students contributed to the Model. As shown in Table 6.2, as the Model developed the number of social work students and the number of Victorian University Schools of Social work contributing to the Model increased. The major representation was from Victoria University.

Table 6.2: Social work student participation by University

	VU	Deakin	RMIT	La Trobe	Monash	Melbourne	Total
1994	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
1995	4	0	1	1	0	0	6
1996	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
1997	2	0	1	0	1	1	5
1998	3	0	0	1	1	1	6
1999	3	0	0	1	1	1	6
2000	4	0	1	1	1	0	7
2001	4	1	1	1	1	1	9
2002	4	2	0	1	1	0	8
2003	4	1	1	1	1	0	8
2004	4	1	1	1	1	1	9
2005	4	1	1	1	1	1	9
Total	41	6	8	9	9	6	79

Source: Audit: Social work students (Archival material, Testa 2005)

The supervision of social work students, in accordance with AASW regulations, was conducted weekly by a qualified social worker; in this instance myself, the designer and animator of the Model. The supervision covered their orientation to St Paul's school, theory and skills. The social work students participated in all school based student wellbeing activities, formal and informal. The next section profiles the field education coordinators (FEC).

#### *Field education coordinators*

During social work student placements FEC from the respective universities visited the school to assess the students' progress, to ensure that students were meeting both university and AASW standards and to monitor that the placement and supervision offered by the qualified social worker was meeting AASW field education requirements (AASW 2008). Four (100%) Victoria University FECs participated in this research.

To summarise to this point, the school's parent, carer and student stakeholder population is multicultural and multi-faith and belongs to a low socioeconomic group. Low educational levels, high unemployment and limited stores of socioeconomic and cultural capital typify the school's stakeholders. Teachers employed in the school are typically inexperienced and their professional agency is firmly embedded in OBE discourses and expectations. Social work students drawn from six Victorian Schools of Social Work, participated in the Model in their first or final placement and were supervised, on site, by the principal. Field education coordinators monitored the placement's compliance with AASW's education and practice standards.

The next section draws on empirical data drawn from policy audits, school newsletters, school reports and surveys to describe the ethos, environment and organisation of St Paul's school.

#### **St Paul's – HPS ethos, environment and organisation**

The school surveys showed there was general satisfaction with St Paul's school values, beliefs and understandings (that is, with the school ethos and environment). Parent and carers acknowledged the central role of leadership and how leadership positively influences the effectiveness of student wellbeing programs (St Paul's 2005d). St Paul's parents and carers, when discussing the school ethos, expressed congruence between the Brigidine, CST, AASW and the socio-ecological discourse and their experience of inclusivity and welcome. Parent and carers represented their experience of these values in a 2004 survey, reproduced in part below (St Paul's 2005b):

St Paul's School is a welcoming place that cares about the children's wellbeing and families. [The] staff is friendly and approachable. The principal is friendly, easy to approach and nice. (Parent P)  
 I believe St Paul's has a wonderful friendly environment which welcomes students from all races. (N1)  
 St Paul's School is the next [second] home of my children. (Parent G).  
 It is appreciated that St Paul's School is [a] Catholic school but it opens up for non-Catholic children. It is important that my son, who is non-Catholic, has an opportunity to attend the school. (Parent T)

As Table 6.3 illustrates, responses from the 228 survey responses received (which accounted for 60 per cent of parent and carer population) stressed the leaders' ability to manage relationships among and between the school community members and their capacity to facilitate the building of social capital among community members.

Table 6.3: Parent survey (percentage of responses, N=228)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
St Paul's has effective networks of care for staff, students and families	71	25	4		
St Paul's 'is a welcoming place'	96	3	1		
[The school] cares about families	86	11	1	2	
[St Paul's] staff are always ready to discuss worries about [their] children	94	5			
St Paul's is a great school; there is a fantastic community feel and a strong family environment'	98	1	1		

SA, strongly agree; A, agree; U, undecided; D, disagree; SD, strongly disagree.

Source: School review 2005 (St Paul's 2005d)

Parent and carers also affirmed the relational qualities of the school in the comments that were included in the 2005 Validation (St Paul's 2005d) survey returns:

I would not send my child to another school, as St Paul's is a great school I'm happy with it and my child loves it. (Parent R)  
 I find the school to be a warm and caring place and the staff is especially helpful. [The principal] is always accessible and always willing to discuss issues with parents. I recommend to school to anyone who asks me about primary school. (Parent M)  
 I find St Paul's to be a great place to work and enjoy the teachers company thoroughly.  
 St Paul's, [the principal] and [deputy principal] are a combination of a family which makes the school more like a home where children and parents feel loved and safe because they care. I will never forget what they did for me and my son, J. Thank you will never be enough. (Parent K)  
 Students are known to their teachers. The principal knows everybody well. There is no loss of individuality. Our school is a happy place where Christian values permeate. (Parent A)

St Paul's staff also attributed a positive school ethos to the leadership in St Paul's school. Naming the leader's ability to encourage teachers' ongoing professional development, the majority of the staff felt that the leader assisted them to audit their skills, attitudes and behaviour and adjust them in line with their own emerging needs and St Paul's educational, visions and plans. Table 6.4 summarises the staff's assessment of the St Paul's School ethos and culture.

Table 6.4: Staff responses – school culture and ethos – (percentage of responses; N=34)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
The leadership provides adequate support and resources to implement effective teaching and learning programs	40	48	6	4	
School staff maintain respect for and sensitivity to diverse cultural values and family structures	92	8			
School staff take responsibility for fostering high quality interpersonal relationships	75	1	14		
Changes within the school are underpinned by St Paul's core values	72	28			
Staff are clear about the vision and plan that leadership had, and that the leadership had tried to animate these visions and plans	63	33	4		
Staff are encouraged to participate in professional development in line with annual review meetings	56	24	20		
Professional learning teams focus staff on teaching and best practice	64	24	12		

Source: St Paul's School registered school board (Victorian Government 2002)

Social work students commented on the supportive school ethos and environment in their experiences while at St Paul's school. Reporting on the supportive, respectful, enabling and tolerant relationships between and among the school community, characteristics of a positive HPS ethos and environment and organisation, they attributed the success of both their field education placement and the facilitation of student wellbeing programs to the school ethos and environment:

[St Paul's has] a supportive team environment and the ability for staff to support each other including me, and I was able to provide much needed support to my team. (SWS 4)

[St Paul's has a] well structured learning environment, school philosophy and teachers are tolerant. (S5)

[St Paul's is] a positive school that is on about student wellbeing. (SWS 11)

[St Paul's has] an environment that was enabling. (SWS 7)

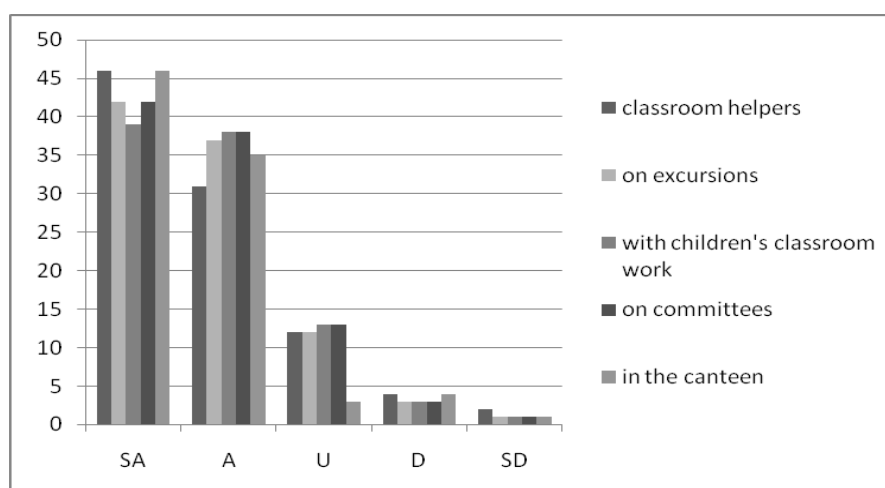
Children are treated very, very respectfully. (SWS 19)

St Paul's programs reflect the philosophy of the Catholic Education Office student wellbeing ... the programs follow pastoral care policies. (SWS 20)

Data indicated that St Paul's worked to strengthen the participation of parents and carers in the school community. For example, annual parent and carer participation audits conducted by the Parent Partnership Team found that parents and carers participated in all Epstein's (1995) eight areas (Appendix 17). The audit results were consistent with the St Paul's School (2005b)

parents' and carers' survey in finding an inclusive, participative and representative school ethos, culture and organisation. Over 70 per cent of the participants in the survey consistently reported that parents and carers had an opportunity to be involved in the school. Drawing on Epstein (1995) and Epstein and Salinas' (2004), parent and carers nominated eight areas in which parents and carers could participate in schools: as audience and spectators; fundraisers; learners; teacher aides; organisers; advocates; decision makers; and policy-makers. A Parent Partnership Team audit of parent participation indicated that parents and carers felt that they had input to committees policy making and decision making processes (St Paul's 1994–2005b). Figure 6.5 over the page indicates the parents' and carers' views on the opportunities offered for parent and carer participation in school activities.

Figure 6.5: Opportunities for Parent participation in percentages (N=288)



Note: SA, strongly agree; A, agree; U, undecided; D, disagree; SD, strongly disagree.  
Source: St Paul's School Review

However, the Parent Partnership Team Focus group had a different perception of parent participation in the school. Their sense was that the parent and care community's participation in the school was constrained by the level of cultural capital and the low socioeconomic status of the school population. The Parent Partnership Team was aware that there was only small pool of parents and carers who could contribute to school initiatives:

We often say it: teachers put in a lot of effort to try to get things happening in the school – but it's the same [parent and carers] all the time and it's the same people all the time that are whinging. (PPT S)  
Then you have family stuff as well as school stuff. (PPT C)  
Yeah, and the parents feel it and then it might affect the child. (PPT T)  
It's like me, I've got to bring the kids to before school and after school care because I work and it's really hard because I'm trying to be part of the school – but it's hard, you know. (PPT L)  
It would be nice if more parents help out with more, like school fund raising etc. (PPT B)

We are very happy to get involved with school activities when we have suitable time. However, we are sorry we couldn't make it so far. (PPT L)

The field education coordinators recognised the socioeconomic and cultural disadvantage experienced by the St Paul's students and families and the role that the school played in reducing further disadvantage. They named social work skills and expert knowledge as being the specific contribution that the school could make to offset this disadvantage and stigmatisation:

Combining work with individuals with community development type work, the social work students brought resources into the school without stigmatising the community. (FEC1)  
[Social work involvement] meant that people could be helped without blaming them for their circumstances. (FEC4)

In summary, the data across stakeholder groups agreed that the St Paul's ethos, environment and organisation the leadership and the way in which it was practised contributed to the development of that was positive, enabling, empowering and inclusive. However, the school's stakeholder profiles also indicated social, educational cultural and economic disadvantage. Moreover, data indicated that the school's ethos was permeated with Brigidine, Catholic and CEOM values consistent with socio-ecological health promoting values. Table 6.5 summarises the themes that emerged from data examined in this section.

Table 6.5: Thematic summary of St Paul's ethos, organisation and environment

Socioeconomic and cultural background	Ethos		Organisation
Disadvantage: social, cultural, economic At risk Resource-poor Inexperienced staff	Welcoming Inclusive Positive Tolerant Participative	Respectful Sensitive Caring Multicultural Multi-faith Non-stigmatising	Accessible Clear, purposeful and enabling leadership

St Paul's school faced the challenge of providing school based programs that would add positively to its ethos, organisation and environment while also offsetting the disadvantage that characterised the school. Prior to discussing how the St Paul's Model attempted to do this, the next section examines how stakeholders viewed OBE and its impact on the school's ability to offer and sustain student wellbeing programs. This data is drawn from the primary data gathered during the research process.

#### *Outcome-based education and St Paul's*

The teachers and parents and carers in the case study recognised the impact of socioeconomic status and negative social determinants on students and schooling. Two views were represented

in this recognition. Firstly that teachers must attend to student circumstances if learning is to progress. These views were represented in the focus group sessions held with teachers and separately with the Parent Partnership Team:

The difference with kids – like, not one kid is going to be the same as the other – their family lives are going to be different, different stresses, different issues. (PPT A)  
Our kids have needs – but having to concentrate on the work – that takes you away from the kids' lives and it doesn't help kid learn. (Teacher A)  
And it's no use – you have to meet the kids' needs before they learn – things that are happening in their lives slow down their learning. And they're upset if they're not being looked after – they can't learn. (Teacher C)

Further teachers also reported that the OBE policy imperatives were taking them away from both student wellbeing and from teaching and learning programs. Comments made during the focus group session illustrate the impact of the time pressures that teachers felt:

Too much to do and not enough time; the quality of time has gone. (Teacher MM)  
I suppose a lot of admin time takes you away from focussing on your teaching. (Teacher K)  
Yes, I agree – what you are doing and what the child is learning – it's constant, constant, constant admin. (Teacher J)  
It's also feeling like you need to fit everything in, it's so structured by the curriculum now. (Teacher C)  
I'm more about results and less about relationships. (Teacher M)

And the pressure of balancing the OBE and HPS discourses:

You have to encourage the relationship with the students but there are so many things that get in the way – quality relationship building takes time – and there are other things that get in the way – you don't have a chance. Our kids have needs – but having to concentrate on the work – that takes you away from the kids' lives. (Teacher A)  
Things that are happening in their lives slow down their learning. And there upset if they're not being looked after – they can't learn. (Teacher C)  
It's that old notion of meeting kids where they are. (Teacher A)

The second view that was represented by some parents and carers was the view that teachers must 'try harder' at ensuring student achievement in measurable curricula. These views were indicated in surveys parents and carers (St Paul's 2005b) and two examples are reproduced below:

Overall, I am very happy with the school but I'd like to know more about the maths program. I think my children need to do more maths. (Parent F).  
The only issue which concerns us is that the children do not have enough maths homework. We have since been sending both children to 'X' [tutoring provider]. (Parent C).

Alongside some parent and carer views that priority be given to student learning, archival records show that 38 per cent of parent and carers were accessing outside tutoring for their children and thus reinforcing the importance of student achievement (St Paul's 2005d). Students



attending these classes were typically tutored in numeracy and in preparation for scholarship and assessment exams (St Paul's 2005d).

The next sections examine the St Paul's Model's components, their focus on student wellbeing and the contribution of social work students to these components. Data for the next sections was gathered from archival and primary sources including: formal school reports, newsletters, surveys, focus groups.

### **St Paul's Model – program components**

The overriding philosophy of the Model is early intervention and prevention. By targeting the whole school environment, creating an environment conducive to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and competence, the Model aimed at intervening early on, before student concerns became too complex or too established (St Paul's 2005c, 2005d; Victorian Government 2002). A socio-ecological perspective formed the foundation of the Model and underpinned the social work contribution to the Model. Taking into account the child's total environment and needs – physical, emotional, cultural, spiritual, social and educational – the Model focussed on student, family and school strengths and needs rather than totally problem centred (Cahill, Wyn & Smith 2004; Jaquier 2002). The twelve programs, examined in the following sections, developed organically over a twelve-year period, 1994 to 2005, and as will be described in the following sections, involved the cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers.

#### *The Breakfast Club*

The Breakfast program at St Paul's, introduced during the 1980, was abandoned in 1993 because of the loss of staff and funding, and reintroduced in 1994 when social work students were introduced to the school. Anecdotal conversations between the principal and the Paul's teachers indicated that students were increasingly arriving at school without having had breakfast and that some arrived without a packed lunch (St Paul's 1994–2005). The reasons that students gave for having had no breakfast or lunch were that their parent(s) had left early for work and they had to come to school, there was no food in the house, and they wanted to be with other children (St Paul's 1994 – 2005b, 2005a).

Social work students were assigned responsibility for the Breakfast Club. The Breakfast Club operated three days per week between 8.15 and 8.40 am. To reduce the stigma that may be attached to students who used the Breakfast Club if attendance had been made conditional, attendance was open to any student. Although a nominal fee of fifty cents per family was set for

using the Breakfast Club, this was accepted only if students offered the money. The students were provided with a warm drink and toast and could make themselves lunch to take to class if needed.

On average, twenty-five students per day (5% aggregated over twelve years) attended the Breakfast Club (St Paul's 2005a). The Breakfast Club also provided food baskets weekly to families who accepted and needed supplies of bread, pies, sausage rolls and cakes for the children's lunches. These supplies were donated by the local bakery and the families' access to these food baskets was via teacher referrals and parent and carer self-referral (St Paul's 1994–2005). Funding and material support for the Breakfast Club was sourced through a number of avenues within and outside of the school. These included support from parents and carers responding to the newsletter requests, the parish (church) community following representation to the Maltese Women's Group, SFYS grants, Brigidine education grants, the local magistrates' court (Sunshine) the Community Chest, Ozchild and local bakeries (St Paul's 1994–2005). Appendix 18 lists the funding sources by year.

As indicated in Table 6.6, student survey responses indicated that knowledge of the Breakfast Club came via three sources: teachers, friends and/or social work students.

Table 6:6: Knowledge of Breakfast Club (N=20)

<b>'I heard of the Breakfast Club from'</b>	
A teacher	4
A friend	10
Social work students	6

Source: Student survey

Focus group responses from students indicated that the Breakfast Club was valued and played an important role in addressing their ability to attend to teaching and learning:

I could think more. (Student 5)

Except sometimes you're late for school and you can't come to Breakfast Club or you're late and then you go to class ... the teachers aren't worried if you're late and you're at Breakfast Club. (Student G)

One student also commented that the Breakfast Club influenced his attitudes toward the health benefits of having breakfast:

I learnt that Breakfast Club is important – it keeps you thinking. (Student N)

Students also referred to the Breakfast Club's role in addressing social disadvantage and responding to family cultural or structural circumstances:

You don't have any bread [at home]. (Student SM)  
 I have no breakfast at home. (Student F)  
 I like eating toast, because you don't get it at home, sometimes. (Student N)  
 You eat only rice at home, and toast keeps you warm. (Student D)  
 Your mum and dad go to work early so I don't get breakfast. (Student H)  
 Your big sister has to go to school early and you have to go, too. (Student D)  
 And you have to do stuff at home – your bed, help with your little brother. And you don't have breakfast. (Student 4)  
 'cos sometimes you wake up late [and you don't have time to have breakfast]. (Student S)

Responses also indicated the contribution the Breakfast Club made to building networks of trust, respect and mutuality that is, social capital amongst and between students and to the ethos of the school:

And you get to meet other people and new friends. (Student D)  
 It's important because you talk to [the social work students] about things. (Student D2)  
 You could treat people better because you know them. (Student G)  
 It was good; I made friends. (Student 3)  
 You talk to others – it's nice. (Student N)  
 You can have breakfast with your friends. (Student F)  
 The Breakfast Club is] cool, it good for making friends. (Student S)  
 The Breakfast Club is] great. (Student D)  
 I feel happy when I'm at Breakfast Club. (Student B)  
 Sometimes you were scared but after Breakfast Club it was OK. (Student S2)  
 [The] Breakfast Club makes me feel safe. (Student 4)

Alongside the student focus group responses, student surveys indicated a high level (100%) of student satisfaction with the Breakfast Club. Table 6.7 illustrates the level of student satisfaction.

Table 6.7: Students' ranking of Breakfast Club (N=20)

'I liked the Breakfast Program'	
Really, really agree	18
Really agree	2

Source: Student survey

As Tale 6.8 indicates, overall, 83 per cent of the staff members had students who participated in the Breakfast Club and 67 per cent of them ranked its importance in the top two of a twelve-point scale

Table 6.8: Teachers' ranking of the effectiveness of the Breakfast Club program (N=18)

Ranking	Frequency
1	7
2	5
3	2
4	1
5	3

Source: Teacher survey

The social work students were aware that it was difficult to rely on the wider community to improve the students' social and economic conditions and that the capacity of the wider community to provide human and other resources to the club were limited. The following social work student survey responses are a sample of that awareness:

In terms of the Breakfast Club, it was hard when local businesses didn't want to contribute or sponsor the school. (SWS 3)

Opening Breakfast Club five days per week may prove to be difficult as the funding for the program is never consistent and also [there is] the problem of finding people to come in and run the program. (SWS 6)

They showed in this way their awareness of the links between the levels of individual and communal wealth and their respective capacity to contribute to and sustain social capital among and between individuals and groups.

### *Homework Club*

Introduced in 2004, the Homework Club tried to offset the inequities experienced by families and communities who could not afford the technology needed to negotiate the demands of teaching and learning programs. Along with providing access to technology, the Homework Club hoped to develop positive study habits in senior students and prepare them for the transition to secondary school. Homework Club ran two days a week between the hours of 3 and 4 pm in the school library. School records show that, at any session, fifteen (16%) of grade five and/or six students attended Homework Club. As shown in Table 6.9, students who participated in this research and who attended the Homework Club highly valued participation in the Homework Club.

Table 6.9: Student ranking of the Homework Club (N=7)

'I really liked the Homework Club'	
Really, really agree	4
Really agree	3

Source: Student survey

During the focus group session the reasons students gave for the utility of the Homework Club to their learning included access to resources not otherwise available to them:

I worked in the library, I could use the internet. We don't have the internet at home. (S)

Students also viewed the Homework Club as bridging the cultural capital gap created by new curriculum content, families' alienation from the school curriculum and their parents' inability to understand schooling processes. For these students, the Homework Club provided the academic and linguistic support they needed to complete their homework, negotiate schooling

tasks and also opportunity and space to work towards the standards and measures set by federal and state education policies:

I have to do my homework at home – my mum doesn't speak English. I could ask people at [the] Homework Club to help me. (Student 2)

I like being in [the] Homework Club because I don't have to worry about it when I get home – I'm always rushed – I don't have time at home. (Student N)

Attendees at the Homework Club had parents and carers who found it difficult because of language barriers, family commitments, educational level and/or unfamiliarity with the Australian schooling system to support their children:

I like [the] Homework Club because I could learn more because I could get help with my homework. I can't get that at home. (Student E)

Teachers' participating in this research though had different views on the relevance and agency of the Homework Club. Ten (50%) of them knew of or had referred students to the Homework Club. Their views clustered around three sets of beliefs: its role in developing academic skills, its role in developing social capital and its role in addressing issues of social justice. The following comments on whether the Homework Club served its role in developing academic skills illustrate the differing views:

... it has to be a Homework Club because it has access to the internet – I know that; that is why I referred kids to the Homework Club – I went over there – and I knew that the kids were doing the research that they couldn't do at home – it depends on the day. (Teacher C)

I just want to make a point about the Homework Club – what (Teacher M2) was saying – I was there one day – the kids were just playing their computer games. (Teacher M1)

The second view was its role was to develop social networks amongst and between students:

Maybe we have to decide if it should be a Homework Club – maybe it should be a games club? (Teacher C2)

The third view was whether the Homework Club's role was to address issues of social justice, equity:

But kids don't have computers at home, they can't do their homework. (Teacher L1)

These different beliefs influenced whether or not teachers referred students to the Homework Club and indicated the need to clarify the Homework Club's role:

It [the Homework Club's role] was too broad – that in itself was good for the kids – they socialised a bit – but from a Homework Club [viewpoint] – I don't know. (Teacher C3)

Maybe we have to decide if the Homework Club should be academic. (Teacher L)

Teacher views also focussed on the role of the social work students in the Homework Club. Their judgements on whether the social work students successfully implemented the Homework Club appeared to be based on whether they acted like teachers, suggesting they were confused about the role or that a role definition was needed. These views were illustrated in the following focus group comments:

The social work students, they were just talking to kids, instead of making sure the kids were doing their homework. (Teacher A)

Why don't the social work students make sure the kids do their homework, that's what it's for. (Teacher C)

In contrast to the teachers, the social work students recognised that the club provided access to scarce resources and addressed structural disadvantage:

[The] Homework Club running [on] only two days wasn't satisfactory. I believe the senior students would have benefited from the Homework Club if it ran every day. (Teacher C)

All three groups, students, teachers and social work students, believed this club was beneficial but the confusion surrounding the purpose and role of the club was located in beliefs about its role – to address social capital, human capital or social justice. Teachers were less inclined to name, see and appreciate the social justice and social capital function of the club while social workers and students were more able to recognise and name the social and structural disadvantage it addressed. Some teachers were also less able to articulate, understand or accept the role of the social worker in the club and some viewed it as a quasi-teaching role that therefore needed to mimic the instruction that teachers would offer if the program were classroom based.

