

# **Character Education: The Formation of Virtues and Dispositions in 16-19 Year Olds with particular reference to the religious and spiritual**

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# **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

## **The Formation of Virtues and Dispositions in the 16-19 Age Range with particular reference to the religious and spiritual**

**‘It’s who you are!’**

### **Executive Summary**

The overall aims of the study were first to understand how 16-19 year old students understood the concepts of virtues and values and what they perceived to be the main influences on the formation of their own characters and second to understand how schools can inhibit or facilitate the formation of virtues and values in this age group.

The research project comprised in depth case studies of three Sixth Form centres in one city in the south west of England between 2004 and 2006. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from students with teachers providing qualitative data as well as school documentation. The three Sixth Form centres selected for the study represented different forms of provision; the A Level centre of a General College of Further Education (FE College), a Church School Sixth Form and a Community School Sixth Form. The total number of students in the sampling frame was 551. This represented the whole population of year 12 students in the two schools and an opportunity sample of students in the College.

The research was undertaken in four phases with each phase building cumulatively on the previous one. First, preliminary theory building based on nine student focus groups provided data about how students understood values and virtues, followed by in-depth personal construct interviews with nine individuals, and semi structured interviews with ten teachers responsible for pastoral and academic development. Second, these data informed the construction of an 81-item questionnaire, which was subject to exploratory factor analysis to identify any key themes or patterns, which could be understood as dimensions of character. Third a cross sectional exploration of relationships was conducted relating the character dimensions to achievement and learning dispositions and finally nine students, who were identified as having ‘high levels’ of character, were interviewed for more detailed narrative explanation.

The findings emerging from the studies suggest a relational, dynamic, integral and critical vision for character education. It is relational because it is informed and shaped by the network of relationships, worldviews and traditions in which a student is located, with the most important being the most proximate and personal. It is dynamic, emerging over time and storied in the trajectory of a student’s life, including their hopes and aspirations for the future. It is integral because it is embodied in an ongoing process of reflection on their own values, feelings and actions and those of others. Fourthly, it is critical because there is a tension between ‘good’ relating to human well being and ‘bad’ relating to oppression and violence and it is not always straightforward to distinguish between these, and this is reflected in the ‘gaps’ between espoused and practiced values on a personal, societal and global level.

To summarise, this enquiry offers findings in three crucial areas of character formation:

- 1. How young people today understand their moral identity**
- 2. How education contributes towards the formation of character**
- 3. What are the key influences on young people's character formation.**

### **How young people today understand their moral identity**

Students understand character as 'who you are' and have a set of core values that shape their moral identity, the most important of which are trust, fairness, caring and honesty.

Students have a sense of the spiritual and the religious, despite their general unengagement from organised religion.

Students expect to vote, but are unengaged from politics. They have a strong sense of social justice and a desire to act on behalf of the marginalized or oppressed, but many are not engaged with their local communities.

Students have a strong sense of learning and changing over time, 'becoming a better person' and taking responsibility for their growth as human beings.

Students have a strong sense of 'experienced' and 'embodied' values, however, they report a gap between having values and putting them into practice.

There is a marked lack of a formal language through which students can articulate the cognitive concepts of values and virtues.

### **How education contributes towards the formation of character**

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is of central importance for character formation in schools. These relationships are characterised by trust and respect.

The most important pedagogical strategy for character formation in schools is teachers modelling values. Students see schools as places that help to shape their values, but not through assemblies, tutor time or in non-examinable subjects.

There is a positive relationship between character dimensions, achievement and learning dispositions.

### **What are the key influences on young people's character formation.**

Mothers are the most influential people on students' moral identity. Friends are the second most influential, above fathers at third who themselves are followed by siblings.

Local communities and religious traditions are not major influences on students' values with contradictory evidence concerning the influence of the media.

## 1. Introduction

This study was undertaken during 2005 and 2006 in three Sixth Form centres in a city in the south west of England. The overall aim of the study, which developed cumulatively in four phases, was to explore the ways in which young people understand moral values and their character formation, and the ways in which schools can inhibit or facilitate character education. This chapter sets out the background and rationale for the study and a brief historical review of the literature relating to character education.

## 2. Background and Rationale

Schools and the wider educational systems they operate within are subject to an understandable pressure to provide the economy with functionally competent persons equipped to meet the increasingly competitive demands of employment. In so doing they may ignore or, more likely, take for granted the equally important dimensions of personal education that encourage a student to become aware of himself or herself as a responsible person. One might say that while schools have become better focused on the task of making students more response-able, they have given scant attention to the business of helping them to become more responsible. Both dimensions of education are essential if a student is to be capable of taking his or her full role in society with a sense of purpose. A reinvigorated conscious focus upon character education in schools is necessary if a proper balance is to be restored to the educational process.

We define character education in the following way: First, that there is such a thing as character, an interlocked set of personal values and virtues which normally guide conduct. Character is about who we are and who we become and includes the virtues of responsibility, honesty, self-reliance, reliability, generosity, self-discipline, and a sense of identity and purpose. Second, that this is not a fixed set, easily measured or incapable of modification. Third, choices about conduct are choices about 'right' or 'wrong' actions and thoughts. Character is not achieved within a vacuum, for in order to become a person an individual needs to grow up in a culture, and the more diverse the culture the more of a person he or she has a chance of becoming. Our argument is that active character development is not simply about the acquisition of academic and social skills, for it is ultimately about the kind of person a student becomes and wants to become and this includes the spiritual and religious dimensions of life (Arthur, 2003: p3).