### *SEASONS program*

The SEASONS program, introduced in 1997, is positioned in the psychosocial and post-intervention described by Cahill and Freeman (2006) and the DEET's (1998) Four Levels of Activity framework. SEASONS addressed the social and emotional domains of a student's life. As such the program was consistent with the HPS's goal of developing a nurturing and supportive environment. This program responded to distress and dislocation in students caused by loss or grief in their family and community. Participants in SEASONS had suffered the death, separation or divorce of their parents or significant individuals. Participation in the SEASONS program was via referral and following permission from parents or teachers. In some cases, students were self-referred. The SEASONS groups were gathered from students aged between five and eleven years from every class level, withdrawn from the classroom for forty-five minutes for eight sessions. Depending on the number of participants, social work

students, in collaboration with their supervisor, conducted one or two groups – a junior and senior group. The groups were co-facilitated by trained parents, carers and social work students and covered topics such as ‘Feelings are OK’, ‘Stories and memories’, ‘Managing someone going’, ‘Moving on’ and ‘Celebration’.

Focus group data indicated that the SEASONS program was valued by students and teachers as being both effective and necessary in addressing wellbeing issues that may otherwise interfere with the students’ availability to teaching and learning programs.

The students stressed the importance of the program in developing their emotional competencies and building their resilience:

I felt happy to be at SEASONS because you get to play games with feelings. (Student T)

I think SEASONS is great because we talk about feelings. (Student B)

Being part of SEASONS is great because you get to express your feelings, talk about problems and family. (Student M)

and their identification with other students who had experienced feelings of loss and grief:

I learnt that other kids think the same as you and that they have things happen the same as you. (Student E)

For particular children, SEASONS was a timely post-intervention program, since it provided crisis intervention after the unexpected death, in 2005, of a St Paul’s school staff member:

When (special education teacher) died I didn’t know how she died. They [the social work students] told me how she died and what happened to her. I felt much better ... because I was really sad about what happened to her and I needed help about it. (Student T)

Other students sought to participate in SEASONS in the future:

Are we going to have the SEASONS group this year? I would like to be part of it – my uncle died and I want to go to SEASONS. (Student N)

Ten (50%) staff indicated that they knew of or had referred students to the SEASONS program.

As Table 6.10 over the page indicates, teachers rated the SEASONS program amongst the top five of the twelve wellbeing programs offered at school.

Table 6.10: Teachers' ranking of the SEASONS program

Ranking	Frequency
1	1
2	5
3	7
4	1
5	3

Source: Teacher survey

The teachers agreed with the students that the SEASONS program attended to socio-emotional needs:

I think this program has to stay – it's really important to the kids and to the families and I would refer kids to it if I need to. (Teacher A)

Teachers also commented on the value that parents and carers placed on the program:

I remember a parent came up to me and said 'my older daughter had just moved overseas and my youngest daughter is having a really hard time' and the child decided to be part of the program. (Teacher C)

The child benefited from going to the program – she just needed that time to talk about it and the parent kept coming up to me as well and telling me how impressed she was with it – she had that time to work through it. (Teacher L)

However, teachers gave another reason for continuing the SEASONS program: time constraints. In a context driven by the pressure of OBE teachers the difficulty of balancing both students' socio-emotional needs and their academic needs. They saw that SEASONS could provide the care they could not when their students experienced loss or grief and that families needed the school to be supportive of their children at such times:

I'm more and more about results and less and less about relationship. (Teacher M)

That's what I mean – as teachers we just don't have the time to give to those programs – it could be the structured [SEASONS] program or 'mum and dad were having a fight last night' –we just don't have the time. (Teacher MM)

Attributing the structure and arrangement of the SEASONS program as critical to its success, teachers held the view that a time-limited program that has a definite beginning and end and a 'teacher and pupil-friendly format' were factors that made the program effective:

The SEASONS program has been a good one – it starts and it finishes and is contained. (Teacher J)

On developing familiarity and accessibility of the program, teachers remarked that SEASONS would be more effective if staff, especially newly appointed staff were made aware of its existence and goals:



When I began, the social work student program was quite big, but I had no idea about what it was, what they were supposed to be for – I wasn't informed – I caught on. As it went on – I wasn't able to refer to SEASONS because I didn't know what it was – [C] told me about it. Now I know and I think [its] great. (Teacher T)

Two years ago before the SEASONS program started, an information sheet went home to explain the program we went through it – that was good. (Teacher C)

To conclude, the SEASONS program was viewed as an important inclusion in the Model since it addressed their students' social emotional wellbeing and relieved teachers of the responsibility of providing a program fell outside of their busy demanding role and/or competence.

### *Classroom Program*

The Classroom Program, introduced in 1994, also referred to as 'the social skills program' is an intervention program targeting classroom survival skills such as academic behaviour, rules and routines or addressing negative verbal and noisy behaviour or disruptive in-and-out-of seat behaviour. Table 6.11 outlines the logic of the program.

Table 6.11: The Classroom Program logic

If students become aware of behaviour that dislocates them from learning and teaching programs	then they can be taught and acquire behaviour that assists them to participate positively in learning and teaching programs
If teachers can accurately describe student social skills or lack of social skills	then the social skills program can accurately target student behaviour and knowledge
If students are taught to understand and use appropriate social skills	then students will appropriately participate in learning programs and teachers can teach learning programs

Source: (Victorian Government 2002)

Children were referred to the Classroom Program via the St Paul's Welfare Committee. Candidates for referral were assessed as needing classroom survival skills. Using cognitive behavioural theory, social work students identified and then helped develop the necessary skills that children needed to negotiate teaching and learning programs. Teachers, student and social work students met weekly to review progress and, if needed, adjust the intervention plans. A formal review of St Paul's School by the Registered Schools Board's panel singled out the Classroom Program as being a significant preventative program:

A feature of the school's programs is the Social Skills program. Tertiary social work students conduct this preventative program under the supervision of the Principal, Sr Doris Testa. This exemplary program targets students in the Junior and Middle school, focusing on the particular needs of individual students or groups of students. The emphasis of this program is prosocial skilling students who are 'at risk' of dislocating themselves from teaching and learning programs because of underdeveloped pro social skills. (2002, p. 2)

As Table 6.12 indicates, St Paul's students were unanimous in their view that the presence of social work students made it easier to negotiate their classroom time.

Table 6.12: Students' ranking of the effectiveness of the Classroom Program (N=20)

<b>'Social work students made my time in the classroom easier'</b>	
Really, really agree	7
Really agree	13
Not sure	0
Don't agree	0
Don't agree at all	0

Source: Students' surveys

Students also stressed that helpful relationships had been formed between the social work students and themselves and the impact this had on their engagement with teaching and learning programs:

Working in the classroom [the social work students] helped my work. (Student D)  
They [the social work students] helped me with my maths. (Student S)  
It was easier to understand my work with someone helping me; sometimes the teacher hasn't got time. (Student A)

Additionally, students expressed an appreciation of the nature of these relationships, implicitly implying that personal attributes were what most assisted them to learn:

[The social work students] are fun. (Student N)  
The people are friendly. (Student S)

In contrast, teachers were divided in their support of the Classroom Program. As indicated in Table 6.13 overleaf, survey results indicated a continuum of satisfaction with the Classroom Program with the Classroom program.

Table 6.13: Teachers' responses on the effectiveness of the Classroom Program (N=18)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Social work students assisted children to participate in the classrooms more effectively	3	11	4	0	0
Social work students assisted teachers to attend to their task of teaching	3	9	3	3	0
Social work students implemented the Classroom Program with success	6	11	1	0	0
Social work students assisted some students more than others	3	11	3	1	0
Social work students worked in ways that were supportive of teaching and learning programs	3	8	4	3	0
Social work students worked with purpose and direction	3	7	3	3	0
Social work students learnt how teaching and learning programs are developed	6	9	1	0	0
Social work students established positive and purposeful working relationships	6	8	3	1	0

Source: Teacher surveys

Focus group responses from the teachers confirmed the range of teacher satisfaction with the Classroom program highlighting both positive and negative aspects of programs organisation.

Positive comments were attributed to the program's capacity to provide the teacher with support in dealing with student dislocation from teaching and learning programs. Teachers who said the Classroom Program was positive said it gave them freedom to concentrate on the teaching programs, gave struggling students the opportunity to receive support that time-poor teachers could not give and gave the social work students the chance to contribute their skills and knowledge:

I found it actually valuable in their monitoring and encouraging the child to maintain the new behaviour. You know the social work students had a code between [her] and the child – not an obvious one – and the social work students and the child would communicate that way – without being intrusive and labelling the kid – the child developed better learning habits.(Teacher C2)

[The Classroom Program] frees teachers for teaching time. Say there were certain problems that were identified, say, for example, a kid may need to deal with something that needed that kid [to be] removed from the group – the social worker may do that and allow the teacher to get and do the other things. (Teacher A)

You know there are other advantages, not just if kids are in trouble, the social work students might see that a kid [is] doing something great that the teacher missed and be able to encourage them and give them a pat on the back. (Teacher N)

[The social work students] also has a bit more time to network. (Teacher S)

You may have five kids in your grade who are good kids who don't do anything wrong and are the first kids to finish their work but they miss out because you've had to deal with the kid who you constantly [telling to] 'sit down, stop playing with that, get on with your work' ... all those little things slow your day down. (Teacher M2)

But they may help them – they can prompt them to watch their work. (Teacher S)

Contrasting the positive views held of the Classroom Program were negative remarks that focussed on the structure and operation of the program and the social work students' skills. Teacher negativity arose from some social work students' inconsistent practises and perceived ill-judged or contested interventions:

I've found that the child more easily reverted back to his own behaviour when the social work students were absent. (Teacher M2)

I don't find the consistency in the ability of the students – you can get good social work students – my experience – if you've got that consistency ... in the classroom ... whether it's emotional ... that's what it is. I look at the social worker coming in and I think – 'oh no!' (Teacher L)

In the same way, though, when the social work student was there, in the room at the same time each day – it helped keep the kid on track – she was good but for a particular social work student, she barely turned up in the classroom and then came to me at the end of term as told me that the kid was ready to go off the social skills program. There was no way the child was ready to come off the program, the student had barely been in there.... But at other times you've had some who have been there and supported the kids: they've been great. (Teacher C)

The difficulty last year (2005) was the inconsistency. I think that leaves a bad taste in some people's mouths and I think there is a lot of work to do to get the program back on an even keel. (Teacher D)

So, when it wasn't working was when the purpose wasn't clear and when the social work student wasn't coming in when they were timetabled to. (Teacher L)

Further, teachers with negative comments appeared to be unclear about the role and purpose of social work intervention in the classroom and found it difficult to share their classroom role. In two instances, they attributed this to a lack of role clarity and a relational distance from the social work student:

To me, sometimes I couldn't get my head around what they were there for; what they were doing – I had no idea who they were – I didn't have a relationship with them. (Teacher J)

In contrast to some of these views other teachers appreciated the difficulty that social work students had in being in both a school setting that was facilitated by social work students, the power dislocation between the students and the teachers and the difficulty that that a different disciplines may have in breaking into the school landscape:

Coming into a staff meeting is really awesome. (Teacher M)

But it's also about the relationship you have with [the social workers], you need to work on it. (Teacher A)

When they come in some say – 'this is the first time I've been into a primary school since I was at primary school. I had good experiences' – or 'I didn't have good experiences at primary school'. This impacts on how they work. (Teacher L)

The student social worker and perhaps our experience is different – we’ve got so many things to do. Social work is another thing – if we want it to work, we may have to understand the social work side as well. (Teacher L)

There are the conversations we’ve had with [social workers] too – if we see [them] not wanting to come into the staff room – talk to some of them privately. There’s a whole heap of issues for them too – coming into a school setting, that’s really big and knowing that you’re not a teacher. (Teacher L)

I can only speak about last year, but we did try to get [the social workers] to come to the staff room more. (Teacher D)

I actually found last year that [the social workers] were quite reticent [about coming into] the staff room. (Teacher A)

Confirming this dissonance, social work students remarked on the difficulty in establishing a working relationship with teachers, the need for program consistency and the place of social work in the school landscape:

[It was difficult] being in an environment where social workers are not the main profession, especially when you have to explain to the staff where you are coming from and why you are doing what you are doing. (SWS 8)

Having to explain social work [was difficult]. (SWS 9)

Some teachers didn’t want you in classrooms. (SWS 14)

I was given a student who was often away, that made it hard because I could only work with him a few times before my placement ended. (SWS 4)

Sometimes I just couldn’t go to the staff room, I felt like I had nothing to say to the teachers. (SWS 10)

Teachers also held views about the type and kinds of social work intervention that differed from, but supported their teaching. This support was seen as social work intervention that needed casework skills and knowledge:

The children that I’ve passed on to social work are kids that, you know, have low self-esteem; I don’t care if they sit with them and build their confidence up for forty minutes. It’s not about work, again, it’s about consistency, because they come in and you know yourself, and if they’re ‘not in tune with what happens it’s no use. (Teacher M)

And what’s the objective with social work and kids – I don’t see them as a teacher, when they come into the classroom, I try to think of them as not working with the kids academically, they should be – I don’t want to give them something to do with their literacy and numeracy and then ‘off you go’ – I want them to help the child socially. (Teacher M3)

But if you had a student who was doing more academic stuff – then there needs to be communication with the social work student and whoever is supervising the social work student – to say ‘that’s not right or that’s not the main purpose of your placement’ it’s more about the social skills that are happening. Even specifically, maybe we need to be more articulate, like ‘Why are we referring this student to the social skills program? Why is that social worker working with them? It’s because that kid is running around the room while you’re trying to teach. What skills can we give that child to sit there and concentrate and.... What kind of monitoring system do we give – stickers, rewards, or whatever it is? (Teacher L)

According to them, discreet social work knowledge such as community development and networking skills were the most useful contribution that social work could make to schooling:

With community stuff – so they can give time that the teachers can’t. It’s about kids and the community as a whole – not just about teachers. (Teacher L)

They point people in the right direction – get access to different programs ... programs that teachers aren't aware of because they're not social workers. (Teacher A)

The Parent Partnership Team views on the Classroom Program reflected an appreciation of the support that social work intervention can give to teaching. Their comments showed they understood that the social work students could help to develop a positive ethos and an environment of care, friendship and social capital. Table 6.14 illustrates the Parent Partnership Team responses.

Table 6.14: Parent partnership team evaluations of program effectiveness (N=10)

	SA	A	U
Social work students help children with their friendships	7	3	
Social work students help children with their playground activities	2	7	1
Social work students help children of St Paul's School care for other children	3	7	

Source: Parent Partnership Team surveys

They perceived that social work removed some of the teaching burdens placed on the teachers:

I know that social work students help the teacher a lot. (PPT S)

Any help within the classroom is a positive one. (PPT T)

However, some members of the Parent Partnership Team qualified this support by expressing a view that the social work intervention could stigmatise children and their families:

You know, you may come across some people who may not like the program because its outsiders working with their kids.... Often social work is associated with people needing help. (PPT S)

There's a stigma. (PPT P)

Yeah, some parent might think, 'Hang on, why does my kid need to see a social worker?' Maybe until they get the program they can't see it as support. (PPT R)

I'm not saying ... but some parent thinks that way. (PPT P)

I think sometimes it's (the views that teachers have about families is different to the parent's view) ... you know what a teacher may think is happening with a child and what the parent thinks and their beliefs about things, so that how they react and what they do may be different for a parent than for a teacher. (PPT A)

Like the teachers, the Parent Partnership Team viewed social work programs as advancing the contribution and maintenance of student wellbeing programs in St Paul's School but said that these programs needed more advertising and information exchange with the parent and carer community:

Letting parents know more about the programs. (PPT T)

I am aware of the programs but what they actually do and how effective they are – I'm not sure. (PPT T)

I'm not really familiar with the social work student program. (PPT L)

Finally, the social work students recognised that working with the whole family was critical to their success:

It's been quite different for me [at St Paul's]. This [placement] brings together community life, whether it be family, organisational or personal, we are bringing the community together. (SWS 12)

In summary, the Classroom Program was viewed as contributing to student wellbeing and was a program that the St Paul's students would recommend to other students. Teachers were mixed in their judgement of the Classroom Program. Some viewed it as relieving them of some of the burdens of dealing with academically at risk students, while others expressed concerns that the program lacked clarity, consistency and purpose. While some teachers expressed that some success in social work students' intervention, data also indicated that some teachers felt that the social work students were unable to establish themselves at the school and classrooms or that the teachers were unable to assist the social work students to establish themselves in the school and classrooms. For the Parent Partnership Team feared that the involvement of social workers might lead to the stigmatisation of students and their families.

#### *Playground Program*

Located in the 'curriculum, teaching and learning' and the 'school organisation, ethos and environment' components of the HPS framework and in the intervention and primary prevention levels of the Four Levels of Activity Framework, the Playground Program, introduced in 2003, is a pro social skilling program particularly targeting students' social skills in the playground to teach school safety and respect. Examples of skills taught included 'friendship-making skills', 'how to join a game', 'how to suggest a game' and 'how to deal with being left out'. Social work students were responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating the Playground Program.

All student participants in the Playground Program indicated that it had a positive impact on their time in the playground. Table 6.15 illustrates the high level of student satisfaction with the Playground Program.

Table 6.15: Students' ranking of Playground Program effectiveness (N=20)

The social work students 'made my time in the playground easier'	
Really, really agree	16
Really agree	4

Source: Student survey

The school students also perceived the strength of this program as advancing their social skills and assisting their networking and social capital bridging and building skills:

[It] helped me make friends. (Student 4)

[It] helped me with my problems and helped me make friends. (Student S)

[It] was good because sometimes when I didn't know stuff, the social workers helped me to work it out and I didn't have anyone to play with at playtime. (Student 4)

Regarding the techniques used to teach social skills, one student commented on the importance of being specifically taught pro social skills:

[the social workers] helped me to work it out so that I could play; they made me practice some things ... like how to play and how to ask to play games. (Student 1)

Teachers both supported and were confused about the Playground Program. The survey results showed that, although all the teachers surveyed knew about it, only thirteen teachers had students participating in the program. While, as indicated in Table 6.16, teachers ranked the programs amongst the top six programs, some teachers also indicated that they were unclear about its purpose.

Table 6.16: Teachers' ranking of Playground Program effectiveness (N=18)

Ranking	Frequency
1	3
2	6
3	1
4	6
6	1
9	1

Source: Teacher survey

Confusion about purpose of the Playground Program focussed on social work students' participation in the program. This may suggest that teachers were unclear about the role of social work students and the specific social work skills that is, behavioural intervention that the social work students were employing in the program:

Sometimes [it] is a good thing – sometimes you didn't know why they were there. (Teacher M1).

Alternatively, they may also have held the view that adults on the yard should act like teachers; that is, perform the same supervisory yard duty role as teachers:

Out in the yard – that's a good thing, if they're out in the yard watching, you know they're doing their job. (Teacher S)

In contrast to the teachers, the social work students expressed the view that the goal of the program was to develop both student social skills and a healthy, safe school environment:

It's all about providing a safe environment. (SWS A)



[A] had no one to play with. We started playing a game with her, she was really happy, sure enough almost immediately around seven children came and wanted to join in the game and they all asked [A] for permission ... we could reverse how the other kids saw her, she became part of the friendship group. We could walk away and leave them to it, knowing she had a little more self-confidence. (SWS R)

The Parent Partnership Team contributed no comments or opinions about the effectiveness or otherwise of the Playground Program. Since members of the Parent Partnership Team focus group gave no indication that their child(ren) had participated in the Playground Program, this silence may be attributed to unfamiliarity with the program and/or their reluctance to voice and opinion within the focus group.

In summary, the Playground Program was viewed as furthering social skills and developing social capital within and among the student group. Students, some staff and the social work students assessed the social work students' contribution as a positive input in building up students' social skills and promoting an ethos of safety. Where there were concerns, they focussed on the teachers' knowledge of the program purpose and goal and on professional boundary issues. Some teachers maintained that the social work contribution was positive when it mimicked teaching responsibilities.

#### *Lunch Program*

The Lunch Program, introduced in 1994, is the joint responsibility of teachers, social work students and the principal. Belonging to the primary prevention and intervention cluster of student wellbeing programs, the Lunch Program provided lunches for students who had arrived at school with no food to eat at recess or lunchtime. Students who attended the Breakfast Club and had no packed recess or lunch were able to prepare and pack a sandwich and a piece of fruit for these meals without having to leave the classroom. Staff would send students who had not brought lunch to the social work students, who would discreetly assist them to make a sandwich. The students would then return to the classroom to rejoin their peers, free to participate in lunch-time activities. Such practices aimed to reduce and address the prospect of student stigmatisation.

Social work students kept note of how many times a student would come without lunch and if this happened on three consecutive days (an arbitrary number set as a trigger), they would then alert the principal. This alert triggered the primary prevention aspect of the Four Levels of Activity (DEET 1998). The principal contacted the family (usually by phone and, if acceptable by the parent/carer, by a home visit) and offered the assistance of the school. Assistance offered was the provision of a packed lunch, permission for the students to access the Breakfast Club

and preparing a packed lunch before they set off for school; accepting a weekly food basket of bread, pies, pasties and pastries; or paying money in advance to the school canteen which the student could use to order lunch as needed. Principles of empowerment, inclusion, self-determination and compensating for individual or family deprivation underpinned this practice (Smith, R 1993).