There is a lack of meaningful language to describe virtues and character development in English schools. The British tradition of virtue language in education has been eroded and as a result there is an impoverished discourse on character, which has created an absence of coherence in the rationale for our educational system. There is a lack of clarity in the moral objectives schools set themselves, especially in the area of personal responsibility, and practice in this area is rarely evaluated. Government initiatives to enhance character education continue to remain patchy, specialist and marginal rather than brought into the mainstream. There is little support or training for teachers and socially excluded groups of young people are least likely to be involved in character development initiatives. A key task

is to re-map the territory of character education in Britain, especially within the 16-19 age group.

## **2.1 Fragmented Policies**

The twin aims set out in the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts and the preamble of the National Curriculum of England concern learning achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The latter is sometimes referred to collectively as ‘personal development’ and has been significantly ignored and under-funded compared to the drive to raise standards of academic achievement in education policy. Furthermore, contemporary policy and research rarely explores the relationship between the two – often treating them as completely different things. This research investigates the relationship between these two strands.

There is a need to bring the various fragmented character policy initiatives and discussions together. National and local policy rhetoric on character needs to be examined to identify the gaps in school practice. In Britain at present the government is advocating the teaching of virtues in schools in order to form the character of students. However, there is no consensus among schools or educational researchers of what constitutes virtue or how it should be taught. Indeed, there is more often opposition to the very idea of teaching virtues. Nevertheless, the government wishes to explicitly promote certain virtues and has been much influenced in that regard by developments in the USA. For example, the British government has recently announced that it wishes to encourage a ‘national community service year’ modeled on the Americorps and Freedom Corp in the USA. This new programme is designed to expand volunteering, to create a culture of service and to support worthwhile community activity, particularly among 19-20 years olds who have a gap year before entry to university. The government has also encouraged the Higher Education Funding Council to provide universities with the resources to encourage community service projects for all students who wish to participate in them.

The government has announced its intention to provide some form of residential experience for every school child in England that will be designed to help build their character. It has already made it compulsory for schools to provide each child with the experience of serving their local community as part of the new Citizenship subject. In the rationale of the National Curriculum, argues that there is a consensus in a core set of values which can be promoted in schools, for example, personal responsibility, honesty, self-discipline, reliability and a sense of duty. In summary, the government wishes to encourage a collective effort for the common good to individuals, the wider community and the environment, and a sense of charitable responsibility by all for all (QCA, 1999).

## **3. Literature Review**

Education might be said to be concerned, in general, with the formation of character. Certainly it is only in the last hundred years that there has been any serious debate about the legitimacy of the role of the school or college in character education. Indeed for most societies, the purpose of the tribe, community, family and the state, as well therefore as the



school 'system' when such formally emerged, was to provide an environment for the cultivation of good character and the nourishing of the common good. The range of contexts involved in the formation of character illustrates the over-arching comprehensiveness of the task, its inter-disciplinary nature and the community-wide responsibility for developing an individual's commitment to the task 'to be of good character'. Historically, there has been a strong assumption that a person's and a community's flourishing depended upon the successful execution of the process.

### **3.1 Historical Overview**

The Greek tradition suggests that character (ethical quality) is predicated of persons not actions and must be acquired and cultivated. Plato believed that when a person recognised the good he would want to practice it, but that this discernment was confined to an elite who therefore had a duty to set the standard for the rest. For Aristotle, good character required the acquisition of good habits, the practice of which would liberate an individual to recognise the virtues for himself and thus make good choices. Plato and Aristotle may be contrasted in the sense that Plato believed that the majority would need to be coerced by the discerning minority to behave well, whereas Aristotle assumes that a virtuous life cannot be compelled (Adams, 1999).

The Christian tradition brought a new dimension to the understanding of character through a profound appreciation of personal responsibility. In a world that was the good creation of God who was therefore also good, the good life – the Christ-minded life – is believed to be within the grasp of each person, if they set their heart on it. Aquinas emphasised the role of reason in making moral choices and thus brought together the insights of Christian faith with the rigour of Aristotle in a fruitful development of Natural Law. The task of Christian ethics is to discover what God is enabling and requiring Christians to be and do for the world's sake. It involves the education of the total person, body, mind, heart, will, senses, passions, judgements and instincts. Character, rooted in intellectual insight, emotional intelligence and rational judgement, is the outcome of the choices individuals make.

A weakness of the Christian approach to character in the minds of many is that it appears abstract and says little to teachers about the pedagogical practices of character formation. Nevertheless, it is the dominating influence on most Western character education programmes because of its generosity, responsiveness and human insight.

The eighteenth century Enlightenment gave birth to both secular insights and experiments regarding character. The Scotsmen James Barclay and David Fordyce, respectively drew attention to the importance of example, and the role of the imagination in character education. Frances Hutcheson urged an objective study of human nature while John Locke underscored the importance of character formation over intellectual achievement, a distinction neither Aristotle nor Aquinas would have understood. David Hume and Jeremy Bentham were among many during this period who sought to sever the relationship between 'value-laden' religion and 'knowledge-based' education, including character education.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of interesting experiments such as Robert Owen's Institution for the Formation of Character that strove to 'improve the habits, dispositions and general character' and Edward Craig's 'Charactograph' that classified students in a class each day according to their performance and awarded them white, red, blue, or black tokens for their efforts.

Victorian education in class-conscious Britain focused upon developing character that fitted pupils for their future role in society. Thus the production of persons suited to the needs of work was the dominant purpose of elementary education. Teachers inculcated social roles by requiring obedience without question and punishing deviant behaviour, and were often poorly educated themselves, having been chosen for their ability to deliver 'education' uncritically.

In contrast, amongst the growing middle class there was a marked interest in character formation for the roles their children would inherit. Strong characters were required to support the principled stand they would need to take in favour of the established virtues of society, such as bravery, loyalty, diligence, application and manners. The regime of the reformed public schools, often linked with the name of Thomas Arnold of Rugby, embodied the manliness found in great literature and celebrated the tough virtues associated with participation in team games. In this period character education held together religious and economic perspectives: a Christian gentleman needed to be both generous and intelligent, and inspired by economic ambition.

There was much ambiguity in the Victorian understanding of character, and confusion in the methods employed to form it; indeed it could be said that the period was satisfied with an appearance of good manners and standards in public life. However, while there remained a relatively coherent religious outlook, there was more than a tinge of altruism and a real desire for improvement in society. Indeed the decline of a belief in religion as the basis of moral life did not necessarily imply a lowering of moral standards. The Ethical Union (1886) established the Moral Instruction League (1897) comprising many of the leading educational thinkers of the time to provide a secular basis for morality. The intention was to make character the chief aim of school life and to ensure that the outcome was not knowledge of the virtues but their practice in moral behaviour. The government's *Introduction to the Education Code (1904 and 1905)*, stated a similar purpose for the elementary school, 'to form and strengthen the character and to develop intelligence, of the children entrusted to it.'

Character Education was likewise a primary concern of the American public school system. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the basis was theological in the sense that the purpose was to provide America with godly citizens. But the grounding of character formation in theology began to loosen at much the same time as it had in Britain. The Character Education League, for example, (perhaps influenced by the British Moral Instruction League) identified 31 ingredients of an integral virtue called 'character'.

The twentieth century produced research findings in various disciplines that appeared to promise significant developments within character education. The whole project was

initially criticised in the reports of The Character Education Enquiry by Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May (1928-39), who, on the basis of a profile of a morally mature person devised a questionnaire to investigate the attitudes and behaviour of young people on stealing, cheating and lying. They concluded that there was no such thing as character, which they defined as the persistent disposition to act according to moral principle in a variety of situations. The impact was slight in both America and Britain; indeed books continued to appear, especially in America, on character education.

Throughout the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century, cognitive psychology grew more influential as did figures such as Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg and Eric Erickson whose theories of child development in moral awareness were concurrent with a cultural interest in psychological explanations over traditional concepts of character. Moreover, such cognitive approaches seemed more compatible with the liberal traditions of critical thinking than the more didactic themes of virtue-based instruction. The period was also characterised by moral relativism, the search for self-fulfillment and a subsequent commitment to search for value-free pedagogy in the classroom. Despite the obviously problematic nature of such a search, discussions of character education fell out of fashion, although the work of Peck and Havighurst (1960) helped to revive explicit interest in the area.

The process of values clarification coincided with a commitment to search for value-free pedagogy in the classroom: any attempt to base an appraisal of human behaviour on an objective description of what was characteristic of human nature was abandoned in academe. There was left only the individual, with goals confined to the fulfilment of the self. But the self was a shadowy term with little content when understood independently of the Christian notion of the soul.

Cognitive psychologists believed that emphasis on the structure of moral reasoning would present a common method of developing an ethical perspective. But since such theories were developed largely independently of any reference to traditional perspectives that focused on the introduction of children into the knowledge, values and virtues of civil society, the result was an open-ended liberalism consistent with self-fulfilment rather than the sustaining of the Common Good. David Carr (2002) questions the scientific basis of such approaches and therefore their relevance to character formation, while James Leming (1993) claims that the confused nature of academic enquiry in the area frustrates effective development of character education in schools.

A litany of alarm about the moral condition of society in the West, particularly with regard to the younger generation, has stimulated widespread concern in the subject in recent years. Teenage dysfunction is seen in drug abuse, cruelty, underage sexual activity and crime, all of which is played out against a background of family breakdown, domestic violence, poverty and an exploitative media. Schools observe the impact of this in the anxiety, emotional insecurity, and lack of social skills amongst their students, which contribute to their aggressive behaviour and low self-esteem. In turn, these all challenge the ability of schools to develop positive character traits. Thomas Lickona (1996) after listing further ills of contemporary society suggests that altruism is rare and has been replaced by self-interest, while others believe that moral relativism has replaced personal responsibility with social

causation. Kilpatrick (1992) refers to it as 'a crisis in moral education'. Despite this discourse of moral decline, there remains confusion and wide-scale debate over the definition, concerns, processes and appropriate outcomes of character education.