The Lunch Program was funded through various charities and local partnerships. This funding assisted with the program's provision of basic food items for students who came without a packed lunch. Both teachers and students viewed the the provision of the food baskets and management plans for financially struggling families as important and necessary

Overall 58 per cent of the teachers participating in this research knew of students who had used the Lunch Program or had referred them to it, while 42 per cent had not known about the Lunch Program but had referred students to the Breakfast Club. The teachers did not comment on the social justice issues that may have contributed to the arrival of students at school without lunch.

When ranking the importance of the Lunch Program in the Model thirteen (72%) teachers, as indicated by Table 6.17, gave it a low ranking that is, less than five.

Table 6.17: Teachers' ranking of effectiveness of the Lunch Program (*N*= 18)

Ranking	Frequency
3	1
4	1
5	3
6	6
7	4
8	1
10	1
11	1

Source: Teacher surveys

These rankings may indicate that teachers do not consider providing material aide as integral to their teaching roles, the social work program, or the school's need to address issues of disadvantage among the school community.

Social work students, in contrast, applying a critical perspective, viewed the program from a social justice perspective, reporting that its purpose was to address and redress social inequality:

You know, I read the [news]paper differently now. I have to think about how stuff affects schools, kids and families. (SWS 13)  
These kids are marginalised. As social workers, we have to work from an anti-oppressive approach to help address some of these issues. (SWS 2)  
The Lunch Program was important for those families that didn't have stuff. (SWS 2)  
It's not right that students come to school without lunch – I didn't know families couldn't feed their kids. (SWS 8)

Other social work students recognised the need not to expose the students to stigmatisation:

It gave kids a chance to get some lunch without others knowing. (SWS A)  
[Z] was meant to come to our office to get some food for playtime because he didn't have any. Usually he comes, so we were a bit worried and went to look for him. But we didn't want to tell other kids why he comes each day. We finally found him out in the yard: apparently one of the teachers had made a sandwich for him. (SWS R)

The Parent Partnership Team returned no information about the Lunch Program although all knew about its existence. This silence may indicate that they had no view on the program or and/or that they accepted the program as being an unremarkable program to include in the Model's structure. In fact, records indicate that the general parent and carer population, Parent Partnership Team Members included, were comfortable with donating provisions to the Breakfast Club (St Paul's 1994–2005). The next section examines the Transition and Classroom assignment programs.

#### *Transition Program and Classroom Assignment*

A primary and early intervention program, the Transition Program, introduced in 2000, was specific to the prep classes and focussed on the incoming five year olds from local kindergartens. Using developmental theories, the program involved social work students working with classroom teachers to assess, over four week, the readiness of incoming students.

Social work students worked with prep and specialist teachers conducting small group activities and assessing key physical, social and academic indicators. The assessments contributed to classroom placement and allocation criteria for the following academic year. While the children were being assessed parent partnership team members and the principal worked with the parents and carers, facilitating their networking, uniform sales, curriculum information and other activities as planned from year to year. This involvement of the parent team exemplified the roles of organiser and advocate in Epstein (1995) that parents and carers can play. It was also underpinned by the principles contained in the CEOM (2006) and HPS (2001) frameworks: enhancing parents' and carers' social capital and facilitating networks and partnerships among and between families, school and the wider community.

The Transition Program was a prep-orientation program. This program combined the skills of teachers, social workers and members of the parent partnership team who together facilitated the assessment and classroom placement of the incoming preps while running parallel information sessions for the prep parent and carers.

The teachers were all familiar with the program but they expressed no views about it in the focus group. Teachers who were or had been prep teachers were most conversant with the program, purpose and content. The proximity of prep teachers to this program may account for its overall teacher ranking at the lower end of program importance, aggregated in the medium range, typically a ranking of between five and eight. Table 6.18 over the page presents teacher ranking of the program.

Table 6.18: Teachers' ranking of the effectiveness of the Transition Program (N=18)

Ranking	Frequency
4	1
5	1
6	3
7	4
8	2
9	2
10	5

Source: Teacher surveys

Classroom assignment involved the collaboration of social work students and teachers. Theoretical perspectives on human development and the knowledge of the impact that position in family has on personality and group functioning were used annually in arranging the class cohorts for the following year. Class teachers and social works students were responsible for preparing 'position in family' profiles which was used as one criterion when allocating class cohorts. Other factors were a gender balance, a language and culture balance, a special needs balance, academic proficiency and academic aptitude.

Parents and carers were given the opportunity to work with teachers in deciding class allocation for their children. In response to the newsletter items, parents and carers also had the opportunity to contribute their thoughts on their children's classroom assignment. Parents and

carers would discuss their requests with the teacher and principal and these views would be considered in the decision making processes (St Paul's 1994–2005a).

Social work students who had participated in the Transition and Classroom assignment activities typically saw that it required a working knowledge of child development theory and its relationship to student achievement and contributed to their professional knowledge:

My knowledge of childhood development was really stretched. (SWS 1)

I had to know what to look for when I was assessing kids in the Transition Program. (SWS 10)

The link between the Transition program, assessment and other Model components was drawn by some social work students:

Assessments are about the social as well as the academic readiness of kids to start school. (SWS A)

I am certain that [D] will need referral to the social skills program when he starts. He finds it hard to settle, he found it hard to settle and follow direction in the transition sessions (SWS R)

Social work students also had an opportunity to engage with parents and carers during the Swimming Program.

### *Swimming Program*

This Swimming Program, introduced in 2000, targeted the 'organisation, ethos and environment' and 'curriculum, teaching and learning ellipse of the HPS framework. This ten-day intensive program involved the social work students accompanying teachers, parents and carers, and classes to the swimming pool. While there the social work students assisted students negotiate prosocial skills such as dressing, acting safely around water and safe movement around the pool. Parents and carers were encouraged to attend the Swimming Program and their attendance was regarded as a key community, social capital building opportunity for the school.

Parent and carer attendance also addressed community isolation and allowed parents and carers and teachers have informal contact with each other in ways that would respect the family culture and child-rearing practices. Parents and carers (and often grandparents) valued seeing their children participate in swimming. The inclusion and welcoming of parents and carers also allayed their fears of their children's participation in this activity since for some children, such as the African children, swimming was a new experience. As shown in Table 6.19 teachers ranked the involvement of social work in the Swimming Program at the lower end of the scale indicating perhaps an unfamiliarity of the social skilling that the social workers did with individual students.

Table 6.19: Teachers' ranking of the effectiveness of the Swimming Program (N=18)

Ranking	Frequency
7	2
8	4
9	8
10	2
11	2

Source: Teacher surveys

None of the participants conceived of the Swimming Program as falling in the cluster of student wellbeing programs. Teachers, Parent Partnership Team members and social work students alike may have seen the program as having no efficacy in forming partnerships and networks with and among parents and carers, as offering no opportunity for building social capital with and among the school community and as having no potential for building the students' social skills.

#### *Referral to the Welfare Committee*

The St Paul's Welfare Committee received concerns about a student's social, emotional, physical or academic progress. The Welfare Committee comprised the special needs teacher, the principal (or her delegate), the referring classroom teacher, the literacy teacher and, in 2001 began to include social work students. Using case planning principles, the Welfare Committee meeting set the direction of the intervention and allocated responsibilities accordingly. Referrals to St Paul's Model programs, for example, SEASONS program and Homework Club came via the St Paul's Welfare Committee.

While twelve (66%) of teachers involved in this research had referred students to the Welfare Committee, only eight (44%) viewed the involvement of social work students as an integral part of the Committee's work.

#### *Policy writing and research and submission writing*

Research, policy development and submission writing were ongoing activities that were seen as making a key contribution to the school by social work students. Between the years 1994 and 2005, social work students assisted in audits, classroom assignments, special events and policy, research and submission writing. Each of these areas called on distinct social work skills and knowledge and called on input from school stakeholders. The goal of each research project was to gather evidence about student wellbeing programs and about the social, economic and

cultural determinants that contributed to student wellbeing so as to develop further school based approaches to student wellbeing. Research, Policy development and submission writing undertaken by the social work students 1994 to 2005 included: Bullying audits, Participation of Vietnamese parent and carers, Enrolment Policy, Out Of Hours School Care Program, Submission writing.

#### *Bullying audits*

Alongside discipline plans, a teachers' Code of Conduct (St Paul's 2005d), training in protective behaviour, personal safety programs and whole school approaches to behaviour management, proformas (Appendix 19) were introduced to assist students to reflect on their relationships (St Paul's School 2005b). Using restorative principles, the pro forma was issued to students who had used offensive language, engaged in rough play endangering others, put themselves or others at risk, attempted to extort money or items from their peers, excluded other students from activities or caused them physical harm.

As indicated in Table 6.20 over the page, St Paul's parents and carers viewed St Paul's as a safe environment.

Table 6.20: Parents' survey on environmental safety (by percentages of respondents, N=228)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
St Paul's has effective networks of care for staff, students and families	71	25	4		
St Paul's 'is a welcoming place'	96	3	1		
[The school] cares about families'	86	11	1	2	
[St Paul's] staff are always ready to discuss worries about [their] children	94	5			
St Paul's is a great school; there is a fantastic community feel and a strong family environment	98	1	1		

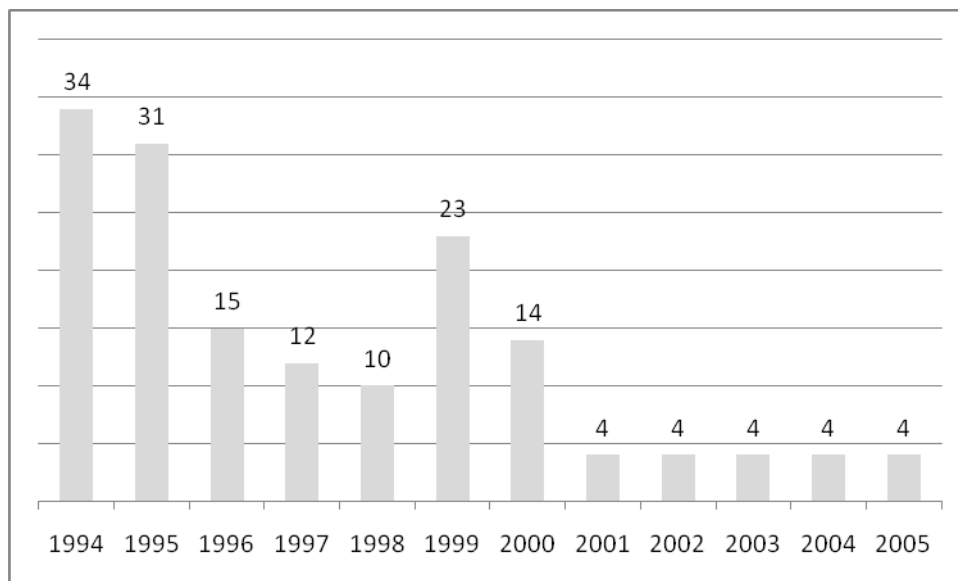
Source: Parent survey (St Paul's 2005b)

The research activity of social work students contributed to maintaining and developing a safe school environment. Social work students were responsible for conducting research into the effectiveness of school attempts to create a safe environment (St Paul's 2004, 2005b). Firstly, social work students were responsible for carrying out annual audits to ensure that the school ethos was maintained and that the school remained safe. These audits included research into the

distribution of proformas<sup>31</sup> by type as well as research into the overall safety of the school environment. The aim of monitoring student behaviour and implementing audits was to be proactive in the development of a school ethos marked by the values of respect, welcome, safety and mutual respect, all of which are determinants of wellbeing and constitutive of a HPS.

Social work research conducted between 1994 and 2005, found a decrease in the number of bullying incidents in the student records. As Figure 6.6 shows, over time the number of proformas issued to students for bullying incidents had decreased by 12 per cent.

Figure 6.6: Proformas issued for bullying incidents 1994–2005



Source: St Paul's policy audits (2005c)

This decrease in reported bullying may indicate that student transgressions decreased in response to (a) the combination of formal personal safety programs; (b) consistent teacher approaches to behaviour management that reinforced acceptable standards of behaviour; (c) an increase in the social capital between and among the students; (d) the referral of students engaging in bullying to the social skills and Playground Programs; or (e) a combination of the all these items.

<sup>31</sup> Proformas are reflection sheets that students are given to complete as part of the discipline plan (see Appendix 19).



Secondly, social work students formally researched the implementation of the bullying policy in 1999 and again in 2005. In 1999 social work student researchers (2005b) found that 90 per cent of the staff believed that the bullying policy was effective in keeping students safe and that it complemented classroom safety programs. The same research found that students were aware of what bullying was and were able to identify bullying, and that St Paul's staff responded to their safety concerns. In 2005, repeating the 1999 research into the effectiveness of the bullying policy, 95 per cent of the staff reported that the school dealt with bullying behaviour in a timely and effective manner:

Bullying is not a problem at this school in that we know what it is, name it and try to deal with it. It is important for us to promote safety for our children. The environment has definitely changed for the better over the years. (Teacher B)

It does occur but it is not out of hand. (Teacher W)

It's dealt with effectively, much less of an issue at this school than at others. (Teacher K)

Five of the teachers felt that the implementation of the bullying policy depended on the teacher's familiarity with it and consistency in dealing with bullying:

I think we need to be consistent with how we, as a school, deal with the issues. What are the procedures? (Teacher C)

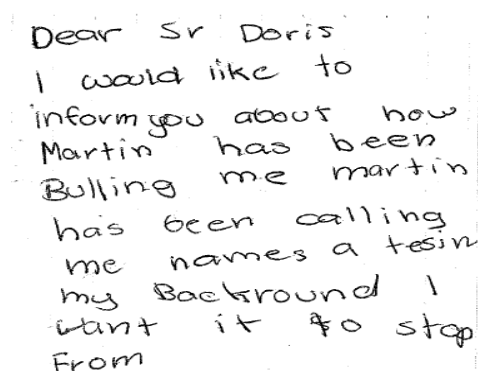
Newer teachers may not know the procedures. (Teacher A)

A lot of teachers have different ways of dealing with bullying. We need to be consistent. (Teacher M)

Additionally school records indicate that following both audits efforts were made to review how teachers understood and implemented the bullying policy and how structures could be implemented to reflect consistency amongst teacher approaches to the safety programs in the school. These attempts included training new staff in protective behaviour, revisiting of bullying policies annually and presenting the audit information every year at staff meetings, together with the adoption of a Staff Code Of Conduct (St Paul's 2005c).

In addition to whole school audits and policy reviews, classroom bullying audits were also formally structured into the classroom health promotion and health action of the Model. All students had the opportunity to report bullying incidents and concerns anonymously to teachers, social work students, the principal, or the deputy principal. Figure 6.7 shows an example of such reporting.

Figure 6.7: Student reporting of bullying (name withheld)



A photograph of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in dark ink and reads: 'Dear Sr Doris I would like to inform you about how Martin has been Bulling me martin has been calling me names a tesin my Background I want it to stop From'.

Source: Personal communication to Sr. Doris Testa (2004)

From a critical perspective, giving individual students the opportunity to voice their concerns and express victimisation empowered them as individuals, skilled them on how to take action, validated their belief that they could take action on their own behalf and confirmed that people in authority would take their concerns seriously.

From a cross-disciplinary perspective, identifying empowerment as social health determinant and as a precondition to learning, social work students used evidence-based practice to inform the school community on how social connectedness and inclusion could be developed at school.,.

#### *Participation of Vietnamese parents and carers*

In 1996, social work students undertook research exploring how Vietnamese parents and carers viewed the chance of participating in their children's schooling. Aware that such participation needed to be culturally sensitive and that Vietnamese parents and carers may have different perceptions and expectations of schools from mainstream Australians, this research resulted in putting in place a more culturally sensitive school practice. Specifically, it led to an increase in the hours that the Vietnamese teacher aide worked, to a policy decision that the newsletter would continue to be translated into Vietnamese and that Vietnamese interpreters would be present at every school meeting held at the school (St Paul's 1996).

#### *Enrolment policy*

Social work students, in 2001, researched two aspects of the St Paul's enrolment process: parents' and carers' individual experiences and opinions of the enrolment process and secondly, the reasons why parents and carers chose St Paul's School. St Paul's research (2001) confirmed

that the enrolment process was inclusive, that the Catholicity and reputation of the school were important in parents' and carers' decision to enrol their children at St Paul's and that the staff was welcoming and warm, again showing that the school has values that are consistent with welcome, inclusivity and religiosity.

#### *Out of-hours-school-care-program (OHSC)*

The social work students were responsible for examining the viability of the program and the subsequent development of the OHSC program. In collaboration with the principal, social work students used both quantitative and qualitative methods, successfully facilitating the infrastructure required for the establishment of the OHSC. These tasks included networking with the relevant government agencies, establishing parent and carer meetings to discuss the viability of the OHSC and drafting the necessary policy and program documents in line with State government program guidelines and requirements (St Paul's 2004). The OHSC program successfully opened in October 2004 and was continuing in 2010, when it was extended its operations to include before as well as after school. Submission writing and the Special Events program also included social work students. The next sections describe the both involvements.

#### *Submission writing*

The availability of social students meant that the school could seek out resources both for individual students and for the whole school that would offset social and economic disadvantage. During 1996 and 2005, social work students were successful in sourcing funding for both individual students and for whole school activities. As shown in Table 6.21, this success meant that the school was able to bring into school activities resources and skills that were unavailable in the parent and carer population. This annual pursuit of funding also sustained partnerships between community groups and agencies for examples with the Brigidine Sisters and the SFYS.

Table 6.21: Funding submissions 1996–2005

Year	Auspice	Funding for
1996	SFYS and Brigidine Sisters	School production of 'Joseph' Three students to attend school camp The Breakfast Club
1998	Brigidine Sisters	School production of the 'Wizard of Oz'
2000	Brigidine Sisters	School production: 'Bats'
2002	Brigidine Sisters and SFYS	School production and financial support for two students to attend school camp
2003	SFYS	Playground program Funding for student to attend school camp
2004	Brigidine Sisters	School production 'Bats'
2005	Clive Peters, Sunshine Magistrates Court, Ruby's Bar	Breakfast Club

Source: Validation review (St Paul's)

Adding to the activities aimed at strengthening the school organisation, ethos environment was the special events program.

### *Special Events Program*

Special events referred to the ad hoc activities involving the input of social work students. These activities included the annual attendance at school camp, organising a photo board for the school's 2005 golden jubilee celebrations, collecting aural and visual histories of generational attendance at the school and assisting in school theatrical productions. In 2005, social work students also worked with the artist in residence to involve the wider parent and carer community prepare a school mural celebrating the school's golden jubilee. Social work students contributed to the operation of special events. Working side by side with teachers, social work students participated in school camps, school theatrical productions and school celebrations. Tasks undertaken by social work students included, with the permission of the parents and carers, preparing photo boards of generations of families who had attended the school for inclusion on the school's fiftieth anniversary concert DVD. Figure 6.8 shows an example of the intergenerational photos that were prepared for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert DVD.

Figure 6.8: Intergenerational photos



Source: St Paul's School 50<sup>th</sup> Year anniversary concert DVD (used with permission of the parents and carers)

Social work students also worked with the artist in residence to organise the primary school students and the adult community to prepare illustrations that would depict the St Paul's school ethos and would be painted on the panels and posts. Figure 6.9 is one such example of this community engagement.

Figure 6.9: Artist in residence 2005



Source: reproduced from *Catholics Today* (Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2006a)

The social work students also helped with school theatrical productions, held biannually. This was a major community development initiative that involved many parent and carer groups in the school. As indicated in the personal communications to the principal, the inclusion of social work students in the cultural activities of the school had a positive impact on how they viewed

school aged children on how the school managed its scarce resources to develop the artistic skills of the its students:

We helped children get ready for ‘Godspell’ and supervised them. I didn’t realise the children were so talented. There were so many good singers. (SWS10)

The school developed a reputation as a major player in education with its drama productions. To be able to produce performances that much more highly funded schools would love is something the school should be proud of. (SWS 17)

The Special Events programs of the Model aimed to build positive relationships with and amongst the community members. The next section uses data gathered from archival and primary sources to describe how the Model and its program components reflected compliance with the HPS, DEET, AASW health promoting and student wellbeing frameworks as well as the Model’s synergy with the CEOM student wellbeing strategy.

### **Cross-disciplinary collaboration: Teachers and social worker students**

As discussed in Chapter Four there has been growing recognition that cross-disciplinary collaboration has grown in most health and social care settings. The Model involved both teachers and/or social workers in all or some of the twelve program components.

Data indicated that the contribution of social work to the Model enabled the introduction, over time, of programs that responded to a range of student wellbeing issues. As indicated in Table 6.22, the Model created the capacity to introduce student programs not otherwise possible because of resource – human and other – gaps that flowed from the social, economic, educational and cultural disadvantage of St Paul’s School.

Table 6.22: Social work and student wellbeing programs by year introduced

<b>Social work contribution to the St Paul's Model</b>	<b>Program start</b>
Lunch Programs	1994
Classroom Programs	1994
Breakfast Club	1994
Participation in School Camp Program	1995
Research: 'Vietnamese Participation in St Paul's School'	1996
Submission writing	1996
SEASONS	1997
Research: bullying audit	1999
Transition Program	2000
Swimming Program	2000
Welfare committee referrals	2001
Research: parent/carer experiences of the enrolment processes	2001
Special programs and SFYS representation	2002
Playground Program	2003
Homework Club Program	2004
After School Hours Care Program and policy development	2004
Community building – Artist in Residence Program and Jubilee celebrations	2005
Research: Breakfast Club report	2005
Research: bullying audit	2005

Source: St Paul's Review (2005d)

Further, as indicated in Table 6.22, as the number of social work students increased so did the capacity of St Paul's school to add programs to the Model. Data also indicated that the introduction of social work to the student wellbeing programs also ensured that programs, once introduced, were sustained in the Model (St Paul's 2005d; Victorian Government 2002).

However, data relating to the effectiveness of the social work contribution, vis-à-vis cross-disciplinary collaboration, was varied across St Paul's staff.

As shown in Table 6.23 teacher surveys indicated that a majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that social work students added positively to their work and that they were supportive in relieving them of some of the pressures of negotiating their students' social emotional issues, for example, grief and loss and social skills.

Table 6.23: Teacher assessment of social work contribution in (N=18)

	<b>S/A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>S/D</b>
Social work students assisted child[ren] to participate more effectively in classroom learning	3	11	4	0	0
Social work students assisted the teacher to attend to her/his task of teaching	3	9	3	3	0
Social work students implemented the social skills program with success	6	11	1	0	0
The social skills program assisted some students more than others	3	11	3	1	0
Social work students worked in partnership with the classroom teacher to assist individual students	3	8	4	3	0
Social work students were able to work with students in ways supportive of teaching and learning programs	3	7	3	3	0
Social work students were able to interact with children with purpose and direction	6	9	1	0	0
Over time, Social work students were able to understand how children learn and how they could best support teaching and learning programs	6	8	3	1	0
Social work students established positive and purposeful working relationships with St Paul's staff	3	11	4	0	0

Source: Teacher survey

For teachers, though, the contribution of social workers and the formation of a cross-disciplinary collaboration was valued when it was a particular type of social work contribution; that is, when it was one step removed from their own teaching programs and responsibilities. They indicated that social work contributions to wellbeing programs were more effective when they were early intervention, intervention and post-intervention programs or took place outside the classroom; namely, the Breakfast, Lunch and SEASONS programs. Programs that teachers accepted less readily were those that involved social work students in the classroom working alongside teachers in roles that the latter perceived as belonging to their own discourse namely, the Classroom Program, Referral to Welfare, the Homework Club and Playground program. These views were reflected in teacher's ranking of programs. Table 6.24 shows the teachers' aggregated ranking of the Model components.