### **3.2 Contemporary debates on character education**

Alan Lockwood (1997) has offered a tentative definition of character education as '...a school-instituted program, designed in co-operation with other community institutions, to shape directly and systematically the behaviour of young people by influencing explicitly the non-relativistic values believed directly to bring about that behaviour'. He assumes that goals of moral education can be pursued, that behavioural goals are part of character education and that antisocial behaviour on the part of children is a result of an absence of values.

One might add too, that character education is not a matter of changing behaviour but of bringing about certain kinds of behaviour. It is not simply concerned with behaviour control, but with personal transformation; it therefore includes education in schools, families, and through the individual's participation in society's social networks. Lockwood's definition of character as inculcating 'non-relativistic values' is a brave one in a constantly changing pluralistic society, where it seems increasingly unreasonable to believe that there could be agreement about a common set of values. Suspicion is quickly aroused by any suggestion that there could be underlying values which characterise the best in human nature. Any such proposals are deemed problematic and challengeable, provoking the question 'how do you feel about it?', rather than 'is it true?'

Significant criticisms of moral education have acknowledged these difficulties. David Purple (1997), for example, attacks moral educators because they do not examine the complexity of the social context that underlies the social statistics to which they draw attention. Moreover, he argues, according to what frame of reference do they consider teenage pregnancy to be a moral transgression? Timothy Rusnak (1998) believes that most moral education is driven by fear when in fact there never was a golden age of moral behaviour; every generation has had its own 'litany of alarm' as Harry McKown (1935) showed when he wrote of America in the nineteen thirties.

Terry McLaughlin and Mark Halstead (1999) take issue with current practices of character education in America, which, they claim, focus on a narrow range of virtues, use traditional pedagogy and attempt to demonstrate their effectiveness by the changed behaviour of students. Nash (1997) is, however, most extreme in his views, criticising current character education for its authoritarian approach, its nostalgia, a pre-modern understanding of the virtues, its anti-democratic reactionary politics, and its anti-intellectualism. In its place Nash would abandon any moral authority and any thought of a common moral standard by which to evaluate competing moral vocabularies. Unfortunately, in so doing, he seems to deny the possibility of any rational criticism of his own position.

The uncertainties surrounding character education have produced a number of approaches that are therefore frankly instrumental. Adult direction and authority is widely criticised, it

being maintained instead that children should have a say in their own education through child-centred methods that emphasise learning through experience, in peer groups and in a neutral environment where values are not imposed. Teachers are wary of being accused of indoctrination and are inclined to excuse themselves from the difficult task of deciding what values to promote, preferring instead to think that the task belongs to others, most especially to parents. The instrumental nature of much pedagogy leads to teachers taking less interest in ideas of development or the critical philosophies that might be brought to bear on the purpose and meaning of character education. Thus, even where, for example, there has been proposed a virtue ethics approach, teachers lack the language in which to think the issues through. It is ironic therefore, as Suzanne Rice (1996) has noted, that the school should be increasingly held responsible for the development of good character amongst its pupils when it constitutes no more than a part of a child's environment and it is recognised that virtue is sustained in interaction with the whole of one's physical and social environment.

On the whole contemporary definitions of character education in Britain and America only rarely regard the school as the main public institution involved in its development; the mass media, religious communities, youth culture, peer groups, voluntary organisations and above all parents and siblings carry more weight. Schools, at any rate some schools, do have a positive influence, but compared to the above it is comparatively small. It needs to be remembered that schools only complement the influence of the home and since there can therefore be conflict between the two it is wrong to entertain utopian hopes for the nevertheless important role which the school fulfils.

So what impact should or can a school have? David Brooks and Frank Goble (1997) follow the pattern provided by McKown (1935) and revived by Thomas Lickona (1992), which focuses on societal alarms, emphasises the community basis of all values, and looks to the school to develop an ethos, a curriculum and teaching strategies to bring about improvement. Brooks and Goble suggested a re-affirmation of standards as the answer to a perceived problem that younger people appeared not to know the difference between right and wrong. Whilst they proposed some teaching methods and a virtue ethics approach, they did not, however, explain what the latter would entail for a school curriculum. De Roche and Mary Williams (2001) agree that didacticism is useless and that successful character education will be based upon an individualised school approach in which each school finds its own consensus regarding what is worthwhile and good in life. In contrast, Ian Kelsey (1993) argues that character education will only succeed if there is a common methodology and a common curriculum across *all* schools, while Mel Noddings (1995) questions whether the way schools are structured is helpful to the moral mission of the school. For each of these authors, however, the ethos of the school remains a paramount influence in character formation.

### **Teaching and learning in character education – forms and processes**

Joel Kupperman (1991) suggests three stages of character education; first, the formation of good habits without serious moral reflection, second a period during which students begin to question and to develop a moral perspective of their own, and third the formation of strong personal identity with the capacity to make moral judgments of one's own. There are, of

course overlaps. Methods are adapted accordingly; dogmatic but not authoritarian instruction with sensitivity to feelings for others is followed by a study of literature so that other lives can be appreciated, discussed and judged, leading to the life-long process of active involvement in making one's own character. The success of this approach will depend upon sensitivity to social interaction, rational discussion and a democratic procedure that involves everyone.

Philip Vincent, who believes that virtues have to be transformed into rules in order to be intelligible and assessable, proposes rules and procedures for character education. Thus the virtue of respect becomes a rule to treat all human beings with respect so that one will, for example, not interrupt them when they are speaking. Bill Puka (2000) identifies six teaching methods. These are 1) instruction in basic values and virtues; 2) behavioural codes established and enforced; 3) telling stories with moral lessons, 4) modelling desirable traits and values; 5) holding up moral exemplars in history, literature, religion, and extolling their traits; 6) providing practical opportunities in school and in community where students can exercise these good traits. The methodology is indiscriminating in the sense that it can be applied in the delivery of the full range of approaches to character education from a total moral relativism to moral values objectively rooted in human nature.

Timothy Rusnak (1998) wants an integrated strategy so that *thinking, feeling, and acting* is to the fore, not merely discussing. The involvement of the whole school and the whole community is an essential perspective. Kevin Ryan and Thomas Lickona (1987) point more generally to the three elements of knowledge, feeling and action and Lickona (1992) develops them more fully. Firstly, the student learns moral content from the constantly changing heritage into which he enters and in which he is introduced to the practice of moral reasoning and intelligent enquiry. Secondly, the affective domain includes feeling of sympathy, care and love for others. The feeling of conscience is important here for it is partly cognitive in that one needs to know what is right, but it also stimulates guilt in two forms; destructive guilt, which might lead a person to think he is bad, and constructive guilt, which will lead a person to avoid bad actions. Thirdly, action depends upon the will of the person to overcome pride and self-interest and to practise what is good. Since character development takes place in community, it is necessary for each person to take part in the affairs of the community. Lickona (1996) further developed eleven principles, adopted by the Character Education Partnership in the USA as criteria for planning a character education programme and for recognising the achievements of schools through the conferment of a national award.

David Brooks and Mark Kann (1993) also list eleven elements that they regard as essential for character education. For them language is a key issue. Hence they believe, children must become familiar with the virtues by name, learn their meanings, identify appropriate behaviour, practise and apply them. Children should learn to use the language but they will only do this if it permeates the ethos of the school. Teachers should therefore always be positive in their style and encourage with 'Be on time', rather than by 'Don't be late'. They conclude: 'If the whole school community fosters the language culture, and climate of good character, the student who spends a significant portion of their time there will acquire the

words, concepts, behaviours, and skills that contribute to good conduct, ethical decision-making, and a fertile learning environment.’

School ethos and the importance of teachers is recognised by almost all character educators to be a vital dimension of character education (De Vries, 1998; Wynne and Walberg, 1985; Grant, 1982). The non-academic aspects of schooling are just as significant for the development of students for there is no such thing as a value-free school ethos. Wynne (1982, 1985, 1986 and especially 1997 with Ryan) asserts that the school could teach morality without uttering a single word, just by the quality of its relationships, organisation, style and overall ethos. The ‘hidden curriculum’ is therefore profoundly important; what was understood by the ordinary public school of the UK is widely appreciated in all schools. Hence great importance is laid on the relationships of teaching and administrative staff, with pupils and parents co-operating in a common enterprise. Collaborative teaching programmes that involve students working together are regarded as essential ingredients in the process.

Teaching itself is a moral activity based upon respect, attention to truth and a concern for justice and fairness. As John Wilson (1993) concludes: ‘Moral qualities are directly relevant to any kind of classroom practice: care for the students, enthusiasm for the subject, conscientiousness, determination, willingness to cooperate with colleagues and a host of others. Nobody, at least on reflection, really believes that effective teaching – let alone effective education – can be reduced to a set of skills; it requires certain dispositions of character. The attempt to avoid the question of what these dispositions are by employing pseudo-practical terms like ‘competence’ or ‘professional’ must fail.’

### **3.3 Empirical Research**

There are few empirical studies looking at character formation and dispositions and what is available appears to be based in the United States. Some previous research, however, has been undertaken looking at the development of students’ values, attitudes and personal qualities (Halstead and Taylor, 1997). Findings from these studies question the common perception that the popular view of young people is that they have little or no sense of right or wrong. On the contrary these research findings demonstrate the values and attitudes of young people, showing students to have a well developed sense of right and wrong as well a keen interest in the meaning of life and a desire to find out the purpose to life (Francis and Kay, 1995; SCAA, 1996). However, research by Simmons and Simmons (1994) also highlights the predominantly materialistic values of English teenagers in being concerned with money, physical appearance and possessions.

Evidence suggests that whether behaviour shows ‘good’ or ‘bad’ character may depend on the situation in which a person finds themselves, and that students make moral judgements as to what behaviour and values are appropriate by looking at the context preceding and the consequences (Vajda and Hajnal, 2005). Ross and Shetowsky (2003) suggest that individualistic cultures such as those of Western Europe and the United States, rely too heavily on a simplistic notion of good or bad character traits to explain and predict the reasons and causes of behaviour. Further to this, a study by Samuels and Casebeer (2005) demonstrated that student behaviour is not consistent across a variety of situations, perhaps

due to the individual circumstances of each situation. Samuels and Casebeer (2005) suggest that when people have an awareness of the relative impact a context may have on their behaviour, this may give them the opportunity to overcome the influences of a given situation.