Table 6.24: Aggregate ranking of program by importance per cent (N=20)

Teacher ranking	Program	Percentage	In class	Outside classroom
High (1–4)	Playground Program	4.45		✓
	Breakfast Program	83		✓
	Lunch Program	16.6		✓
	Swimming Program	15.6		✓
Medium (5–8)	SEASONS Program	15.6		✓
	Transition Program	15.4		✓
	Homework Club	56		✓
	Policy Writing	12.4	✓	
Low (9–12)	Classroom Program	11.2	✓	
	Special Events	7	✓	
	Referral to Welfare	6.8	✓	
	Other	11	✓	

Source: Teacher surveys

Overall, teachers, indicating their preference that the social work contribution to programs that were outside the classroom arena also indicated the features of the Model that they perceived to both facilitate and hinder the social work contribution to the Paul's Model. These features, which emerged from focus group and survey data, are discussed in the next section.

*Social work contribution – factors that enabled and empowered, hindered or constrained*

The social work prevention, early intervention, intervention and post-intervention programs offered in the Model attempted to reduce barriers to learning and improve interactions between children, the school, the home and the community environment. It did so by addressing the socio-ecological determinants in the child's life and the discrepancy between the child's life circumstances and the demands of the school environment. The reduction of disadvantage is consistent with the aims of social work, as articulated by McKinnon *et al.* (2004), Rimmer *et al.* (1984) and AASW. Further, the Model, in combining the social interaction and community model of social work and by including social work discourse in its formal and professional arrangements, gave all stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the fabric of school operations, whatever their socioeconomic status.

Thematic alignment of responses to the last two questions on the teacher and social work student surveys asking respondents to think about the factors that enabled or empowered and/or constrained and hindered the social work contribution to the Model returned differing perspectives.

When teacher and Parent Partnership Team focus group data and survey data and teacher, social work student, Parent Partnership Team and field education coordinator surveys were arranged using cluster coding, initially by theme the factors that facilitated and/or empowered the social work contribution to wellbeing programs. Then sub themes, three sub themes emerged: cross-disciplinary relationships, social work expert knowledge and skill and the availability of human and material resources. Table 6.25 lists the themes and theme attributes.

Table 6.25: Factors that enabled/empowered social work contribution (N=32)

Enabling/empowering themes	Combined frequency
Cross-disciplinary collaboration Community development skills were brought to the program Freed teachers to teach Positive relationships between teachers and social workers Social work contribution was non-stigmatising Social work students had good rapport with children	25
Social work expert knowledge Social workers brought social work expertise to programs Social work students could bring different insights to program	3
Increased availability of human, material resources Access to agency contacts not otherwise known to school Increased capacity to apply for funding Introduction of programs otherwise not available to students	4

Source: Teacher, social work student, Parent Partnership Team, field education coordinator surveys

When teacher and Parent Partnership Team focus group data and survey data and teacher, social work student, Parent Partnership Team and field education coordinator surveys were arranged using cluster coding the factors that that constrained or hindered the social work contribution to student wellbeing programs, three subthemes emerged: cross-disciplinary relationships, program delivery and the fear of stigmatisation. Table 6.26 lists the themes and theme attributes.

Table 6.26: Factors that constrained/hindered social work contribution (*N*=28)

Constraining/hindering themes	Combined frequency
Cross-disciplinary collaboration Different understandings about program goals, components Inconsistency, lack of clarity and goals of social work input Isolation of social work students No time to meet School culture intimidating for some social work students	15
Program delivery inconsistency of performance and competence in social work students input of social work program contribution too short	8
Stigmatisation Fear of stigmatisation of children and their families	5

Source: Teacher, social work student, Parent Partnership, field education coordinator surveys

Overall, as Table 6.25 and 6.26 indicate, when assessing the effectiveness of the cross-disciplinary collaboration, participants evidenced varying levels of satisfaction. Reflecting disparate views on the collaboration, interdependence, group processing and interaction between and amongst the teachers and social work students, all of which have been recognised as integral to effective cross-disciplinary collaboration participants named similar factors in both categories, for example, lack of stigmatisation/fear of stigmatisation.

Additionally Table 6.27 summarises focus group and survey qualitative data collected from the research participants. When cluster coding this data it was possible to extract the main themes that emerged reflecting the HPS framework as well the positive and negative attributes of the Model as to these positive and negative attributes that impacted on the different aspects of the HPS framework.

As Table 6.27 shows, while the Model positively included all aspects of the HPS framework and had programs that addressed the socio-ecological determinants of health, the Model's ethos, organisation and environment and the curriculum teaching and learning arrangements of the Model were the areas in which the cross-disciplinary collaboration was most negatively represented. Finally the next section concludes this data chapter and discusses the use of case study and summarises the findings.

Table 6.27: Cluster coding and thematic arrangement of data using HPS framework

Organisation, ethos and environment	Curriculum, teaching and learning	Partnerships and services
Positives		
Addressed social, economic, cultural disadvantage Built social and cultural capital amongst stakeholder groups Safe environment Non discriminatory Inclusive	Addressed social, emotional and educational issues Enabling, empowering leadership Student focussed Students able to attend to learning Extra support for teachers Access to skills and knowledge outside the teaching discourse Evidence Based Practice	Inclusive of parent and carers Formed partnerships across time Reliant on wider community Accessed resources available in wider community
Negatives		
Difficult culture for social work students to negotiate Professional boundaries	Unfamiliarity of Model purpose and program goals Time limited, inconsistent or contested interventions Rigid interdisciplinary boundaries and expectations Fear of stigmatisation	School had to source social, cultural and economic resources Sponsorship for some programs was time limited

Source: Student, teacher, Parent Partnership surveys and focus group data, field education coordinator and social work student surveys.

### Rest note

This chapter presented the case study, St Paul's Model. Researching the Model sought to answer *RQ: Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; (b) effective in addressing and promoting wellbeing? And (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

Using both quantitative and qualitative data the case study returned thick descriptions of how the Model impacted on teaching, on the school's capacity to develop and sustain student wellbeing programs and how social work could contribute, or not, to student wellbeing programs. In doing so this data presented in this chapter found that:

1. The socioeconomic and cultural circumstances of St Paul's school evidenced social, economic, educational and cultural disadvantage which could place limitations on the social, economic, educational resources available to the student wellbeing programs. Data also indicated that outcome-based education discourse impacted on

teachers' ability to be engaged in student wellbeing programs. Data indicated that teachers find it difficult to balance the outcome-based education requirements and health promoting school discourse and subsequently making it difficult for teachers to attend to both student wellbeing and student achievement.

2. The Model had congruence with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse and that data evidenced aspects of the WHO's (1991) health promoting school (HPS) framework, the DEET's (1998) 'Four Levels of Activity' and the AASW's (2006) Practice Standards for School Social Workers frameworks. Additionally data evidenced synergy with the CEOM's (2006b) 'One Body, Many Parts' strategic plan. Data also indicated that the ethos, environment and organisation of St Paul's School reflected values consistent with the HPS discourse, as well as resonance with CST and AASW values and ethics.
3. The Model, while addressing the social, emotional and cultural aspects of student wellbeing the effectiveness of Model's twelve program components, particularly the contribution of social work to those components, was judged differently by the different stakeholders. Data indicated that this judgment was referenced within the position, the professional boundaries and expectations held by each stakeholder group within the Model. Students identified programs as contributing to their social and emotional wellbeing and the requirements of their learning programs by addressing some aspects of their socioeconomic disadvantage. Teachers named the social work contribution to early intervention and intervention programs as more acceptable than intervention that they perceived as belonging to the teaching discourse. Teachers were also found to enforce strict professional boundaries and expectations, clearly delineating between teaching and social work tasks. Social work students could apply a critical perspective lens to the Model's agency and articulate the Model's attempts to address and redress socioeconomic, educational and cultural disadvantage and could also see the benefits of their contribution to the social, economic and cultural disadvantage of the school community. In contrast to field education coordinators, who considered the Model as offering a non stigmatising, community development contribution to the Model, the Parent Partnership Team, while appreciating the support that Model offered time poor teachers, worried about the stigmatising effect that social workers may have on some sections of the school population.

4. The contribution of social work to the Model and the cross-disciplinary approach adopted in the Model, had structures that impacted both positively and negatively on its effectiveness. Positively, by virtue of their unique position in the school, social workers used their skills in advocacy, direct casework, research and community development to contribute to school policy and practice. In focussing on collective, as well as individual issues, through, for example, bullying audits, homework programs and school theatrical productions, the social work contribution could be framed around the socio-ecological determinants of health, adding their efforts to the reduction of social disadvantage among St Paul's school students, families and school communities. Negatively, data indicated that while teachers worked alongside social work students, the Model lacked elements of cross-disciplinary collaboration that is, interdependence, group processing and interaction.

Finally, what this case study did not set out to find but which became evident was that the Model, which developed organically over a twelve-year period, pre dated or paralleled the development of the Health promoting discourse. WHO's (1991), health promoting school declarations, the School Focused Youth Service strategy (2009b), AASW Standards of School Workers (2006), DEECD's (2005) Primary Welfare Initiative and the CEOM (2006b) student wellbeing strategy were as such examples. Moreover, what this case study did not set out to find but which became evident was the usefulness and richness of case study as a methodology.

As described in the introduction, case study methodology is underrepresented in social work research and undertaking a case study was choosing to navigate unfamiliar territory (Ryan & Sheehan 2009). However, this decision was validated by the richness of the data that was assembled during the research. The case study returned what Yin (2009) and Stake (2000) maintain as the strength of such a methodology: rich evidence of 'how', 'what' and 'why' in an area not previously researched. From this perspective, this case study confidently contributes to the area of social work practice not previously researched: social work and its contribution to the health promoting school. What this case study found was that by understanding the 'how', 'what' and 'why' at the micro level of school structures what also became evident was the cross-disciplinary attitudes, cross-disciplinary knowledge and cross-disciplinary skills that would provide a reference point for the future development of cross-disciplinary collaborative frameworks.

By using a methodology not popular within the social work discourse, this research charts a way forward for how school based social workers, attempting to reclaim and showcase the diversity of their expert skills and knowledge, can demonstrate the value of cross-disciplinary approaches to student wellbeing programs.

Further, using case study methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to research arrangements at the micro level of health promotion, has the potential to return evidence of both the efficacy and the effectiveness of the social work contribution to health promoting schools. This evidence will advance the case for the social work role in schools to move beyond simply providing case work to a more socio ecologically focussed and community engaged practice.

The next chapter, 'Accompanying Notes: Hindrances and Harmonies' expands on the findings of this and previous chapters and discusses the research findings and their implications for future social work contributions to student wellbeing programs. The chapter ends with recommendations for further research.

## Chapter 7: Accompanying notes: hindrances and harmonies

In the belief that two discourses – teaching and social work – could combine their expert skills and knowledge and develop a social health model alongside a schooling system underpinned by the outcome-based education (OBE) discourse, this research examined the St Paul's Model (1994–2005). The model is one example of an attempt by one Victorian Catholic primary school to introduce the social work discourse into the school's formal and professional student wellbeing programs. Researching the St Paul's Model ('the Model') sought to discover three things as contemplated in the research question: RQ *Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; (b) effective in addressing and promoting wellbeing? And (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

Addressing the research question and drawing on the data presented in Chapter Six, this chapter:

1. Summarises chapters two to four revisiting the current discourses and associated global, national and local policies and practices that impact on and inform student wellbeing, particularly the OBE and health promoting school (HPS) discourses in Victorian Government and Catholic schools and the history, the role and the contribution of school social work to student wellbeing in Victorian government schools.
2. Addresses each research question in turn and references them in both the literature review and the research findings.
3. Discusses the implications of the research findings for other schools who may want to locate the contribution of social work within school based student wellbeing programs.
4. Makes recommendations for further research and signals, by providing a framework for developing effective cross-disciplinary collaboration, how this research may be developed into the future.



As stated in earlier chapters, this research **does not** concern itself with student achievement and thus this chapter restricts the discussion to the formal and professional ways in which student wellbeing can benefit from a student wellbeing model that uses HPS principles and frameworks and the contribution from social work students to address student wellbeing.

### **Summary: Revisiting the literature review**

An examination of the Model necessitated an exploration of the two discourses that underpin twenty-first century Australian schooling: the OBE and the HPS discourses. I argued that both discourses are concerned with students obtaining the necessary skills that would enable them to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of society as well as key factors in addressing social, economic and cultural disadvantage.

Using a critical inquiry lens as the theoretical base for the analysis of global, state and local student achievement and student wellbeing policies and practices, Chapter Two examined how globalisation and economic and school reform were intertwined and how the OBE discourse makes close links between the financial security and economic competitiveness of the nation state and individual prosperity. National prosperity was argued as dependent on a highly skilled workforce and thus schooling, as the place where these skills are acquired, was argued as being pivotal to providing such a workforce (Donnelly 2007; Gillard 2008). Next school reform was examined from the Victorian perspective. Beginning with Kennett's marketisation reform agenda of accountability, accuracy and effectiveness and the consequences of this agenda for schooling that is, the increasing articulation of OBE policy and associated standards, testing and accountability regimen, the pros and cons of OBE were examined. The former position argued that OBE provides all students equal opportunity to achieve the same standard of educational outcomes and eventual social, economic and cultural rewards for themselves and their nation state. The opposite position argued that OBE's pursuit of equality of opportunity for all students does not necessarily translate to success for all students. Rather literature showed that OBE has the potential to alienate some students since equality of opportunity fails to account for the structural impediments, for example, low socioeconomic status, low stores of cultural capital, that frustrate the access to and realisation of these opportunities and can thus further reinforce disadvantage (Apple 2004b; Boxely 2003; Lynch & Moran 2006).

This argument was situated in literature that showed that those with the least social, cultural and economic resources in society do not, on average, overcome the hurdle of initial low academic achievement and that social class differential remains a powerful indicator of subsequent educational achievement. For students unable to draw on high stores of cultural capital it was

argued that schools potentially reproduce and further differentiate individuals along class lines. Middle-class parents and carers using their own knowledge and skills are more able to convert their economic and social capital into cultural capital through their informal networks, collective bonds and contacts and their ability to work the system. This much has been shown in international studies such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Lokan, Greenwood & Cresswell 2001).

PISA reported that Australian schools, despite government policies into what, when and how schools are to achieve, continue to miss international benchmarks in the educational achievement of socially disadvantaged students. Victorian reports echo PISA's findings. For example, Lamb's (2004) report to the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet found that student performance is strongly linked to student background and that a high concentration of middle-class parents and high achieving students provides certain schools with the platform on which they can build successful outcomes. Chapter Two also examined the role of Catholic schools in the current OBE policy context. Following a brief history of Catholic schooling in Australia, I argued that Catholic schools have both a responsibility to ensure that students do well academically and also a responsibility, as directed by CST, to ensure that students and school communities are not further socially or culturally differentiated along lines of class by the OBE requirements.

Next Chapter Three reviewed literature concerning student wellbeing. Literature demonstrated that students' social, emotional, economic, cultural, physical and spiritual resources have been shown to be integral to student wellbeing as it is positively associated with improved outcomes in other aspects of schooling for example, connectedness and academic achievement (Cahill & Freeman 2006; Keleher, Murphy & MacDougall 2007; Withers & Russell 1998). The development of student wellbeing, then, provided students with the basic skills for success, not just in school but ultimately in their personal, professional and civic lives. This being the case, the research examined the school's role in promoting and developing student wellbeing. To do this the thesis compared the biomedical and the socio-ecological approaches to and understandings of health. This comparison was contextualised within the World Health Organisation's (WHO) broader global health policy charters and meetings. The Ottawa Chapter was named as defining the key principles and actions of health promotion and as framing how school health promotion was to advance.

Chapter Three argued that the HPS discourse, formally conceptualised in WHO's Sundsvall conference, was accepted internationally and nationally as a model on which to base health

promotion in schools. I argued that the HPS discourse and framework offered a comprehensive, systematic approach to health promotion in the school setting. Focussing on three areas: organisation, ethos and environment; curriculum and teaching and learning; and partnerships and services, the HPS framework included such initiatives as classroom-based education programmes directed towards achieving behavioural goals (e.g. tobacco and drug misuse and sexual health), as well as initiatives that offered supportive social environments and that fostered links with the community and created a safe and secure physical environment. I argued that the challenge to embedding the HPS discourse in schools was the lack of quantitative research highlighting the effectiveness of the HPS. I argued that the OBE emphasis on standards, measurement and accountability could be reconciled with the HPS by using values of social justice, empowerment, and participation in research methodologies. Such an approach would satisfy both funding bodies and also sustain school based HPS initiatives.

Next, turning to the Australian then Victorian context, Chapter Three briefly examined the health promotion strategies employed in schools. I argued that Australian curriculum had extensively represented concern with student wellbeing in curriculum documents and statements and traced their move away from the biomedical approach that focussed on programmes that were specific to certain aspects of health' for example' disease, cures and young people's behaviour, to the socio-ecological approach which was concerned with developing the health determinants necessary to predispose students to learning (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2008). The shift in approach signalled an understanding of the socio-ecological discourse as means by which students can ultimately attain positive health. I argued that this involved schools, concentrating less on curing students and more on health promotion, in establishing professional alliances and strategies across professional bodies. This chapter also argued that teachers, balancing both OBE and HPS requirements, struggle to negotiate the dual responsibilities and that an overemphasis on OBE regimens potentially distracts them from the relational and social justice aspects that are premised in the HPS framework.

Chapter Three also examined how HPS principles were incorporated in Department of Education, Employment and Training's (DEET) 'Four Levels of Activity' framework and the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne's (CEOM) 'Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010'. I argued that, while there are differences between these approaches, both the DEET and CEOM frameworks respond to WHO charters and health policies. In Victoria the DEET framework and CEOM strategy engage schools in a continuum of health interventions that promote, embed and sustain positive health among individuals and the community. This continuum involves primary

prevention, early intervention, intervention or post-intervention and aimed at responding to both the level and intensity of health actions to suit a variety of wellbeing needs among its students and communities (Cahill & Freeman 2006). The analysis of the DEET and CEOM student wellbeing strategies showed that the HPS, underpinned by a socio-ecological discourse and the values of equity, justice and empowerment, could return positive outcomes. Among these outcomes were increased prosocial skills, stronger prosocial peer networks, increased acceptance, connectedness and belonging in the school setting.

Next in Chapter Three examining such initiatives as the School Focused Youth Service strategy and *beyondblue*, which coordinated and resourced whole school approaches to student wellbeing, I argued that Victorian Government schools, responding to the emergence of federal and state policies such as the Adelaide Declaration (MCEETYA 2000) and the Blueprint for Early Childhood Development and School Reform (DEECD 2008c) and recommendations contained in Victoria's Taskforce Report (MCEETYA 2001) into youth suicide, took advantage of such initiatives as the School Focused Youth Service or the Primary Welfare Initiative (2004) to support and fund school based student wellbeing programs. I argued that these under resourced programs and initiatives, while going part of the way to address student wellbeing, fail to address the structural antecedents of ill health that is, social, economic, cultural disadvantage.

Next, examining the CEOM's student wellbeing policies, I argued that the reframing and restructuring of student wellbeing policy and approaches in Catholic schools resulted from the CEOM's mapping of how Victorian Catholic schools were addressing student wellbeing. CEOM evidence indicated that student wellbeing was approached in a 'hit and miss' way, distanced from teaching and learning programs and from the formal structures operating in schools (Thomas 2005). This led, Chapter Three argued, to the CEOM's use of State SFYS funding to sponsor and train classroom teachers to take on, in addition to their teaching role, the overall coordination and implementation of student wellbeing strategies. I argued that while teachers can contribute to student wellbeing programs and have agency in contributing to the organisation, ethos and environment and to the curriculum, teaching and learning components of a health promoting school, such a policy overlooks evidence that credentialing time poor teachers adversely impacts on the effectiveness of the student wellbeing role. I also argued that such a policy decision overlooks the contribution that could be made by another profession that is, social work to health promoting school. This contribution was examined in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four examined school social work practice at global, national and state levels and showed that it had and continues to have relevance and agency in addressing structural disadvantage and the social determinants of health. Concentrating on school social work in Victorian government schools, Chapter Four argued that school social workers have successfully circumvented welfare policies and ideological shifts to maintain a presence in the school reaching back to 1949. Initially aligning themselves with psychologists social workers were included in school welfare activities managing student issues such as, for example, truancy. The literature examined three themes pertinent to the role of school social work: forging links with the community, the full service school and the school as a developer of social capital and health and wellbeing.

Literature examined how Whitlam's Federal Labor government 1970s social reform agenda introduced the DSP. I argued that the DSP enabled some schools to employ social workers whose role it was to target the structural determinants that dislocated students and their families from the school's teaching and learning programs. The Doveton Cluster was examined as a particular initiative that utilised social work skill and expertise and different social work models to improve the educational outcomes of students. I argued that subsequent to the DSP years, social workers in Victoria had to survive the Kennett's economic rationalisation of the late 1970s and 1980s that dislocated or removed them from school sites as locally set priorities, responding to the testing regimes of the emerging OBE discourse, began to redeploy human resources to teaching rather than wellbeing programs. I argued that like teachers school social workers had to adjust to the policy imperatives of globalisation and marketisation.

I argued that throughout the political constructions and reconstructions of welfare policy during the Kennett years and beyond and the shifting priorities of schools, school social workers managed to lobby, through industrial action, for structural change, improved pay and conditions, the relocation of school social workers to multidisciplinary teams on one site to service a cluster of schools. It was during the industrial upheaval of the Kennett years that the Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) School Social Workers Special Interest Group (SSWSIG) was formed. Literature indicated that social workers continue to be a presence in school and are consistently pursuing socially just outcomes for students and their families. In 2010, the full time equivalent of school social workers employed in Victorian government schools is seventy three social workers (SSWSIG 2010). Chapter Four argued that Victorian Catholic schools have no social workers employed within the CEOM or within individual

schools and continue to preference the allocation of student wellbeing to teachers who have a welfare credential.