A number of studies suggest the family plays the most important role in influencing students' values, and that students place value on loyalty and trust of friends (Taylor, 1996; Francis and Kay, 1995). Newman and Smith (1997) highlight the changing nature of the family in a study which found that 13% of families with dependent children were headed by lone parents, and these parents were predominantly mothers. This is an important consideration since moral emotions and understanding have been shown to be critical for personal and social development and as Kagan and Lamb (1987) discovered, in their study of the development of values and moral sense in young children, that moral sense is developed within the first twelve years of our lives.

Further to this, the extended family appears to play less of a role with most people less likely to live with their kin now than a decade ago. Relatives see their families less often, even though the family remains an important source of help and dominant source of support and care for most people (McGlone et al, 96), and for ethnic minority students, community influences may be particularly influential (Taylor, 1996). The media is commonly seen as having considerable influence on young people's values and attitudes. The extent of this influence is unclear (Burnett, 1996) and requires further investigation, but on average, people watch 26.1 hours of TV a week with a recent rapid expansion in the number of homes receiving a digital TV service: 57% of households receiving a digital TV service in May 2005 compared to 43% in April 2003 (GB. ONS, 06). The role of the Internet on students' values and attitudes is also an area requiring further investigation.

With the rapid pace of social change, schools are charged with enhancing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (Halstead and Taylor, 1996) and the 'values debates of the 1990s strongly associates spiritual and moral development with a whole school approach, school ethos and the idea of 'instilling citizenship' in students in order for them to become 'morally accountable members of society'' (Arweck et al, 2005: p329). There is evidence that some teachers feel the need to introduce experiential approaches to values education and citizenship in order to counter the overly cognitive nature of the national curriculum and to address issues of student behaviour (Arweck et al, 2005). There is also empirical support for citizenship to be communicated through learner-centred, process oriented pedagogy. An EPPI centre systematic review of the evidence of the impact of citizenship education on student learning and achievement suggests a holistic approach in which learning is related to experience and adopts a more conversational and negotiated style of teaching (Deakin-Crick et al, 2005).

The contribution of the school to character formation is based on the belief that adults have a duty to teach virtue and help children develop good habits (Wynne, 1991). Whilst the effects of character education programmes require further investigation, there is case study evidence that character education can turn schools around for the better (Scott, 1992; Lickona, 1993), and may lead to lower levels of vandalism, pregnancy and truancy



(Wooster, 1990). Extensive evidence is available of effective character building strategies through involvement of parents, use of stories, teaching by example, direct instruction, the learning environment and motivation to practice good behaviour, however, there is little research evidence that such approaches build character (Halstead and Taylor, 1996).

Modelling of values by teachers through setting examples and acting as role models emerges extensively as a key vehicle for values development (Lickona, 1991; Powney et al, 1995; Halstead and Taylor, 1996; Rose, 2004; Arweck et al, 2005; Kristjánsson, 2006). Further to this, evidence suggests that the role of the head teacher and their relationships with other adults within a school is widely acknowledged as being vital in establishing the ethos of a school (Powney et al, 1995). Within the character education movement, there are explicit materials about role models who could be emulated such as Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King as well as sports stars. However, parents are the most common role models and generally students choose a model of their own sex and ethnic group (Yancey et al, 2002). Taylor (1996) found evidence that students are able to voice and articulate their own values and reflect upon their cultural, learning and moral experiences in school in relationship to their teachers, peers, curriculum and school life. Within the classroom itself students articulate the qualities of the good teacher as someone who shows consideration and professionalism, is helpful and who listens to them (Taylor, 1996).

With respect to evidence of the provision by schools for the spiritual development of their charges, Woods and Woods (1996) indicate that when reporting on students' spiritual development, school inspectors focus on collective worship and assemblies, whilst Hallis (1995) suggests that little attention is given to spiritual development in Religious Education lessons and even less in other areas of the curriculum. A study by Francis and Kay (1995) found that only 6% of young people agreed that schools should have daily religious assemblies with only 33% agreeing that RE should be taught in school at all. There is conflicting evidence surrounding students' spirituality, so that whilst there is evidence of belief in some form of deity with younger children being more 'spiritual' (Hay and Nye, 2006); a majority of teenagers believe themselves to be agnostics (Francis and Kay, 1995). This contrasts with another study that suggested whilst many students do not believe they belong to certain religion, they still have a belief in God (Roberts, 1996).

Political participation of young people is a widely held concern, with previous evidence suggesting that students are less interested in politics than adults (Park, 1995). Other research indicates a relationship between politics and moral reasoning. In particular, studies by Handziska (2005) and Ferguson (2005), findings point to a negative impact on students' socio-moral reasoning where there is political turmoil in a country. Further to this, a study by Cislak (2005) about self interest, moral ascriptions and political perceptions, indicates that where political candidates serve the voter's self interest, they were perceived as more moral.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

Education is about engaging students with real issues in a reasoning way within a supportive environment. Robert Nash (1997) suggests that character education in schools separates

moral reasoning from moral conduct and therefore fosters an ethos of unthinking compliance rather than autonomous decision-making. He offers little if any evidence for this view. In contrast behind many traditional approaches to character education there lies the belief that students seek guidance and want discipline in order to give a sense of direction and order to their lives. Character is not formed automatically, but is developed through good teaching, good example and sound practice.

The wide variety of approaches to character education makes it impossible to evaluate them *en masse* – it is necessary to look at individual projects. Virtue ethics approaches appear to best justify traditional character education programmes because of their focus on role modelling, their behavioural emphasis and the importance they place on developing knowledge of a wide range of virtues. They take seriously the whole-person dimension of character formation and cannot be reduced to instrumentalism or private indulgence. Their sure grounding in the religious and spiritual tradition of Christianity may make them problematic for some. However, what is required is a new and thorough investigation into the relationship between the languages of morality, spirituality and theology, and the ways in which they can be brought together in fruitful conversation in pursuit of programmes of character education that motivate and inform personal and public concern for the general good.

## **4. Research Questions and Design**

### **4.1. Research Questions**

The overall aims of the study were first to understand how 16-19 year old students understood the concept of virtues and values and what they perceived to be the main influences on the formation of their own characters, and second to understand how schools might influence the formation of virtues and values in this age group.

The following research questions were identified:

1. What do students consider to be appropriate virtues and values for life in 21<sup>st</sup> century society?
2. How do students understand those virtues and values?
3. What resources do students draw upon in the formulation of their virtues and values?
4. What is the 'language in use' by young people?
5. What are the links between virtues and learning dispositions?
6. How and in what ways do schools and colleges inhibit or develop the formation of virtues and dispositions of character in Sixth Form students?

### **4.2. Research Design**

The research was an in depth case study of three Sixth Form centres in one city in the south west of England between 2004 and 2006. A case study design was selected because the research question required a depth of understanding and explanation for questions of policy and practice, which are influenced by a complex range of factors best understood in a particular context. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from students, with teachers providing qualitative data as well as school documentation.

The three Sixth Form centres selected for the study represented different forms of provision; the A Level centre of a FE College, a Church School Sixth Form and a Community School Sixth Form. The total number of students in the sampling frame was 551. This represented the whole population of year 12 students in the two schools and an opportunity sample of students in the College.

The research was undertaken in four phases of data collection and analysis with each phase building cumulatively on the previous one.

First, preliminary theory building, in which nine student focus groups provided data about how students understand values and virtues. A student from each group was selected for further personal construct investigations using repertory grid technique, with constructs and elements provided from the analysis of the focus group transcripts. Ten teachers with responsibility for student pastoral and academic development were then interviewed, and their views on the findings from the student data were also elicited. This data from teachers and students provided the empirical and theoretical basis for the design and construction of a questionnaire.

Second, building on the theoretical framework emerging from phase one, a questionnaire was designed, constructed, piloted and administered to the whole cohort of students. An exploratory factor analytic study was then performed to explore whether there were key themes or patterns, which could be understood as elements of character formation.

Third, a quantitative cross sectional exploration of relationships was conducted. Data were collected from students about their learning dispositions, and from schools about students' achievement at GCSE (national standardized tests taken the previous year), gender, ethnicity and religion. It was then possible in phase three to explore the relationships between the dimensions of character, learning dispositions, achievement, gender, race and religion.

Fourth, a group of students were selected for open ended, in depth interview in which qualitative data were collected to explore the ways in which students understood the themes emerging from the research.

## **5. Profiles of Schools in the Sample**

The following section provides a description of each of the three Sixth Forms in the study. They were chosen to represent a range of types of school, and a substantial cross section of the population of 16/17 year olds in the city. The context is important to convey given the nature of the research design.

### **5.1. Church of England Voluntary Aided School Site A**

The school is a flourishing comprehensive located in the centre of the city and has over 430 years of history being the only Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School in the city and diocese. It provides co-education for over 1450 students aged 11-19, with around 400 students in the Sixth Form. It has a proven record for academic achievement as well as sporting, dramatic and musical performance. As a Church of England school the values identified by teachers, parents and students are explicitly located within the Christian tradition.

One of the distinctive features of the school is its worship, engaging the students in a wide range of acts of worship, reflecting the diverse churches that members of the school community belong to. The school sees charity work as an expression of worship and makes special efforts at Harvest, Christmas and Lent. Children of other faiths are supported and their worship and beliefs are respected. Further to these activities, there are successful sports clubs and flourishing performing arts societies who put on plays and performances. Members of the Sixth Form initiate and organise rag week and various other activities to raise money for charity. Other clubs and societies include an Amnesty group, members of whom lead assemblies not only in their own school but other secondary schools in the area.

The school has two house systems, which in years 7, 12 and 13 are in tutor groups in a horizontal system and a vertical house system in years 8-11.

#### **Mission Statement/Aims**

The school is proud to allow students to achieve excellence within a Christian community and its mission statement is as follows:

‘Steadfast in faith’ we aim to rise above the ordinary by developing education which can transform lives and communities. Inspired by our faith in Christ and together with our parents, churches and communities, we aim for each person to reach their full potential in body, mind, heart and soul.