From the perspective of Catholic schools I argued that since the pursuit of justice, the common good, cooperation and diversity are central considerations in CST and thus relevant considerations in Catholic schools, cross-disciplinary collaboration between teachers and social workers can be viewed as integral not optional pursuits in the formal and professional arrangements in Catholic schools. Sharing with Catholic schools the values of justice, equity and social reform, I argued that social workers can apply their skills and knowledge, their professional and administrative abilities, leadership and policy-making, research and supervision skills in areas such as networking, counselling, home and school liaison and in facilitating and advocating for families' use of school community resources and preventative programs, all of which are conduits to a positive health.

I also argued in Chapter Four that at a point of time in which cross-disciplinary collaboration across health services is becoming common, social work practice was in a good position to reclaim its place at school so as to assist teachers in balancing the requirements of the OBE discourse while strengthening the student wellbeing practices and the health promotion discourse. I argued that social workers can use their skills and expert knowledge to assist schools to address student disadvantage, to improve equity and enhance student wellbeing and to contribute to all aspects of the HPS frameworks. I also argued that social workers in schools can engage in practice that, in line with HPS principles and practice, is emancipatory and empowering and premised on a socio-ecological understanding of how to achieve positive health. Further I argued that school social workers can use their skills and knowledge to influence environments and make them structurally conducive to the health of students, their families and the school community. Finally I argued that school social workers are once again able to use their code of ethics and value base as well as their skills and expertise to address structural disadvantage, adding to their considerations of disadvantage the social determinants of health. This opportunity is afforded by governments at both federal and state levels who have identified in their policy statements and education declarations as ideologically committed to tackling the social determinants of health.

However, I also indicated that school social work is confronted with the practical challenges associated with cross-disciplinary collaborations: professional and cultural school-related policy and organisational and resource-related barriers. I argued that these barriers need to be overcome if social work is to move beyond the limited traditional casework model that locates

the problem in the student or the student's family and seeks to solve the welfare issues at an individual level rather than also addressing the structural antecedents of these issues. Finally, following an explanation in Chapter Five of the research methods, the reasoning behind the ontological, epistemological positions that is, social constructivism and critical inquiry, and methodology that is, the rationale for the use and stages of the case study, how data was collected and analysed, this thesis presented, in Chapter Six, the research data.

An underlying assumption of this research was that teachers and social workers can form a cross-disciplinary collaboration and that social work can contribute to student wellbeing programs addressing the structural conditions that negatively impact on students' ability to attend to teaching and learning programs. Central to this Model and to the cross-disciplinary collaboration was the role played by the principal, the designer of the Model and the researcher in this thesis. Having dual qualifications in teaching and social work the principal was advantageously placed to help teachers and social workers negotiate two discourses and balance each discipline's discourse contribution to student wellbeing programs. In a sense, as bridge between the two discourses, how the leadership was able to include and involve all stakeholders, giving all responsibility and input into the development and thus ownership of the Model, would impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of the cross-disciplinary collaboration.

As a result the research addressed the intersection of the two disciplines of teaching and social work, and specifically the social work contribution to student wellbeing in one Victorian Catholic primary school. Social workers, as discussed in Chapter Three, are excluded from the CEOM's formal and professional student wellbeing programs which instead sponsors and trains teachers to take responsibility for student wellbeing in formal and professional school based arrangements. Therefore, this case study, which is a unique phenomenon in the Victorian Catholic primary school context, was particularly important. In policy terms, the research can provide both guidance and an example of how the teaching and social work professions can challenge the construction that the social worker has no formal or professional place in Catholic primary schools.

Further, the Model may be an exemplar for future teacher and social work cross-disciplinary collaborations and may assist schools to take the findings of this case study as a basis for adapting, developing, designing and redesigning their own student wellbeing models. It may give an impetus to the realisation in Catholic primary schools that teachers can invite other

disciplines onto the school site in the knowledge that the skills and expertise of other disciplines can complement rather than clash with their own.

The next section discusses the research data and uses the three research questions to structure the discussion.

### **Discussion of findings**

The three themes relevant to student wellbeing that were reviewed in the literature and formed the basis of the research questions were: schooling, the health promoting school and social work. As will be shown in the following sections, these themes underpin the research questions.

*RQ Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse?*

As discussed in chapter two OBE policy imperatives based on the notion that equality of opportunity leads to equality of outcome and that government financial investment in each school should return the same result from each school overlooks the impact of social class and cultural capital on both student achievement and student wellbeing. Pathways between education and student achievement are confounded by the socioeconomic circumstances of the parent and carer if issues of disadvantage are not addressed and redressed. To assume otherwise is to deny that social class and cultural capital are strongly associated with a greater parental input to their child's schooling and, ultimately, to greater levels of student achievement. Moreover, to assume that students' wellbeing is tangential to their achievement conflicts with the socio-ecological arguments underpinning the HPS discourse and also conflicts with federal and state policies mandating schools to provide for students' physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic needs as well as address their intellectual development. Further, locating the responsibility for student achievement and student wellbeing in the school itself and assuming schools have the necessary economic and cultural resources and/or that teachers are skilled, able and willing to address the social, political, economic and cultural circumstances that shape student lives is problematic.

From the perspective of this research both the index of relative social disadvantage and the socio-economic indexes for areas rated the constituents of St Paul's School and its surrounding community as highly disadvantaged and the students as socially, economically and educationally vulnerable and thus more vulnerable to a negative health status than other, more privileged groups (Brimbank City Council 2009). This socioeconomic profile which indicates a



concentration of the St Paul's community at the lower end of the social class continuum supports Apple's (2004b), Ryan's (2004), Jamrozik's (2001), Calder's (2003), and Griffith's (2005) views that poor students and poor families are concentrated in poor communities and may find it more difficult to access and contribute to the school resources, human and cultural, that would help students successfully negotiate passage to a higher social class. The interrelatedness of social and cultural capital and the level of personal and school resources were recognised by research participants. Examples of comments that typified this view:

I like being in the Homework club because I could learn more because I could get help with my homework. I can't get that help at home. (Student E)  
We often say that it the teachers put a lot of effort to try to get things happening in the school – but it's the same [parent and carers] all the time and it's the same people all the time. (PPT S)  
It was hard when local businesses didn't want to contribute or sponsor the school. (SWS 3)  
Social work students brought resources into the school without stigmatising the community. (FEC4)

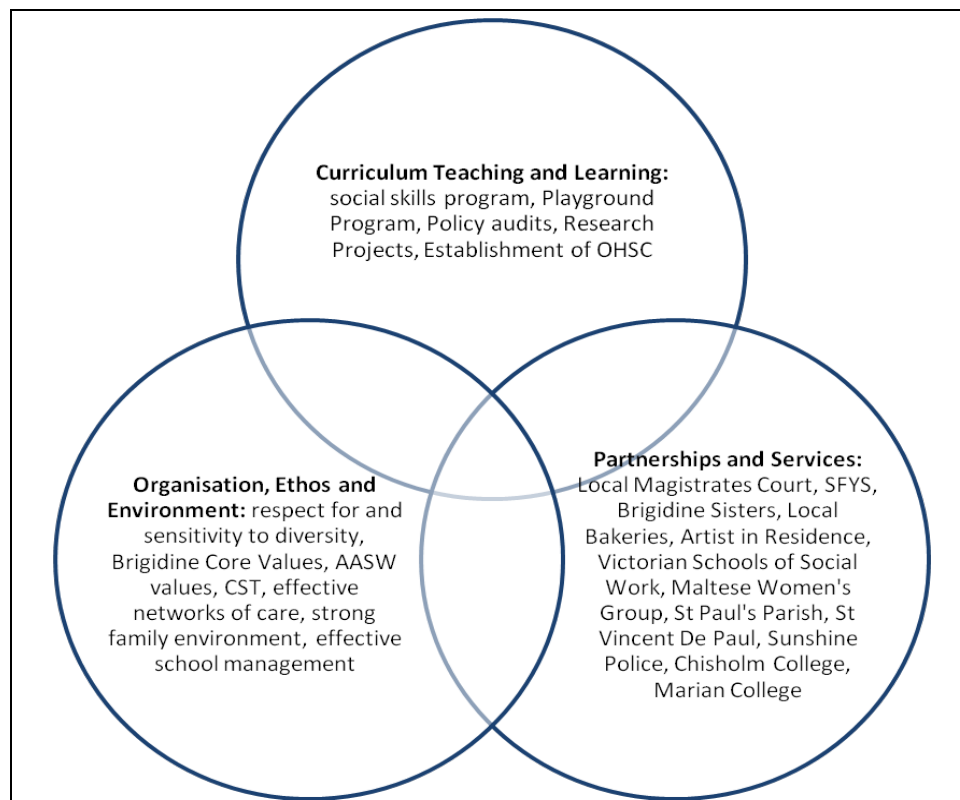
Thus unless supported through other avenues the St Paul's community, positioned within low socioeconomic and cultural strata, alienated from the resources and opportunities that accompany the possession of high levels of cultural capital (such as financial, emotional and physical resources) to invest in schooling, the pathway between education and health is further disadvantaged. For example, if the students in St Paul's failed to meet the benchmarks set by Federal and State policy, then the school would be identified on websites such as *MySchool* (DEEWR 2010) as ineffective and failing its students. This being the case parents and carers may be motivated to stay away from or choose a 'better school' thus concentrating poorer students in St Paul's School and further differentiating students and their families along lines of social class.

This said, the Model's professional and formal arrangements attempted to introduce a comprehensive and coordinated system of student support, integrated at many levels of the school and which reflected the socially just, inclusive, multi-faith and welcoming philosophies, beliefs and attitudes of CST (Ebear, Csiernik & Bechard 2006) and Brigidine Education core values and criteria for ministry (Brigidine Secondary Schools Council 2005b; Brigidine Sisters 1988). Additionally the Model, although developed organically over twelve years, in 2006, would specifically address goals three and five of the CEOM's (2006a) student wellbeing strategy. This goal aimed at 'strengthening school community' and 'student wellbeing'. The Model would reflect a student wellbeing strategy that is not a 'hit and miss' approach to student wellbeing as was the case in Victorian Catholic schools underpinned the CEOM's (2006b) policy concern and was the impetus for introducing its 'Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006 to

2010'. The Model also encompassed the World Health Organisation's (WHO 1998) HPS framework.

As Figure 7.1 indicates the Model's school culture combined with the Model's program components to address the socio-ecological determinants of wellbeing: redressing inequality, creating a supportive, safe environment, mediating and advocating on behalf of stakeholder groups and engaging with the local community.

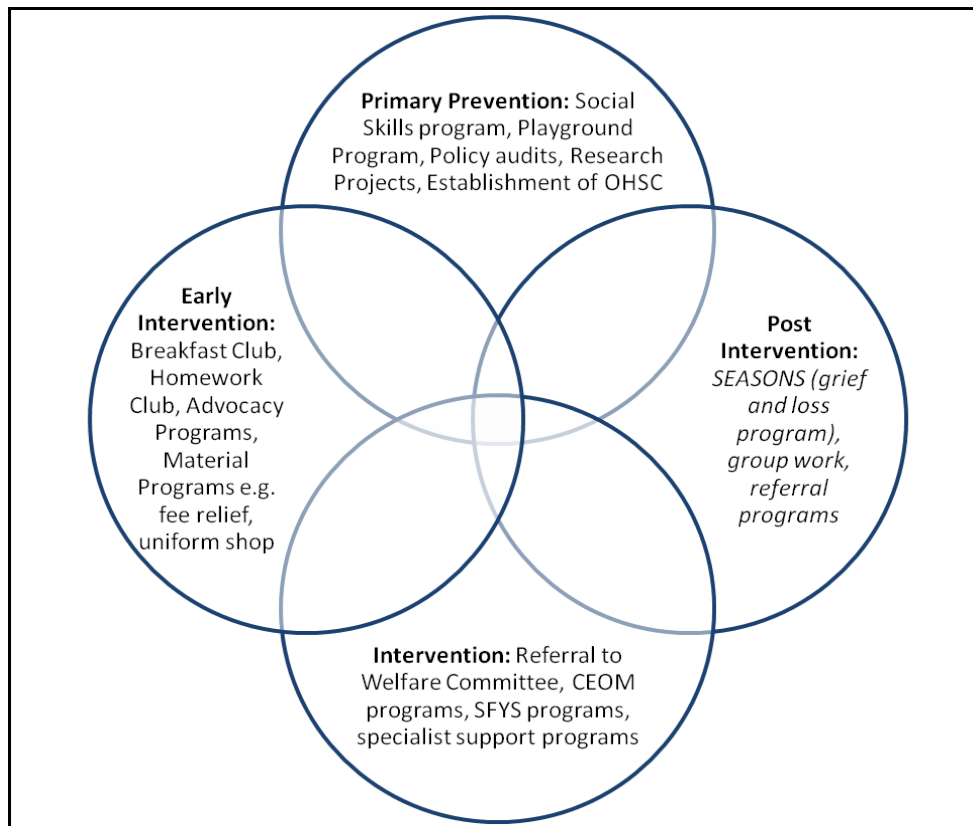
Figure 7.1: St Paul's Model and HPS framework, 1994–2005



Source: Parent survey (2005b), Validation document (St Paul's 2005d), St Paul's School Registration Review Report (2002)

As well as reflecting HPS framework, Figure 7.2 illustrates that the Model also conforms to DEET's (1998) *Four Levels of Activity* framework and has student wellbeing interventions in the four areas prescribed by DEET's framework: early intervention, primary prevention, intervention and post-intervention.

Figure 7.2: St Paul's Model and the DEET Four Levels of Activity Framework



Source: Parent survey (2005b), Validation Document (St Paul's 2005d), St Paul's School Registration Review Report (2002)

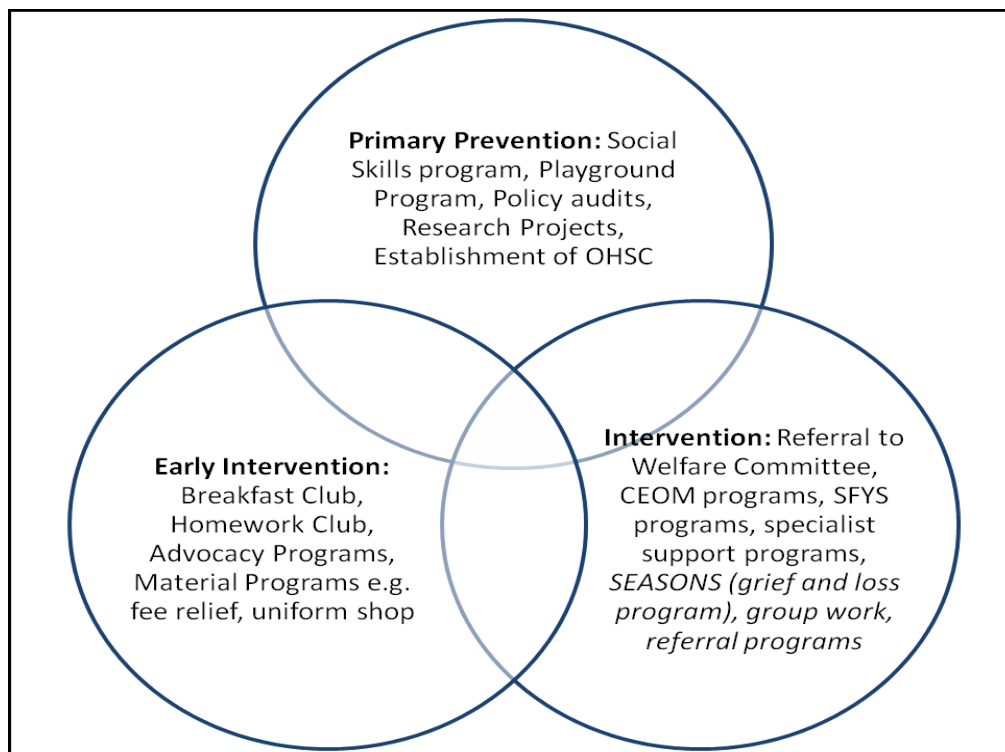
The particular contribution of social work was its ability to contribute an alternative 'voice' in how the socio, economic and cultural interpretation of student wellbeing and schooling was constructed. The introduction of social work to the school landscape enabled a critical perspective and a community development perspective to be introduced to understanding and addressing student wellbeing. Examples of comments that social work students brought and typified a critical discourse were:

It's been quite different for me [at St Paul's]. This [placement] brings together community life, whether it be family, organisational or personal, we are bringing the community together. (SWS 12)  
 [The social work students] also has a bit more time to network. (Teacher S)  
 In terms of the Breakfast Club, it was hard when local businesses didn't want to contribute or sponsor the school. (SWS 3)  
 Combining work with individuals with community development type work, the social work students brought resources into the school without stigmatising the community. (FEC1)  
 [Social work involvement] meant that people could be helped without blaming them for their circumstances. (FEC4)

You know, I read the [news]paper differently now. I have to think about how stuff affects schools, kids and families. (SWS 13)  
 These kids are marginalised. As social workers, we have to work from an anti-oppressive approach to help address some of these issues. (SWS 2)

That the Model's program components had student wellbeing programs intervening along a continuum recognised that health promotion provides support for all community members not just the most at risk. By strengthening protective factors and addressing risk factors, the Model heeds scholarship such as that reviewed in Chapter Three, highlighting a holistic and socio-ecological approach to wellbeing. As well as conforming to DEET's 'Four Levels of Activity' framework, the Model also conformed to the Australian Association of Social Work's (2006) 'Practice Standard For School Social Workers': intervention, primary prevention and intervention. These interventions involved social work students in five of the six social work practice areas outlined by the AASW: direct practice, service management, organisational development and system change, policy and research. Figure 7.3 illustrates the Model's conformity with the AASW practice framework.

Figure 7.3: St Paul's Model and AASW School Social Work framework



Source: Parents survey (2005b), Validation document (St Paul's 2005d), St Paul's School Registration Review (2002)

Overall, data, arranged and rearranged according to the WHO HPS, DEET, AASW and CEOM frameworks and strategy showed that the Model's programs addressed the school's organisation, ethos and environment; its curriculum, teaching and learning and partnerships and services. Designed to work at the micro-level, the Model attempted to deliver student wellbeing programs that would address the socio-ecological determinants of health and that predispose students to engage positively with teaching and learning programs. In this way, in line with the socio-ecological approach and using a critical perspective, St Paul's sought to respond to social inclusion policies and reflect the Federal and State policy (DEECD 2007; DEET 1998; DEEWR 2008a; DEST 2005a).

However, while the Model reflected congruence with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse, this research also found that teachers recognised that their roles have been realigned to meet OBE expectations. They also recognised that this realignment brought with it sustained pressure, increased teacher workloads and the expectation that their students reach national and state benchmarks. Examples of comments that typified these views:

I'm more about results than relationships. (Teacher M)

Too much to do and not enough time; the quality of time has gone. (Teacher M)

It's also feeling like you need to fit everything in, it's so structured by the curriculum now. (Teacher C).

Cumulatively teachers reported that OBE policies dislocated them from becoming involved in the holistic and socio-ecological approach to the promotion and sustaining of health. From the perspective of the HPS, such a dislocation also distances teachers from HPS values and goals; namely, to produce in them and in their students positive relationships, empowerment, justice, collaboration and partnerships, all of which are intrinsic to a socio-ecological approach to health determination. Balancing student wellbeing and the pressure of OBE teachers reported the negative impact that OBE had on their availability to their students' wellbeing. The difficulty was consistently reflected in teacher comments naming their increasing inability to respond to, attend to and provide for their students' wellbeing. Examples of comments that typified this view:

You have to encourage the relationship with the students but there are so many things that get in the way – quality relationship building takes time – and there are other things that get in the way – you don't have a chance. Our kids have needs – but having to concentrate on the work – that takes you away from the kids' lives. (Teacher A)

Things that are happening in their lives slow down their learning. And there upset if they're not being looked after – they can't learn. (Teacher C)

It's that old notion of meeting kids where they are. (Teacher A)

It is also worth noting that a HPS produces its own short-term pressures, for example, in that the relational aspect of creating socially inclusive, engaged and empowered communities are premised in a commitment to building relationships

‘You have to encourage relationship with students but there are so many things that get in the way – quality relationship building takes time’ (A)

This point aside, while in its formal arrangements, the Model addressed all areas of the health promoting school framework; curriculum, teaching and learning; organisation, ethos and environment; and partnerships and services, the Model also recognised that it lacked the resources to address specific student wellbeing issues and that time poor and unskilled teachers did not have the social, economic and cultural resources to offset student disadvantage and had to seek these out from other sources. Examples of comments that typified this view:

[The] Homework Club running [on] only two days wasn’t satisfactory. I believe the senior students would have benefited from the Homework Club if it ran every day. (Teacher C)

That’s what I mean – as teachers we just don’t have the time to give to those programs – it could be the structured [SEASONS] program or ‘mum and dad were having a fight last night’ –we just don’t have the time. (Teacher MM)

It is this recognition, combined with the dual teaching/social work qualifications held by the principal that was the impetus for the Model’s creation and the introduction of a second discipline – social work – to student wellbeing programs. As is discussed in the next section, this thesis also showed that the formal and professional arrangements that underpinned the Model had frustrated the effective cross-disciplinary approach to the Model.

*RQ (b): Are the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul’s Model effective in addressing and promoting student wellbeing*

Developing organically, the St Paul’s Model evolved in parallel, and in some cases, ahead of HPS frameworks and strategies. Established in 1994, the Model was one year ahead of the HPS (1996) ‘Development of Health-Promoting Schools – A Framework for Action’ guidelines, four years ahead of the DEET (1998) ‘Framework for Student: Support Services (Four Levels of Activity)’, ten years ahead of the first AASW (2006) Practice Standards for Social Workers in Schools and twelve years ahead of the CEOM (2006b) ‘Student Wellbeing Strategy 2006–2010’. In this way, the St Paul’s Model predicted and anticipated global, national and local policies for student wellbeing. As it developed, it articulated in school policies, documents and practice all the elements required of the HPS (organisation, ethos and environment; curriculum, teaching and learning; and partnerships and services), those in DEET frameworks (primary prevention, early intervention, intervention and post-intervention) and the three CEOM goals

(living life within the Catholic tradition, making schools accessible to all Catholic families, strengthening the educational community<sup>32</sup>).

At face value, the focus of the Model on the social determinants of students' health to counter socioeconomic and cultural disadvantage indicates that OBE and HPS ideologies need not compete for space on the school site. Student wellbeing programs can exist alongside student achievement programs and can be developed with the use of a teacher/social work cross-disciplinary collaboration. In this research, it was argued that social work is a logical partnership to teaching. The findings bolster arguments that the social worker need not be a stranger in the Catholic primary school site and that the inclusion of the social work discourse can actually assist teachers in their student wellbeing role.

This research confirmed that merely to locate social work in the school site and alongside teachers in a Victorian Catholic primary school (or any school) is not enough to promote a united cross-disciplinary focus on student wellbeing. Nor is this co-location enough to permit each discipline to understand the other's input to the HPS. Research results corroborated Mahony's (1995) findings that social workers can remain distanced from teachers and teachers distanced from social workers – in their own silos on the school site. The teachers acknowledged the social workers' contribution, but preferred social work interventions that paralleled, rather than partnered, teaching activities. For example, the early intervention and post-intervention programs that were highly ranked by the teachers, such as the Playground, Breakfast and Homework Club and SEASONS, all involved interventions that removed students and social work from the classroom. Conversely, the programs least valued by teachers as inclusions in the St Paul's Model were those that required social work intervention in the classroom alongside teaching activities for example, the Classroom and Referral programs.

This disconnect between teachers' views and their appreciation of the social work input along the continuum of interventions and within all the ellipses of the HPS framework as discussed in Chapter Three raises questions about the effectiveness of the Model and its ability to develop an effective cross-disciplinary collaboration. Ultimately, the effectiveness or otherwise of the St Paul's Model is dependent on the effectiveness or otherwise of the cross-disciplinary collaboration formed between teachers and social workers. Although it may reap benefits in all aspects of school activity, to do so all HPS stakeholders need to understand, be involved in, get on board with and acquire adequate skills and training in the theoretical underpinnings of the

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<sup>32</sup> The fourth CEOM goal, 'ensuring high achievement for all', was not measured during this research.

HPS to move on from the traditional notion of ‘doing health promotion’ to a socio-ecological one of ‘being health promoting’. The following section discusses the theoretical and practical lessons offered by this research and argues that the effectiveness of the Model was compromised by a number of factors. These factors fall under three headings: cross-disciplinary attitudes; cross-disciplinary knowledge; and cross-disciplinary skills, each central to the effectiveness and sustainability of the St Paul’s Model.

While the principal who had dual qualification in social work and teaching had prime responsibility for designing and developing the Model and was the bridge between the teachers and the social workers, there were three areas of cross-disciplinary collaboration that impacted on the effectiveness of the model: cross-disciplinary attitudes, cross-disciplinary knowledge and cross-disciplinary skills. Each will be discussed in turn.

*Cross-disciplinary attitudes:* Overall the inclination to respect and value social work as a legitimate collaborator in student wellbeing programs was varied. While the principal was the main driver of the Model and led the development and inclusion of social workers in the Model, not all teachers were interested in or committed to the Model. There was indication of a lack of trust in both the skills and knowledge competencies of undergraduate social work students:

So, when it wasn’t working was when the purpose wasn’t clear and when the social work student wasn’t coming in when they were timetabled to. (Teacher L)

To me, sometimes I couldn’t get my head around what they were there for; what they were doing – I had no idea who they were – I didn’t have a relationship with them. (Teacher J)

Continuing, the Model lacked formal and professional opportunities to respectfully and purposefully appreciate how each discipline contributed to the Model as well as why the respective contribution to the Model was important to the development of student wellbeing. Consequently interest and commitment to the Model varied across staff members. Examples of comments that typified these contrasting views:

To me sometimes I couldn’t get my head around what they were there for; what they were doing – I had no idea who they were – I didn’t have a relationship with them. (Teacher J)

You know there are other advantages, not just if kids are in trouble, the social work students might see that a kid [is] doing something great that the teacher missed and be able to encourage them and give them a pat on the back. (Teacher N)

There was also a lack of openness to the multiple scopes of practice, in this instance social work, that can benefit both teachers and students. Some teachers were agreeable to the presence of social work students and willing to accept social work skills and knowledge, while others were insistent that social work input be kept apart from their teaching and learning. Examples of comments that typified this view:



[The Classroom Program] frees teachers for teaching time. Say there were certain problems that were identified, say, for example, a kid may need to deal with something that needed that kid [to be] removed from the group – the social worker may do that and allow the teacher to get and do the other things. (Teacher A)

You know there are other advantages, not just if kids are in trouble, the social work students might see that a kid [is] doing something great that the teacher missed and be able to encourage them and give them a pat on the back. (Teacher N)

Also some social work students may also have frustrated the effectiveness of the social work contribution to the St Paul's Model. Whether it was their inexperience, personalities, personal or their underdeveloped social work competencies, some social work students may have skewed negatively teacher perceptions and experiences of social work skills and expertise.

Conversely, the attitudes and priorities of some teaching staff also contributed to some of the barriers to professional and collaborative arrangements promoting student wellbeing programs. Some teachers failed to reciprocate the contribution of the social work students, and some saw no need to cross their disciplinary boundary and involve the social workers' skills and expert knowledge in their teaching and learning programs. Examples of comments that typified this view:

To me sometimes I couldn't get my head around what they were there for; what they were doing – I had no idea who they were – I didn't have a relationship with them. (Teacher J)

If already qualified social workers, rather than student social workers, had provided the social work input, perhaps the teachers would have felt that the social work input was more legitimate and more professional. As a corollary, already trained social workers may have contributed more confidently their professional expert skills and knowledge and they may have been more able to advocate the changes to school structures and approaches that were necessary to implement health promotion and health actions.

The issues of professionalisation and qualifications aside, I would add that while some social work students may have skewed negatively teacher perceptions and experiences of social work skills and expertise, the attitudes and priorities of some teaching staff also contributed to some of the barriers to professional and collaborative arrangements promoting student wellbeing programs. Some teachers failed to reciprocate the contribution of the social work students and some saw no need to cross their disciplinary boundary and involve the social workers' skills and expert knowledge in their teaching and learning programs. For teachers, having a high degree of professional self confidence, the cross-disciplinary collaboration was not the preferred option when addressing student wellbeing. This was most evident in interactions between teachers and social work students that were characterised by consciousness of differences in prestige and

defence of their own territories, for example, classroom, Homework Club. As such the positive interdependence that contributes to successful cross-disciplinary collaboration was missing and/or hampered.

Additionally, perhaps the power differentials between the principal and the teachers and between the teachers and the social work students were a significant factor in the lack of synergistic collaboration between teachers and social workers in the St Paul's Model. Where principles of participatory decision making are central to effective cross-disciplinary collaboration, the professional hierarchy and its inbuilt imbalance in power served only to maintain awkwardness between teachers and social work students and stood in the way of straightforward co operation.

*Cross-disciplinary knowledge.* The teachers' and social workers' level of comfort and facility with the Model was weakened by their unfamiliarity with the ideological HPS underpinnings of the model. Contrary to the emancipatory and empowerment goals embedded in the socio-ecological discourse, teachers and social workers unfamiliar with this discourse made little input into what had been identified as important health promotion or health actions to be undertaken and included in the Model. The lack of this bottom-up input compromised stakeholders' investment in the Model as well as their appreciation of the political nature of health actions and their conceptualisation of how individuals relate to their environment as well as the ecology of health.

There was no evidence of formal structures that developed understandings of health promoting schools, of the roles, responsibilities and capabilities of each disciplines role in the health promoting school or ongoing forums in which teaches and social work students shared their skills and knowledge. Nor was there evidence of structures that promoted accountability between teachers and social work students in the development of health promoting school structures and programs. Where there was accountability for the success or otherwise of the program components, accountability was to the principal and to some teachers involved in some programs. In this way responsibility and accountability was vertical, top down, rather than horizontal and across the discipline collaborators.

Without stakeholder training, and without having formally embedded in the curriculum the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Model, the teaching and learning planning cycle of school operations and health promotion from a socio-ecological perspective remained on the periphery of school-based actions. They were consequently hard to integrate or embed in the

school environment. Thus, teachers and social workers were unfamiliar with the conceptual links and rationale underpinning the Model. This limited their appreciation and understanding of the social determinants of health and the interdependence of student wellbeing and student achievement and influenced both teachers' and social workers' effective participation, investment in, and contribution to the Model.

The Parent Partnership Team, and by implication the school community needed knowledge about the purpose of the Model, its components and the cross-disciplinary roles and contributions to the Model. The Parent Partnership Team's silence on some of the program components may have been as a consequence of this lack of familiarity with the program components and thus they may have been unable to appreciate or understand the contribution of social work to student wellbeing programs.

Also, this lack of professional articulation maintained teacher and Parent Partnership Team stereotyping of social workers thus limiting the contribution of social work to student wellbeing programs. Examples of comments that typified this view:

You know, you may come across some people who may not like the program because its outsiders working with their kids.... Often social work is associated with people needing help. (PPT S)  
There's a stigma. (PPT P)

Cross-disciplinary skill was the second area in which the research offered insight and learning.

*Cross-disciplinary skills.* While some stakeholders were able to see the benefit and value of the social work contribution, others remained spectators or minor players, or judged the social work intervention as something that came into play for problem students and families (but not for my child, my family). Their appreciation of the political nature of health actions and the ecology of health remained unclear and unarticulated. Examples of comments that typified these views:

I am aware of the programs but what they actually do and how effective they are – I'm not sure. (PPT T)  
[It was difficult] being in an environment where social workers are not the main profession, especially when you have to explain to the staff where you are coming from and why you are doing what you are doing. (SWS 8)  
The student social worker and perhaps our experience is different – we've got so many things to do. Social work is another thing – if we want it to work, we may have to understand the social work side as well. (Teacher L)

Further, although the social work students were able to introduce a critical voice and contribute to the Model in community building, research, individual and group work skills, the Model did not succeed in embedding into the school structure and in teachers and their teaching a similar

sensibility. In this way the discipline silos remained untouched and the symphony, that is an effective cross-disciplinary collaboration, was difficult to realise.

Although teachers could see the need to address student wellbeing, teachers did not make an active contribution to collaborative tasks such as planning program components and conducting evaluations of the components. Nor was there a 'space' within the Model design to negotiate the role, responsibilities and expectations of each discipline in relation to the Model's operation. Albeit teachers having little understanding and input to the Model, social work input did occur and student wellbeing programs did develop in spite of teachers.

The Model was able to address, design and offer student wellbeing programs along a spectrum of health determinant factors and it was able to engage students, staff, the school and the wider community in some or all of the levels of health action and promotion but not in a way that was underpinned by principles of wider community participatory approaches. Moreover, if collaboration simply means an alliance between two disciplines that both contributed their skills and knowledge to the same project, then the Model, during the years from 1994 to 2005, was able to engage formally the professional collaboration of two disciplines and offer student wellbeing programs.

If social workers had not been located at the school and their contribution had been excluded from the Model, then St Paul's School would not have had the capacity to carry out any components of the Model for example, the Breakfast and Homework Clubs, the Playground, Lunch and Classroom Program and SEASONS. Nor would St Paul's staff have had the skills and knowledge needed for the research that was carried out as part of the Model, for example, the bullying audits, Vietnamese Parents' Participation (St Paul's 1996), and Parents' and Carers' Experiences of the Enrolment Processes at St Paul's School (St Paul's 2001). Furthermore, teachers would not have been able to establish OHSC (St Paul's 2004).

Moreover, students at St Paul's School were able to attend school each day knowing that there were structures and practices that would respond to what they brought to school. The Model was holistic and ecological in its health actions and health promotion. Students whose family was experiencing economic hardship had access to material aid, such as the Breakfast Club, the Lunch program, food baskets or fee relief. Students experiencing socio-emotional difficulties could access the support of grief and pro social skilling programs, for example, SEASONS and the Playground Program. Students having difficulty with their academic work or needing resources to support it could use the Homework Club and Classroom Program. Programs that

kept students connected to their families and families connected to the school included the OHSC, special events programs and the Swimming Program. Finally, if students needed to be reassured that the school environment was positive and inclusive, they were supported by the ongoing research and policy initiatives that focussed on the ethos, the environment and organisation; for example, the bullying audits.

Overall, while a variety of student wellbeing programs were delivered by the Model, the alienation of various groups from the Model's operation or from understanding the socio-ecological determinants of students' wellbeing is relevant to the sustainability of the Model and to cross-disciplinary collaboration into the future. If the Model is to be an exemplar for other student wellbeing teacher and social work cross-disciplinary collaborations key aspects of the Model's formal and professional arrangements must be addressed. The next section addresses these considerations.

*RQ (c) Can the St Paul's model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

The results showed that social workers can, did and can continue to address the social health determinants that would otherwise negatively influence student achievement (AASW, 2006; Shaver 2002; Smyth 2002). Social workers could contribute to student wellbeing where teachers could not. Confirming Apple (1990) and McKay's (1994) finding that teachers' ability to promote the social justice aspects of health is made more difficult by OBE mandates, data showed that social workers could address, in ways that teachers could not, the social justice and structural arrangements that placed students at risk of being dislocated from their teaching and learning programs. It was the social workers, rather than the teachers, who could analyse from a critical perspective the school site through the processes that constitute it. For example, using social work discourse skills to link social behaviour and social action, the social work students could recognise the need for the Breakfast and Homework Club and the Lunch Program in the micro, meso and macro structures which withheld from some students the social, economic and physical resources that premised their successful participation in schooling.

As noted earlier, the Model developed alongside the HPS policy discourse, without the directives and policy frameworks articulated in DEET or CEOM. In light of these subsequent policies, and informed by the corpus of HPS literature, the Model would have an increased validity and research base for launching its programs. Should other Victorian Catholic primary schools wish to pursue a social work contribution to student wellbeing programs, they would

need to attend to the findings of this research, specifically to the learning in each of the areas identified as hindering the effectiveness of cross-disciplinary collaboration: disciplinary attitudes, cross-disciplinary knowledge and cross-disciplinary skills. The following section suggests what could be done in each of these areas to enhance the effectiveness of the cross-disciplinary collaboration.

*Cross-disciplinary attitudes.* Positive attitudes can be promoted and interest and commitment to the inclusion of social work in student wellbeing programs would be enhanced by ongoing transparent dialogue between the teachers and social workers. Purposefully structured dialogue within the formal professional development structures of school operations would provide a forum within which each discipline can share skills and knowledge and each can map their contribution to mandated federal, state and CEOM student wellbeing policies. The negative effects of stereotyping would also be addressed by ongoing transparent dialogue within cross-disciplinary learning forums. Each discipline would have opportunity to share and challenge each other's skills and knowledge and would learn together how to support and guide each other's contribution to student wellbeing programs.

*Cross-disciplinary knowledge.* If professional development that provided for the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of each discipline's contribution to student wellbeing was formally embedded in school structures in a systemic and strategic way, then the teachers' socio-ecological understandings of student wellbeing and student achievement and the contribution of social work to teaching and learning programs would be enhanced. Further, an ongoing commitment to researching the contribution of social work to wellbeing programs would also provide an evidence-based approach to the development of student wellbeing programs further informing the development and efficacy of school based social work. This will bring social work in from the margins and into the mainstream of school activities. If the rationale of the social work input is not clearly articulated in school policies, teachers will remain alienated from the intent of the program and social workers will remain alienated from the classroom.

The involvement of all stakeholders would also be maximised by emphasising and inviting community engagement in the design, evaluation and implementation of student wellbeing programs. This would increase the broad ownership and understanding of the program. The Model needs to be focussed on health actions and health promotion strategies that use community engagement and empowerment principles. This should reharness the expertise and energies of the stakeholders. By involving all stakeholders in advocacy, in enabling, mediating

and promoting health actions, the Model will assert its values and trust its stakeholders and also will include them as core participants and partners in shaping their own health promotion and health actions. In this way, a refocussed Model will enable, rather than coerce the stakeholders and forge cooperative, rather than compliant partnerships, whether the partnership is between students and teachers, between students and students, between teachers and social work students, between teachers and parents or between the school and the community.

Using school resources and supportive school policies, a collective collaboration between disciplines in terms of the Model can buffer the impact of negative health actions, offsetting negative social health determinants and go some way in reconciling the demands of OBE with the vision of HPS.

*Cross-disciplinary skills.* Substantive tasks are critical to the role of managing the tensions and contradictions that arise from a lack of clarity regarding cross-disciplinary knowledge and the effective handling of professional boundaries and connections. These tasks include (a) an articulation of the potential of a model such as the Model's to address the socio-ecological health determinants of the school stakeholders; (b) a purposeful, sequential and reasoned phasing-in of the components of the Model; (c) providing training for the stakeholders to help them move beyond the traditional approach to health to a socio-ecological one; (d) the articulation of the way in which a model such as the Model complements already existing welfare policies; and (e) an articulation of how, when and by whom the program would be evaluated and reformulated.

On the issue of having one person with dual qualifications carry the responsibility of the Model's operations, while leadership is a significant factor in whether cross-disciplinary collaborations will be pursued and whether local priorities will continue to allocate resources, human and other, to student wellbeing programs, whether the principal needs to have dual qualifications is unclear. Certainly while in this case study the principal carried the story and was largely the conduit for its operations, the engagement with University Schools of Social Work who would contribute social work skill and expertise is not reliant on the principal's qualifications. The establishment of a student wellbeing unit in the school and within the formal student wellbeing structures together with the appointment of a qualified social worker to that unit by CEOM or Universities would embed the model in the school.

Appointing a qualified social worker to that unit could draw on services and opportunities within and outside the school site so as to address the HPS and DEET framework. This

appointment would also provide a bridge between the CEOM, Universities and the school. Further if a student unit were established in collaboration with University Schools of Social Work, the community engagement and partnership aspirations of universities would also be realised. The qualified social worker, leading the social work student unit, together with other student wellbeing core team members and university representatives could ensure that student wellbeing programs, competing for space in the crowded curriculum, are clearly and consistently delivered, avoiding lock-step ways of program delivery. Such a unit and approach would necessarily require that collaboration between the school, CEOM and the universities would articulate clearly the roles and responsibilities of each partner: school, CEOM, university and social work student.

While this research has signalled how the Model could be made more effective, this research and this learning also have implications for schools wishing to adopt such a model. The next section discusses the implications and presents a way forward for schools who wish to adopt formal and professional structures that would include cross-disciplinary collaborations in pursuit of student wellbeing.

### **Implications for practice**

Can the Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers? Ultimately, the future effectiveness of student wellbeing models such as the St Paul's Model will depend on harmonising the notes that are currently dissonant in its implementation. To do this the voices of stakeholders need to be heard more clearly and adjustments made to how such an approach to student wellbeing is embedded in the formal and professional structures of school operations. The links between the socio-ecological discourse underpinning student wellbeing approaches need to be strengthened and made more explicit.

I argue that the time is right to move to a proactive stance and call to the attention of school principals, teachers and governing bodies the array of services and knowledge social work practitioners bring to schools. By defining their services in and for schools and by articulating their relevance and how they can contribute to HPS, DEET and CEOM student wellbeing frameworks, school social workers keep the locus of control and actively resist being narrowly hampered by the what teachers may see as advantageous to their practice rather than what is advantageous to the welfare of students, families and community.

While this research indicated that it is possible to develop student wellbeing programs alongside student learning programs and that student wellbeing programs can be underpinned by health



promoting school principles and frameworks, the research also indicated the absence of an organisational culture that is, ‘the way we do things around here’ that engaged the collaborative contribution of both teachers and social work students in the formal and professional student wellbeing structures of the school. Thus the implication of this research is that an effective cross-disciplinary collaboration requires a shift in the organisational culture from one that keeps the disciplines working in parallel (that is, in silos) to one that promotes the collaborative endeavours of both disciplines (that is, in symphonies).

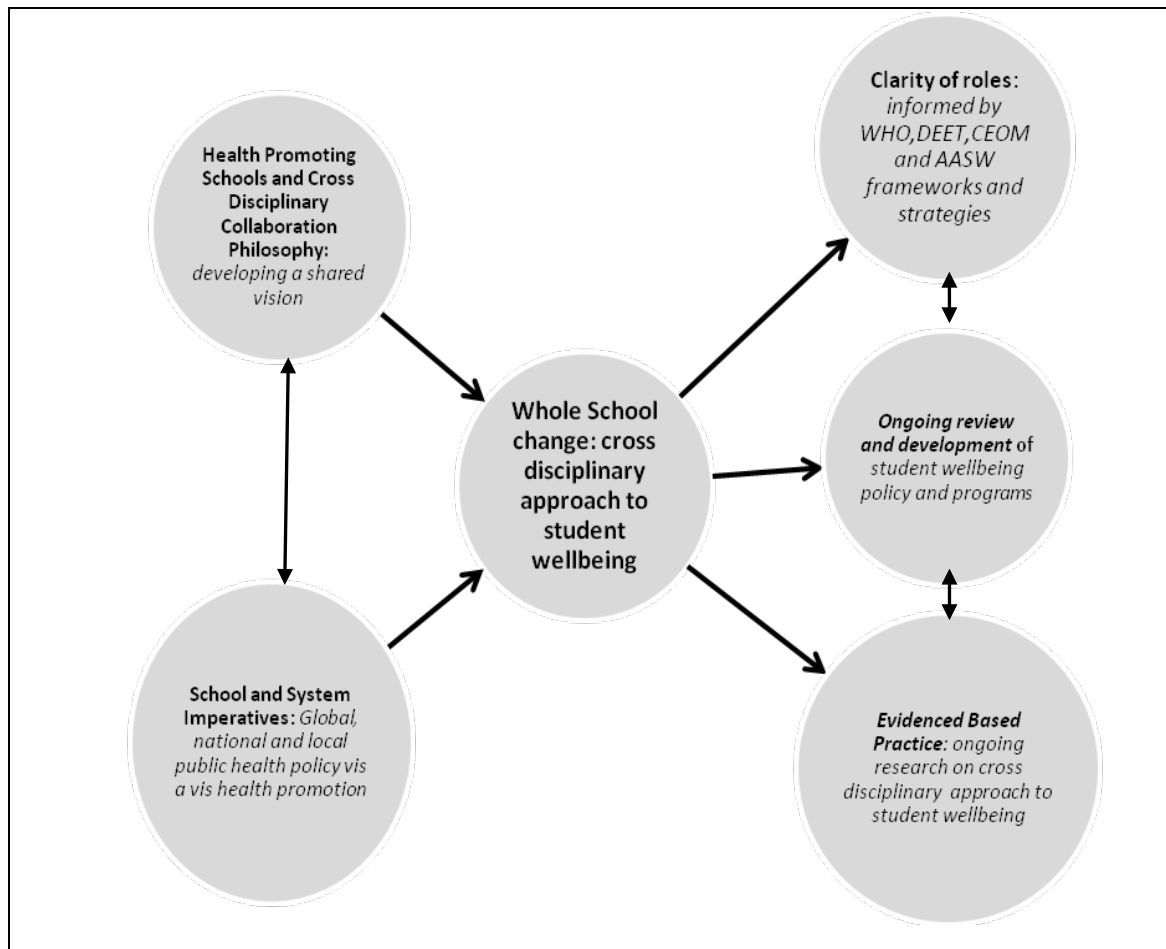
Cultural change though is not easy to implement. Lee (2004), an Australian authority on leadership development and organisational change, argues that changing cultures challenges stakeholders in ways that may be perceived as professionally and personally threatening and also takes time. So then how can such organisational culture be changed so that student wellbeing models that use a cross-disciplinary collaboration be advanced? Kouzes and Posner (1997) give some direction as to how the St Paul’s Model, and indeed any model based on the St Paul’s Model, can be revisited to become more affective.

They suggest five fundamental principles to consider when working shifting organisational cultures, each stage working towards changing attitudes, awareness and actions:

1. Making a case for change
2. Developing a shared vision
3. Developing effective and responsive practice
4. Modelling the way
5. Encouraging practise

Using Kouzes and Posner’s principles I argue that a cross-disciplinary approach to student wellbeing practice could be enhanced if schools adopt processes and practices that changes and challenges the school culture to more accurately reflect both an understanding of the health promoting discourse and an understanding of how cross-disciplinary collaboration can establish and sustain a health promoting school. To this end I propose a framework that schools can use when developing a cross-disciplinary approach to student wellbeing. This framework is illustrated in Figure 7.4 overleaf.

Figure 7.4: Health promotion and cross-disciplinary collaboration: Changing school culture



At the micro level, as indicated in Figure 7.4, a framework that would embed a cross-disciplinary approach in a school's formal and professional student wellbeing structures would:

1. Strategically and purposefully make the case for health promotion that is, develop a familiarity with and understanding of the global, national and local health promotion discourses.
2. Explore and develop an understanding of cross-disciplinary collaborations and how such collaborations can be used effectively in student wellbeing programs and practices.
3. Define and clarify discipline skills and expertise and map how each discipline contributes to student wellbeing programs.
4. Commit to ongoing evidenced based research and review the cross-disciplinary collaboration in light of the emerging research evidence.

At the macro level what is needed for HPS models and cross-disciplinary collaborations to be successful are guaranteed resources and funding streams to provide for health promotion as well as for the professional development of teachers and social workers. Such professional development would focus on why and how health actions and health promotion are linked in global, national, state and local economic and public health policy.

### **Recommendations for further research**

The goal of this study was to research the St Paul's Model with the intention of answering whether *the formal and collaborative professional arrangements employed in the St Paul's Model are (a) congruent with global, national and local student wellbeing policies as articulated by the HPS discourse; (b) effective in addressing and promoting wellbeing? And (c) can the St Paul's Model be an exemplar for other collaborations between teachers and social workers?*

The findings, although significant for understanding the St Paul's Model, have some limitations. One of these limitations was that the research focussed on *one* Victorian Catholic primary school. Future research could map the transferability of the Model to another such school to see if the social work contribution, adjusted to incorporate the research findings, was successful.

A second limitation was that the Model relied on the principal's leadership and her social work knowledge and skill. Future research could pursue the effectiveness of the Model when transferred to another Victorian Catholic primary school, with an onsite or an offsite social worker who was part of the student wellbeing core team and worked with or without social work students. Such research would return data on the importance of having a qualified social worker rather than a qualified teacher to implement student wellbeing programs and the influence of the positional power of the principal on the development of the model. This research would also return evidence of how universities could continue to engage schools in the training of social workers.

Future research could also include a more detailed analysis of the impact of student wellbeing programs on student achievement. This would provide definitive evidence as to whether there was a link between the students' wellbeing and their achievement and contribute quantitative data to the qualitative data offered here to enhance the evidence gathered during this research. Further, research could gather data on the effectiveness or otherwise of implementing the '*Health Promotion and cross-disciplinary Collaboration: Changing School Culture*' framework that I articulated at the conclusion of this research. Finally, future research needs to be

undertaken in programs and formal and professional structures that could move the programs closer to the classroom and away from the margins into the mainstream of schooling.

## Chapter 8: Reprise: the next journey

This journey began with a long held desire to privilege the voices that spoke to me throughout my formative and professional years. I began as a teacher and found myself adding the bow of social work to those of my teaching skill and expertise. My dream was to implement a student wellbeing program that brought together my two passions: teaching and social work, and move them closer together to form a symphony. Whether the Model will keep moving the disciplinary silos towards disciplinary symphonies is for further research and scholarship. My view is that, even amidst the discordant notes that stakeholders voiced, harmony was evident. The Model did pioneer a program that was unknown in the Catholic primary school landscape and it ventured into the hitherto unknown and undeveloped territory of the HPS discourse, University partnerships and community engagement. In its infancy, there was no knowledge of the HPS frameworks to inform the Model and no plan to direct it. There is now a corpus of HPS literature to inform the knowledge and skills available to the Model. Should interdisciplinary collaboration become part of the Catholic primary school landscape in the future, this research offers its learning and insights into the socio-ecological, schooling and social work discourses and the ways in which each can co exist, with integrity and purpose, in the school.

For now, for me, the journey has turned full circle. I am teacher again, as I am researcher, but this time in a university setting. Part of my task now is to teach social work students how to negotiate the primary and secondary school landscape, how to contribute their expert knowledge and skills to schools and how to assist schools in addressing student, family and school disadvantage and dislocation. Similarly, my task is to teach teachers how to be open to the contribution of social work to student wellbeing programs.

In 2010 I excitedly, with the assistance of a colleague from the Victoria University School of Education, delivered a unit entitled 'Schools and Student Wellbeing'. This unit had a cohort of twenty five social work students sitting alongside thirteen education students. An exciting beginning to the mentoring and shaping of the next generation of professionals. I hope that the contribution that I, social worker, beginning academic and researcher, make into the future will further the Brigidine and social work emancipatory values that are the core of my living and

being. In so saying, my final sentence belongs to Daniel Delaney, the founder of the Brigidine Congregation who instructed that ‘what you are those who come after you will be’.

## Appendix 1: History of health promoting school

Year	Event	Outcome
WHO 1948	World Health Organisation was established	Redefined the focus onto preventative health: <i>'Health is a complete state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'</i> .
WHO 1978	Alma Ata Declaration	134 nations are signatories (including Australia): <i>'The declaration acknowledges that health is more than the absence of disease and expands the notion of people as being more than independent biological units to one which encompasses the idea that people are affected by their social, economic and natural environments.'</i>
WHO 1981	The Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000	The major themes of The Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000 were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity in health</li> <li>• Health promotion</li> <li>• The need to develop Primary Health Care to enhance preventative activity in primary health care settings</li> <li>• Cooperation between government, community and the private sector</li> <li>• The need to increase community participation.</li> </ul>
WHO 1985	'Healthy Cities' movement emerges (following a conference in Canada)	This new approach to public health highlighted the interconnections among what seemed to be diverse elements and problems in society. 'Healthy Cities' core processes involved fostering collaboration among citizens and people from business, government and other sectors of society who recognised that their interconnection could be used to promote the wellbeing of the entire community.
WHO 1986	1 <sup>st</sup> International Conference, Ottawa, Canada	Resulted in the Ottawa Charter. Established five action areas for the New Public Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating supportive environments by enhancing the physical and social environments of communities</li> <li>• strengthening community action by enabling people to have more power and control over their own health</li> <li>• developing personal skills to promote the empowerment of communities</li> <li>• reorientating health services towards illness prevention and health promotion</li> <li>• Building healthy public policies by putting health on to the planning agendas at all levels of government</li> </ul>
Australian Better Health Commission 1986	Commonwealth of Australia	The Commission produced a review of the nation's health from a social perspective and published three volumes making recommendations on national health problems.
WHO 1988	2 <sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Health Promotion, Adelaide, Australia	Recommendations drew attention to the need to build health public policy to strengthen the action areas listed in the Ottawa Charter

WHO 1991	3 <sup>rd</sup> International Sundsvall Conference, Sweden	Released a declaration to describing a supportive environment 'A supportive environment is of paramount importance for health. The two are interdependent and inseparable'. Emphasises settings as playing a pivotal role in shaping population, and personal, health outcomes and include the family, schools, and workplaces, as well as local neighbourhoods, and specific micro-networks such as religious groups or community places such as libraries. Each of these settings develops its own unique culture and climate, but all remain interconnected to varying degrees.
European Network of Health Promoting Schools 1992	WHO Scottish Health Education Group	The report of the Symposium described the health promoting school as 'a combination of health education and all the other actions which a school takes to protect and improve the health of those within it'. Developed into the European Network of Health Promoting Schools in 1996.
International Union of Health Promotion and Education 1994	International Union of Health Promotion and Education	The International Union of Health Promotion added health promotion to its name to become International Union of Health Promotion and Education
WHO 1995	Health Promoting Schools (HPS)	Founded on the principles of the Ottawa Charter. The World Health Organisation initiated the approach in May, launched on the back of the Global School Health Initiative. The goal of WHO's Global School Health Initiative was to increase the number of schools that can truly be called 'Health-Promoting Schools'. A Health-Promoting School was defined as 'a school constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working' (WHO, 1996). Guidelines entitled 'Development of Health-Promoting Schools – A Framework for Action' were published by a WHO working group in December 1995, after being reviewed during national and international meetings (IUHPE, 2000).
WHO 1997	4 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Health Promotion, Jakarta, Indonesia	The focus of this conference was on the inclusion of the private sector in decision making. Five priorities areas were listed for future action
WHO 1999	5 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Health Promotion, Mexico	Focus was on equity and inequalities within and between countries and future actions, particularly through health promotion
WHO 2005	6 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Health Promotion, Bangkok,	The focus of this conference was on the determinants of health in the context of the globalised world. The Bangkok Charter calls for strengthening of commitment from a wide range of stakeholders towards achieving health for all.
United Nations 2006	United Nations	8 Millennium Development Goals set for 2015. These goals form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions to meet the needs of the world's poorest.

Based on Keleher et al. (2007) and Renwick (2006)



## Appendix 2: History of social work in Victorian state schools

	Critical event	Role
1949	Employment of first social worker. Attached to the psychologist	Work with children and families
1970s	Karmel Report highlighted the link between social disadvantage and educational outcomes Social workers worked within 'disadvantaged schools' Experienced teachers sponsored to undertake social work degree Social workers join with guidance officers and speech therapists	Work with school communities to reduce social inequities Based in regions, work with other professionals to service students and families
1980s	Restructure of education services to create School Support Centres Expanded multidisciplinary teams	Social workers offer case work, group work, consultation and advise to principals, in-service, crisis intervention, policy and program development
1990s	Neo liberal policies, market driven principles see the outsourcing of school support services. Language of social justice discouraged and staff – teaching and other – faced uncertain employment futures School social workers deployed to school clusters and become accountable to school principals Social workers were fired and then rehired on contract work Formation of the School Social Work Special Interest Group [SSWSIG]	Social work activities hampered by their professional isolation and outsourcing of social work tasks Inconsistent services to schools as school budget constraints determined the level of social work involvement in schools SSWSIG and their union the Community Public Service Union [CPU] lobbied for structural change, improved pay and conditions and the relocation of school social workers in multidisciplinary teams and on one site to service a cluster of schools
2005 and beyond	'Primary Welfare Initiative',	Schools may or may not employ social workers to help implement the <i>'Framework for Student Support Services in Government Schools'</i> . Federal and State education policy and OBE has school social workers competing with local priorities and issues.

Based on Barrett (2003)

### Appendix 3: School social work practice models and tasks

Social worker role	The social worker task	The social work model	Power location
Control	To <b>communicate</b> the expectations of the school to student, parent or community	Residual model, Traditional clinical model	With the institution Enshrines the school's dominance
Information giving	To <b>transmit</b> messages to parents and community	Traditional clinical model	With the institution Information exchange is one way and unreceptive to outside influence or negotiation'
Information exchange	To <b>facilitate</b> the exchange of information between parents, social agencies and/or the community	Social interaction model	With the institution Limited sharing – between stakeholders. Information exchanged limited to what is needed to make the student/family more compliant to Institutional needs and effective resourcing of school activities
Limited involvement	To <b>co opt</b> students, parents, social agencies and community in the School's nominated tasks	Social Interaction Model	With the Institution Power imbalance remains unchallenged and dependent on how Institution constructs its activities and priorities
Transactive – negotiated	To <b>assist</b> students, parents and community to articulate their interests, develop competencies and negotiate with the school on a more equal footing Social worker is 'catalyst' or 'concert master'	Community development model School change model Indirect services model	Shared between key stakeholders: students, parents, social organisations and Institution. Structural change

Based on Rimmer et al. (1984)

## Appendix 4: Catholic Social Teaching and AASW social work values and ethics

Catholic Social Teaching (Ebear et al 2006)	AASW Code of Ethics
<i>Dignity of the Human Person: a belief in the inherent worth and dignity of the human person is fundamental to all Catholic Social Teaching</i>	<i>Human dignity and worth All have a unique worth, a right to wellbeing, self fulfilment and self determination, consistent with the rights of others</i>
<i>Common good and Community: human dignity can only be realized and protected in the context of relationships with the wider community</i>	<i>Dignity and worth: Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person Social workers foster individual wellbeing, autonomy and personal/social responsibility, with due consideration for the rights of others A satisfaction of basic human needs, equitable distribution of services and resources, equal treatment and protection under the law, social development and environmental management in the interests of human welfare Social workers have special regard for those who are disadvantaged, vulnerable, oppressed or have exceptional needs</i>
<i>Option for the Poor: the moral test of society is how it treats its poor. Public policy must be looked at from the perspective of how policy may impact on the least advantaged</i>	
<i>Rights and Responsibilities: human dignity and healthy community are consequence of the preservation of human rights</i>	<i>Service to humanity Meet personal and social needs Enable people to develop to their full potential</i>
<i>Role of Government and Subsidiarity: the state has a positive moral function. The role of Government is to promote, preserve and advance human rights and the common good to all its members</i>	<i>Social Justice social workers promotes distributive justice Social workers espouse the cause of human rights, affirming that civil and political rights must be accompanied by economic, social and cultural rights</i>
<i>Economic Justice; the economy must serve people not the other way around</i>	<i>Social Justice Social workers act to change social structures that preserve inequalities and injustice.</i>
<i>Stewardship of God's Creation: the goods of the earth are a gift from God and intended to be used to benefit all</i>	<i>Social Justice Social workers meet their responsibilities to society by engaging in action to advocate for equitable distribution of resources</i>
<i>Promotion of Peace and Disarmament: peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent on the right order among human beings</i>	<i>Human Dignity and Worth Social workers recognise and respect group identity and interdependence and the collective needs of particular communities</i>
<i>Participation: community participation of all people at minimum level is fundamental to a just society and the preservation of human dignity</i>	<i>Service to Humanity Social workers promote public participation in societal processes and decisions and in the development and implementation of policies and services</i>
<i>Global Solidarity and Development: responsibility for each other crosses national, racial, economic and ideological differences</i>	<i>Service to humanity Meet personal and social needs Enable people to develop to their full potential Social workers reject the abuse of power for exploitation or suppression. That support anti oppressive policies and practices that aim to empower clients</i>

## Appendix 5: Barriers and risks to school social work

Policy/organisation barriers	Resource related barriers	Professional and cultural barriers	School related barriers
The nature and complexity of social work and of seeing results	Securing long-term full-time employment	Having to be a generalist and responding to diverse needs	Lack of willingness of some schools to realise the needs that some students have
Working in a system that is not predominantly welfare	Lack of supervision and support	Other social workers who will resist an expansion of their role	Changes in education make some school less willing to learn
The power of principals can have a negative influence on social workers	Discrimination within the system	Social worker passivity	Sometimes teachers are not well suited to the job and remain unchanged by welfare and discipline policies
Broader educational reforms which show a total disregard for social justice and see education solely in terms of budgets and educational outcomes	Lack of time due to large student population and being the sole worker in the school	Social worker's emphasis on service provision with little discussion or engagement in policy and planning	Schools preferences for purchasing hard equipment, for example, computers, air conditioners over employing social workers
Policy sees to say that there is no such thing as student and families who experience difficulties	Lack of power, low morale and little recognition	Lack of credibility	
Non-analytical, non-critical culture, non-reflective culture	Not enough opportunity for growing, learning, exploring and expanding the professional role	Low profile of social workers	
	Isolation of school social workers	Decision makers have little understanding of how social work is a specialised role in education	
	Selection of quality new staff and supervision new staff	Spreading oneself too thinly, or only servicing a few students	
	Lack of family supports in rural areas		

Based on Mahony (1995)

## Appendix 6: Summary of archival and primary data sources

Documentation	<p>St Paul's 1994–2005, <i>Breakfast Club Report</i>, St Paul's School, West Sunshine, Report.</p> <p>1994– 2005, <i>Newsletters</i>, St Paul's School.</p> <p>1994–2005, Parent Partnership Team Meeting Minutes 1994 -2005.</p> <p>1996, <i>Newsletter</i>, 5/08/1994.</p> <p>1996, <i>Research: Vietnamese Parent Participation</i>, St Paul's School, West Sunshine, 28th March 1996.</p> <p>2001, Parent/Carers Experiences of the Enrolment Processes at St Paul's Primary School, St Paul's School, West Sunshine, October 2001.</p> <p>2004, Anti Bullying and Harassment Teacher Survey, West Sunshine, 17/11/2004.</p> <p>2005, <i>Breakfast Club Survey</i>, St Paul's School, West Sunshine, August-December.</p> <p>2005, <i>An Evaluation of the bullying policy (1995–2005)</i> St Paul's School, West Sunshine, 1/11/1999.</p> <p>2005, <i>Newsletter</i>, 17/07/2005.</p> <p>St Paul's 1995, <i>Newsletter</i>, 18/09/1995.</p> <p>2000, <i>Newsletter</i>, 30/05/2005.</p> <p>2004, <i>St Paul's School Out of Hours Care</i>, St Paul's School, 09/08/2004, Program and Policy Planning</p> <p>2005, Breakfast Club Report 1994 -2005, St Paul's School.</p> <p>2005, <i>Parent Survey 2005</i>, St Paul's School, 30th May, Newsletter.</p> <p>2005, Partnership and Sponsorship Records 1994–2005, West Sunshine.</p> <p>2005, Policy Audits: School Development Plan Minutes 2000–2005, St Paul's School and Minutes.</p> <p>2005, <i>Validation Review 2005</i>, West Sunshine.</p> <p>Victorian Government 2002, St Paul's School Registration Review Melbourne, 2002.</p>
Journal entries Social work student Letter from primary school student	<p>W, A 2005, Thank you to Sr Doris Testa, 14/12/2005.</p> <p>S A. 2005, social work student Journal to Sr Doris Testa, 4/08/2005.</p> <p>H. 1997, social work student Journal to Sr Doris Testa, 19/03/1997.</p> <p>K. 2000, social work student Journal to Sr Doris Testa, 22/10/2000.</p> <p>Letter from primary school student 'M' to Sr Doris Testa re bullying concern</p> <p>Personal journal and work diaries, Sr Doris Testa, 1993–2005</p>
Physical artefacts	<p>Photos: school celebrations, art installations</p> <p>School Song</p> <p><a href="http://www.stplsns.w.melb.catholic.edu.au/content/aboutus/schoolsong.htm">http://www.stplsns.w.melb.catholic.edu.au/content/aboutus/schoolsong.htm</a>.</p>
Surveys X 72	<p>St Paul's students (20)</p> <p>St Paul's staff (20)</p> <p>Parent Partnership Team (10)</p> <p>Social work students (18)</p> <p>University field education coordinators (4)</p>
Focus Groups X 3	<p>St Paul's students</p> <p>St Paul's staff</p> <p>St Paul's Parent Partnership Team</p>

## Appendix 7: Primary School Student's Survey

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this discussion group and study. Please answer all the questions as best as you can. The teacher will help you if you are not sure of how to fill in the questions. If you feel uncomfortable about doing this, you can stop at any time.

Your age last birthday:						
Your class/grade:						
Please tick which programs you have been part of (✓)		What do you think of the programs?				
		😊😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊
Breakfast Club						
SEASONS						
Playground Program						
Homework Club						
Help in the classroom						
Breakfast Club						
The social work students make my time at school a easier						
The social work students make my time at <i>school</i> easier						
The social work students make my time in the <i>playground</i> easier						
The social work students make my time in the <i>classroom</i> easier						
I would tell my friends to go to programs run by the social work students						
😊😊😊😊😊 really really agree	😊😊😊😊😊 really agree	😊😊😊😊😊 really agree	😊😊 don't agree	😊 don't agree at all		

## Appendix 8: St Paul's Primary School Staff

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this discussion group and study. Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. Your responses will assist in future plans to collaborate with University Schools of Social Work.

This questionnaire will be considered in conjunction with information offered via the focus group feedback which will be conducted with St Paul's Staff.

<b>Your Name:</b>			
<b>Your present role in the school:</b>			
<b>How long have you been at St Paul's school?</b>			
<i>Please tick which programs you have had students participate in or that you have referred students to</i>			
1. Breakfast Club		2. Playground Program	
3. SEASONS		4. Help in the classroom	
5. Homework Club		6. Referred students for lunch orders	
7. Transition Program		8. Referral of a student via the Welfare Committee	
9. Swimming Program		10. Policy Writing i.e. Out of School Hours Care	
11. Special Programs e.g. Celebration Year, School Production, School Camp		12. Other – please name	

<i>The following questions are aimed at contribution of social work student involvement in school based programs</i>					
<b>The goal of the classroom based programs is to assist students to better attend to teaching and learning programs. Please rate your experience of social work student involvement in Classroom Programs</b>					
<b>SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree U: Undecided A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree</b>					
	<b>S/D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S/A</b>
Social work students assisted child[ren] to participate more effectively in classroom learning					
Social work students assisted the teacher to attend to her/his task of teaching					
Social work students implemented the social skills program with success					
The Social skills program assisted some students more than others					

Social work students worked in partnership with the classroom teacher to assist individual students					
Social work students were able to work with students in ways supportive of teaching and learning programs					
Social work students were able to interact with children with purpose and direction					
Over time, social work students were more able to understand how children learn and how they could best support teaching and learning programs					
Social work students established positive and purposeful working relationships with St Paul's staff					
<b>Some of the difficulties of the Social Skills Program are:</b>					
<b>Some of the positives of having the social work student program are:</b>					
<i>The following questions are aimed at gathering your thoughts on the other programs that social work students are involved in.</i>					
<b>Please rank in from 1 – 11 the programs you would consider important for social work students' continue involvement</b>					
	Breakfast Club		Playground Program		
	Homework club		Referred students for lunch orders		
	SEASONS		Help in the classroom		
	Special Programs e.g. Celebration Year, School Production, School Camp		Policy Writing i.e. Out of School Hours Care		
	Swimming Program		Referral of a student via the Welfare Committee		
	Transition Program		Other – please name		
<b>Thinking about the social work students Program what factors or conditions enabled/empowered the implementation of the program?</b>					
<b>Thinking about the social work students Program what factors or conditions constrained or hindered the implementation of the program?</b>					
<b>Other comments:</b>					

*Thank you for your time. Your feedback is appreciated.*

Please place your questionnaire in a sealed envelope and return to the Wellbeing Coordinator/Principal

Regards

*Doris Testa CSB*

*1/70 Delbridge Drive*

*Sydenham 3037*



## Appendix 9: Parent Partnership Team Survey

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this discussion group and study. Please answer all the questions as best as you can.

This questionnaire will be considered in conjunction with information offered via the focus group feedback which will be conducted with Parent Partnership Team.

<b>Your Name:</b>					
<b>Your children are in [please circle]</b>			JMA	MMA	SMA
<b>How long have you been at St Paul's school?</b>					
<i>The following questions give feedback on your experience of the social work student Program at St Paul's School. Please tick which programs you have had <b>heard about or had your child[ren]</b> participate in</i>					
Breakfast Club		Playground Program			
SEASONS		Help in the classroom			
Homework club		Referred students for lunch orders			
Transition Program		Referral of a student via the Welfare Committee			
Swimming Program		Policy Writing i.e. Out of School Hours Care			
Special Programs e.g. Celebration Year, School Production, School Camp		Other – please name			
<b><i>The following questions ask about what you think about having social work students at St Paul's School</i></b>					
The purpose of the social work student program is to work with the class teachers to help children at school. Please indicate how much do you agree with the following statements <b>SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree U: Undecided A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree</b>					
	SD	D	U	A	SA
Social work students help children with their classroom work					
Social work students help children with their friendships					
Social work students help children with their playground activities					
Social work students help St Paul's school to care for children					
<b>Thinking about the social work students Program what things enabled or empowered the program?</b>					

<b>Thinking about the social work students Program what things constrained or hindered the program?</b>
<b>Other comments:</b>

Thank you for your thoughts. They are appreciated and will help with further planning. Please place your response in an envelope and post to: *Doris Testa CSB, 1/70 Delbridge Drive Sydenham 3037*

## Appendix 10: Social Work Student Survey

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. Please answer all the questions as best as you can.

<b>Name:</b>					
<b>My current position is:</b>					
<b>Year of Field education placement at St Paul's school</b>					
<b>Field Education Placement was</b>	Field Ed. 1		Field Ed 2		
<b>I was on placement:</b>	on my own		With other students		
<b>While on placement I participated in or facilitated the [please tick]</b>					
Assisted in Policy writing, e.g. Out of Hours School Care		Transition Program			
Breakfast Club		SEASONS			
Help in the classroom		Special Programs, e.g. Celebration Year, School Production, School Camp			
Homework club		Swimming Programs			
Playground Program		Lunches for students program			
Social skills program		Other [please name]			
<p><i>The following questions are aimed at rating your experience of the Field education placement as a <b>learning experience</b> i.e. how effective the placement was for you in linking theory to practice.</i></p> <p><b>SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree U: Undecided A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree</b></p>					
	SD	D	U	A	SA
<b>Orientation Activities</b>					
The Orientation Activities helped me understand the school					
The Orientation Activities helped me understand how schooling and social work have same/different values, ethics, enterprises					
<b>Theory/Conceptual skills</b>					
My placement gave me opportunity to integrate theory with practice					
My placement helped me reflect on the impact of policies, economics and structures on schooling					
I understood the theories that I learnt at University and was able to practice them while at St. Paul's school					
<b>Practice</b>					
The learning opportunities provided met my needs as a student and learner					
The learning opportunities were challenging but manageable					
The placement helped me with future directions					

with regards my work/study					
<b>Supervision</b>					
Supervision met my needs regarding					
• Education – linking theory to practice					
• Support – a balance of structure and guidance					
• Administration/management – understanding and managing the task of school social work					
Supervision was focussed on empowerment of students within a school setting					
Individual supervision met my personal needs					
Group supervision was helped me to develop my insights with regards the place of social work in school settings					
The mixture of individual and group supervision provided a positive learning opportunity					
I would recommend a Field Education Placement at St Paul's school to other students					
<b>Thinking about your Field Education placement within St Paul's, what factors or conditions <i>enabled/empowered</i> your experience?</b>					
<b>Thinking about your Field Education placement within St Paul's what factors or conditions <i>constrained or hindered</i> your experience?</b>					
<b>Suggestions that would contribute positively to the Field Education Program within St Paul's School</b>					
<b>Other comments:</b>					
<b>If the need arises, I would be happy to be contacted to contribute additional comments or to clarify my responses</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>		
<b>The best time to contact me is</b>	<b>On this number:</b>				
Thank you for your thoughts. They are appreciated and will help with further planning. Please place your response in a sealed envelope and post to: Doris Testa CSB 1/70 Delbridge Drive Sydenham 3037					

## Appendix 11: Field Education Coordinators survey

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this discussion group and study.

<b>Name</b>					
<b>University</b>					
<b>Year of field education coordinator/liaison role</b>					
<p><i>The following questions are aimed at rating your experience of the Field education placements at St Paul's school as a <b>learning experience</b> for your students</i></p> <p><b>SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree U: Undecided A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree</b></p>					
	SD	D	U	A	SA
<b>Orientation Activities</b>					
The Orientation Activities helped the students understand the school setting and the place of school based social work practice					
<b>Theory/Conceptual skills</b>					
The placement gave students opportunity to integrate theory with practice					
<b>Practice</b>					
The learning opportunities provided for the students meet the goals and objectives set by the University and AASW					
The learning opportunities were challenging but manageable for students					
The placement helped our students with future social work studies					
The placement prepared our students for future social work jobs					
<b>Supervision</b>					
Supervision meet our requirements regarding					
• Education					
• Support					
• Administration/management					
Supervision was focussed on both theory and practice					
Individual supervision met students individual needs					
Group supervision met students individual needs					
The mixture of individual and group supervision provided a positive learning opportunity					
I would recommend a Field Education Placement at St Paul's school to other students					
St Paul's School and the University formed a positive and productive partnership					
The partnership was mutually beneficial to both partners					
<b>Thinking about your Field Education placement within St Paul's, what factors or conditions constrained or hindered the students' experience?</b>					

Thinking about your Field Education placement within St Paul's, what factors or conditions <i>empowered or enabled</i> the students' experience?			
Suggestions that would contribute positively to the Field Education Program within St Paul's School			
Other comments:			
If the need arises, I would be happy to be contacted to contribute additional comments or to clarify my responses	Yes		No
The best time to contact me is	On this number:		
<p>Thank you for your thoughts. They are appreciated and will help with further planning. Please place your response in a sealed envelope and post to:</p> <p><i>Doris Testa CSB</i>  <i>1/70 Delbridge Drive</i>  <i>Sydenham 3037</i></p>			

Enquiries: Any questions regarding the project titled *Social Work Field Education and Its Contribution to Wellbeing Programs within Victorian Catholic Schools* can be directed to the senior investigator, Professor Carolyn Noble, of the Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development, on 99192917.

In the event you have any complaint about the way you have been treated during the study, or an enquiry that the senior investigator has been unable to satisfy, please write to or phone – The Chair  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
Victoria University  
P.O. Box 14428 CMC  
Melbourne 8001, PH: 03 9688 4710

## Appendix 12: Focus Group Guide Questions

<b>Role of the Focus Group Facilitator:</b>
The goal of this activity is to gather the <i>group</i> response and experience of the <i>social work students in Schools</i> program. These responses will be added to the <i>individual responses</i> already collected as part of the study.
The following questions are presented as a guide only and are not meant to constrain you; for example, you may wish to follow up issues of particular importance raised by group participants or ask the following questions in a different order.
<b>(Approximately 45 mins)</b>
You may also wish to reword the questions.
<b>Thinking about your role and the current expectations of teachers and their ability to respond to student wellbeing issues:</b>
1. What do you see as the main stresses placed on teachers/school staff/parents/carers? 2. What do you see as the main issues that present themselves to teachers?
<b>Think about the Social worker in school Program:</b>
1. What do you see as the <b>strengths</b> of the program?
2. What do you see as the <b>weaknesses</b> of the program?
3. What do you regard as the <b>opportunities provided</b> by the program?
4. What do you regard as the <b>threats, or barriers</b> to the effectiveness of the program?
5. Would you change the program in any way? How?
6. Are there other comments you would like to add?
Following the focus group, you are asked to send a summary of the group responses to: <i>Doris Testa, 1/70 Delbridge Drive, Sydenham 3037</i>

## Appendix 13 (a): Permission to Conduct Research – Victoria University Ethics Committee

TO	Professor Carolyn Noble School of Social Sciences Footscray Park Campus	DATE 07/03/2007
FROM	Professor Michael Polonsky Chair Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee	
SUBJECT	Ethics Application – HRETH 06/257	

Dear Professor Noble,

Thank you for submitting this application for ethical approval of the project:

**HRETH06/257 Social work field education and its contribution to wellbeing programs  
within Victorian Catholic Schools**

The proposed amendments have been accepted by the Chair, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee and approval for application HRETH06/257 has been granted from 07/03/2007 to 07/03/2009.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants, and unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date (by **07 March 2008**) or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the VUHREC web site at: <http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php>

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 9919 4625.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

**Professor Michael Polonsky**

Chair

Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee



## Appendix 13 (b): Request for Permission to Conduct Research

Sr Doris Testa  
6/27 Bendigo Avenue  
Elwood  
3184  
9531 2340  
0411126301

Mr S. Elder,  
Acting Director of Catholic Education,  
Catholic Education Office,  
P.O. Box 3,  
East Melbourne. 3002.

Dear Mr Elder,

I am currently undertaking PhD studies at Victoria University. The research component of the study requires data collection from St Paul's Primary School, West Sunshine. I am writing to seek approval to approach the Principal of St Paul's Primary School, West Sunshine, Mr Damian Casemento, to request her approval to invite students and parents from the School to be involved as participants in the research project.

The basic aim of the research is to examine the efficiency, sustainability and transferability of the social work student involvement in the school – an involvement that has spanned eleven years and support the development and implementation of school based wellbeing programs. I will describe the research in more detail in the attached document which I have prepared in the light of CEOM Policy 2.8.

The material required to be included is to be found as Appendices.

Victoria University requires that I have CEOM approval *enclosed with* my Ethics application. This being the case, I undertake to forward Victoria University approval when it arrives.

Yours sincerely

Doris Testa CSB

## Appendix 13 (c) Permission to Conduct Research: Director, Education Office, Melbourne



**Catholic Education Office**  
Archdiocese of Melbourne

In reply please quote:

GE06/0009  
1256

15 November 2006

Sr D Testa CSB  
6/27 Bendigo Avenue  
ELWOOD VIC 3184

Dear Sr Doris

I am writing with regard to your letter of 3 November 2006 in which you referred to your forthcoming research project titled *Social work Field Education and its contribution to wellbeing programs within Victorian Catholic schools*. You have asked approval to approach a Catholic primary school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, as you wish to survey students, parents and staff.

I am pleased to advise that your research proposal is approved in principle subject to the following standard conditions. Additionally, I ask that you forward to this Office a copy of the notification of approval from the University's Ethics Committee when it becomes available.

1. The decision as to whether or not research can proceed in a school rests with the school's principal. So you will need to obtain approval directly from the principal of the school that you wish to involve.
2. You should provide the principal with an outline of your research proposal and indicate what will be asked of the school. A copy of this letter of approval, and a copy of notification of approval from the university's Ethics Committee, should also be included.
3. A Criminal Record check is necessary for all researchers visiting schools. This must be shown to the Principal before starting the research in the school.
4. No student is to participate in the research study unless s/he is willing to do so and informed consent is given in writing by a parent/guardian.
5. If additional schools (other than St Paul's Primary School, Sunshine West) become involved in the research, you should provide the names of these schools to the Knowledge Management Unit of this Office.
6. Any substantial modifications to the research proposal, or additional research involving use of the data collected, will require a further research approval submission to this Office.

1 of 2

7. Data relating to individuals or the school are to remain confidential.
8. Since participating schools have an interest in research findings, you should discuss with the principal ways in which the results of the study could be made available for the benefit of the school community.
9. At the conclusion of the study, a copy or summary of the research findings should be forwarded to this Office. It would be appreciated if you could submit your report in an **electronic format** using the email address provided below.

I wish you well with your research study. If you have any queries concerning this matter, please contact Mr Mark McCarthy of this Office.

The email address is <[km@ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:km@ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au)>.

Good wishes

Yours sincerely



Terri Hopkins  
ACTING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

## **Appendix 13 (d): Permission to Conduct Research – St Paul’s School Principal**

Mr Damian Casamento

Principal,

St Paul’s School,

West Sunshine 3020

Dear Damian,

I am currently undertaking PhD studies at Victoria University. The research component of the study requires data collection from St Paul’s Primary School, West Sunshine. I am writing to seek your approval to invite students, staff and parent from the school to be involved as participants in the research project.

The basic aim of the research is to research the contribution of social work student involvement in the school – an involvement that has spanned eleven years.

I would like to speak to the school students in their classes, staff, at a staff meeting and Parent Partnership Team at a Team meeting to request their co-operation, explain that there is no obligation for them to participate and that they are free to withdraw at any time, explain the procedures involved, and assure them that their confidentiality will be preserved. They will also be informed that if any concerns arise concerning the project they should contact school Principal. Information about the research will be advertised via the school Newsletter. For ethical considerations I would also request that the administration and conducting of the focus groups and questionnaires be facilitated by the Wellbeing Coordinator.

I would discuss the most suitable way of collecting the specified data, distribution and collection of permission letters with yourself or your delegate, as early as possible in the new year.

Yours sincerely,

Doris Testa CSB

## Appendix 14: Plain Language Statement

### *Social work Field Education and its contribution to wellbeing programs in a Victorian Catholic School*

**Investigators:** Doris Testa and Professor Carolyn Noble PhD (supervisor)

The aim of this project is to undertake a study of social work field education and its contribution to wellbeing programs within Victorian Catholic Primary schools using a case study approach. The in depth study will include questions regarding the effectiveness, component parts, outcomes, acceptability, equity, quality and development of a particular model – *The St Paul's Social Skills Program*– of partnership between social work students, universities and school communities and the intersection between school based wellbeing programs, field education and university partnerships within this model. The study will use focus groups, questionnaires, and key documents which will provide qualitative data for use in the evaluation of program purpose, effectiveness and outcomes. Included in this study will be the following stakeholders: primary school staff, students, parent/carers, social work students and university field educators.

**Procedure:** You/your child(ren) will be asked to give their thoughts about the value of social work students' contribution to any of the following programs: Breakfast club, SEASONS, Homework club, Playground Programs, Social skills Programs or any other program that has had social work students involved. These thoughts will be collected in two parts: [1] a questionnaire given by the St Paul's Wellbeing coordinator and [2] participation in a focus group activity. Both the filling out of the questionnaire and participation in the focus group will be held at the school, during school time.

**Time involved:** It will take about 45 minutes to be part of the group discussion and to complete questionnaires.

**Benefits for you and society:** In giving feedback, the value of or otherwise of having social work students on placement at the school, will enable other primary schools and Universities to form school based partnerships that will benefit primary school students.

**Consent and withdrawal:** Please fill in and sign the Informed Consent Form following this page. In doing so, you will be agreeing to take part in the research. You are free to withdraw consent and participation at any time during the data gathering stage.

**Privacy of information:** Your name will appear only on the Informed Consent Form. You and/or your child/ren's name(s) will be removed from any completed questionnaires received by the investigator. Only the supervisor and the investigator will have access to the information gathered. Any publication of the results will not refer to individual's responses in any way.

Where individual's names are used, they will be replaced by pseudonyms. Only group results will be posted.

If participating in the groups or filling out the questionnaires causes you or your child/ren any distress or worry, you are able to contact any of the people below

Mr Damian Casamento: St Paul's Principal	93631568
Victoria University Psychology Unit	9919 4418
Doris Testa, Research Student	99192851 or 0411126301
Professor Carolyn Noble: Research Supervisor	99192917

Enquiries: Any questions regarding the project titled ***Social Work Field Education and Its Contribution to Wellbeing Programs within Victorian Catholic Schools*** can be directed to the senior investigator, Professor Carolyn Noble, of the Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development, on 99192917. In the event you have any complaint about the way you have been treated during the study, or an enquiry that the senior investigator has been unable to satisfy, please write to or phone-The Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University,,P.O. Box 14428 MCMC,

Melbourne 8001, PH: 03 9688 4710

## Appendix 15 (a): Consent Form Primary School Students

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM - SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Social work Field Education and its contribution to wellbeing programs within a Victorian Catholic School*

STAFF SUPERVISOR: *Professor Carolyn Noble PhD*

STUDENT RESEARCHERS: *Ms Doris Testa*

COURSE: *Doctor of Philosophy*

Copy to Submit to Researcher

Parent/Guardian Consent

I ..... (*the parent/guardian*) have read and understood the information provided in the Information Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child, nominated below may participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way

Name of Parent/guardian: .....

(block letters)

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name of child: ..... Class: .....

Child Assent

I ..... (*the participant aged under 18 years*) understand what this research project is designed to explore. What I will be asked to do has been explained to me. I agree to take part in the project, realising that I can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason for my decision.

Name of child: .....

(block letters)

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Staff Supervisor: Professor Carolyn Noble

Student Researcher: Doris Testa

Signature: .....

Signature .....

Date: .....

Date: .....

## Appendix 15 (b) Consent form: Staff, Parent Partnership Team, Social Work Students and Field Education Coordinators

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM - QUESTIONNAIRE AND FOCUS GROUP

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Social work Field Education and its contribution to wellbeing programs within a Victorian Catholic School*

STAFF SUPERVISOR: *Professor Carolyn Noble PhD*

STUDENT RESEARCHERS: *Ms Doris Testa*

COURSE: *Doctor of Philosophy*

Copy to Submit to Researcher

I ..... have read and understood the information provided in the Information Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way

Name: .....

(block letters)

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Staff Supervisor: Professor Carolyn Noble

Student Researcher: Doris Testa

Signature: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Date: .....

Enquiries: Any questions regarding the project titled *Social Work Field Education and Its Contribution to Wellbeing Programs within Victorian Catholic Schools* can be directed to the senior investigator, Professor Carolyn Noble, of the Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development, on 99192917.

In the event you have any complaint about the way you have been treated during the study, or an enquiry that the senior investigator has been unable to satisfy, please write to or phone-

The Chair  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
Victoria University  
P.O. Box 14428 MCMC  
Melbourne 8001, PH: 03 9688 4710



## Appendix 16: St Paul's School song

### St Paul's School Song

We are children of the story  
a story that's travelled far  
to dream and make good memories  
underneath the southern stars

Our families name us holy  
and bless us with their care  
they send us to St Paul's school  
to learn a love that's rare

Our love is for the young ones  
our love is for the old  
our love is seen in how we speak  
our love is named as gold  
From the corners of the wide world  
Diversity is feast  
we learn of lives from many lands  
Respect for those with least

We travel on like St Paul did  
and are proud of who we are  
we're Christians, Jesus people

Our message must travel far  
Our message is of justice  
our message is of peace  
our message is the lives we live  
God's love must never cease

From the church of our West Sunshine  
From the school within its midst  
Not one person must be stranger  
Not one person be dismissed

## Appendix 17: Parent participation audit 1994–2005

Community relationships in St. Paul's School, categorised under Epstein's eight headings	
<b>1. Audience</b> Classroom/Weekly assemblies BATS fundraising/dress up day – Multicultural days School liturgies Christmas carols Bi Annual Art Show School Open Days	<b>2. Fundraisers</b> Hot cross buns/Easter fundraisers Collect-a-cap Compassion project Jeans for Gene's day Fathers days raffle X 8 parents/carers organising Beslan: raising money to assist people in Russia Mothers/Father's day stalls
<b>3. Spectators</b> Beginning of school year school open for parents/carers Ash Wednesday Preps start school – open house Family open day to celebrate parish 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary Catholic education week – Open School Wednesday Eucharist [weekly attendance at class/parish Eucharist]	<b>4. Decision makers, Policy makers</b> Parent Partnership Team <i>Survey participants</i> – Early School Leaving, Outside School Hours Care, Validation Document, School Reviews, School Productions, change of school uniform Vietnamese Parent Participation Research Parent Experience of Prep Enrolment Research Survey – Adjustment of School Hours
<b>5. Advocates</b> Source funding for Breakfast club, School Production Transition Program – K-P Participation in Special Needs Funding programs Class placements – annual invitation for parent/carers to have input to their child(ren)'s classroom allocation PPT	<b>6. Learners</b> Parent/teacher interviews Parents as Tutors Program Vietnamese parent meeting parent/cares Curriculum information evenings/Transition Meetings School nurse to meet prep parents Science day-open classroom File Book and Report recipients per term Annual JMA/MMA swimming parents/carers in attendance
<b>7. Teacher aides</b> The SEASONS program – parent leaders Parent tutors Excursion leaders – all levels Sports carnival co leaders SMA camp parent leaders [Boomerang Camp] <i>Wizard of Oz, Joseph, BATS</i> Production – parent on production team, sewing, selling tickets, hair/make up etc Book Club Organisers Library Aides	<b>8. Organisers</b> 3–5 year old weekly play group Canteen helpers Library helpers Annual Chocolate drive Organising Sausage Sizzles Art show/sponsorship Co directors/School Production Parent Organisers – as hoc tasks groups Co-leaders on school camps/sports days

Source: PPT Minutes (St Paul's 1994–2005b)

## Appendix 18: Breakfast Club Sponsors 1995–2005

PRE 1995	1995–1996	1997	1998	1999	2000–2005
Brigidine Sisters Disadvantaged Schools Program Monica Gould MLC Routley's Bakery Parent/carer donations	Brigidine Sisters Monica Gould MLC Routley's Bakery Parent/carer donations St Vincent de Paul	Brigidine Sisters Monica Gould MLC Routley's Bakery Parent/carer donations SFYS	Anonymous donor Brigidine Sisters Concept Fasteners Monica Gould MLC Our Lady of Good Counsel Primary School, Deepdene OZ CHILD (until March 1998) Parent/carer donations Routley's Bakery Sunshine Magistrate Court	Anonymous donor Brigidine Sisters Concept Fasteners For Children Monica Gould MLC Our Lady of Good Counsel Primary School, Deepdene Routley's Bakery Parent/carer donations Sunshine Magistrate Court	Brigidine Sisters Maltese Women's Group Parent/carer donations Sunshine Magistrate Court Sunshine Green Grocers SFYS

Source: Breakfast Club Sponsorship History (St Paul's 1994–2005a)

Funding for the School Liaison Officer ceased in 1994. Following this other arrangements had to be pursued if the Breakfast Club was to continue.

Since 1994, funding arrangements and staffing of the Breakfast Club has been through a number of arrangements, mainly relying on donations to the Breakfast Club. Staffing of the Breakfast Club has involved a paid coordinator (1997, 1998), volunteers and social work students (1994 - 2005).

## Appendix 19: Discipline proforma

Today	
During ✓ (please tick)	
	Recess
	Lunch
	Teaching learning time
✓ (tick)	
	Used Offensive Language
	Used Rough Play
	Acted in a dangerous way
	Made give (him/her)
	Excluded from playing, games
	Caused physical harm to
This behaviour affected in this way	

You are invited to talk with your child and help find another way to solve the problem if it happens again.

Next time I could act differently by

---



---



---

*We thank you for taking the time to talk with your child about the ways to keep her/him self and other safe. Please feel welcome to talk to Sr Doris, the teachers or social workers about this should you need to.*

*Please ask your child to return this to the school tomorrow.*

Signed (student)

---

(parent/carer)

---

Principal/Deputy Principal/Teacher

---

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