Our teaching will foster an understanding of human society and the worth and dignity of human beings, so that everyone in our community will be cared for unconditionally and valued equally.

Our students will be characterised by their personal understanding of faith, love of learning and striving to fulfill their own potential.

We expect every member of our community to engage with and practice behaviour consistent with the school's core values".

### **Core Values**

- Understanding and exploring our Christian Faith
- Valuing ourselves and valuing others: being committed to learning and respecting others, including their right to learn
- Being trustworthy and being a good friend
- Offering forgiveness and letting go of anger
- Understanding justice, respecting rules and taking care of the disadvantaged
- Good stewardship for our environment and belongings
- Both telling the truth and trying to find out what is really true
- Fulfilling our potential by doing our best and learning how to learn

### **Admissions policy**

The criteria for admission to the main school is, church attendance by parents and student. Four places are reserved each year for families from other religions. The school is regularly oversubscribed. In the Sixth Form students of all and non-faiths are welcome to apply.

### **Sixth Form**

The Sixth Form has its own specialist building within a short walking distance of the main school building that was opened in September 2004. There are over 35 'A' level courses and 3 advanced vocational courses offered. 85% of the 2005 year 11 leavers went onto further education courses with 71% returning to the school's Sixth Form. Students who enter into the Sixth Form are provided with a Sixth Form handbook, which contains a comprehensive range of information and guidance to study in the Sixth Form, as well as the Sixth Form enrolment contract. Students sign this on enrolment and agree to abide by the rules and Code of Conduct as set out in the student handbook. Senior students are appointed (four girls and four boys) at the end of the spring term from year 12. These students represent the school on many occasions and therefore the roles are regarded as both demanding and rewarding. Entrance requirements are five C grades at GCSE level with some science subjects requiring a B grade. Students make their application and are subsequently interviewed by the Head of Sixth Form. As with the main school, applications to join the Sixth Form are over subscribed with a current waiting list. 'A' level results for 2005 were a 98.1% pass rate with 47.1% at A or B grade. In some subjects there is 100% pass rate.

### **5.2. A Level Centre of the Further Education College - Site B Profile**

The College is a General College of Further Education with eight main centres throughout the city, and a specialist 'A' level centre created in September 2004 and located in the heart of the city. The College offers a diverse range of courses to a diverse range of people,

catering for students of all ages, from 14 to adult and has 40,000 students in total, many of whom are part time. The 'A' level centre offers students the widest choice of 'A' levels in the area with a choice of over 30 subjects and 850 'A' level places, attracting students to facilities such as 1000+ PCs with direct internet access, extensive library, teaching rooms, student support services and several choices of catering facilities. Many courses are offered at different levels including GNVQ and GCSE's alongside other vocational training such as award-winning engineering training.

The College offers students a 'lively, adult environment' where students 'gain all the confidence' they will 'need to succeed in higher education or work' that aims to bridge the gap between school and university or employment. The A level centre is managed in a friendly and supportive manner and doors are invariably 'propped' open so that if a student has a problem they will always be able to drop in and find someone to help them. There is also a unique student support service especially provided for the pastoral care of students.

The College prides itself on its 'student first' ethos, stating that college life is very different from school, with one-to-one subject based support to ensure student success. At the A level centre, students are treated as adults, with friendly, relaxed and informal working relationships. The College recognises that students respond well to clear structure and goals and parents are kept in touch through reports and meetings concerning progress towards these goals. The College encourages students to develop responsibility for their own learning within well supported and resourced programmes of study and each student has their academic and personal progress monitored by a personal tutor.

At the heart of the College is the Students' Union (SU) which is run by the students for the students, organising trips, tours, activities and events not only to raise money for charity but also for entertainment. In addition to this the student council and student ambassador schemes represent students at meetings and events and prayer meetings are held weekly in designated rooms across the centre.

## **Mission Statement**

The College mission statement is as follows:

“Success for all.”

“To work collaboratively with a range of partners to stimulate and fulfill the demand for lifelong education and training from the people of (name of city) and the surrounding area by providing a comprehensive range of high quality learning, which promotes equality of access and enables individuals and their communities to shape a better future.”

## **Core Values**

- Learners at the centre
- Teaching and learning the first priority
- Celebrating diversity

- Listening and responding
- Embracing change and innovation
- Mutual respect and trust
- Making partnership work
- Striving for excellence”

## **Admissions Policy**

Entrance to the ‘A’ level courses require 5 GCSE’s at grade C or above, which must include Mathematics and English Language or the equivalent relevant Key Skill literacy or numeracy qualification. The College’s A level results for 2005 were 70% A-C grades and the overall pass rate for those taking two or more A levels was at 96%. In some subjects there was 100% pass rate

### **5.3. Community Secondary School – Site C Profile**

The school is an 11-18 co-educational comprehensive school serving a town and nearby villages. It also draws some of its pupils from a neighbouring town and the city. There are 1650 pupils with over 300 students in the Sixth Form. The school was opened in 1956 and became the county’s first comprehensive school in 1964.

The school has a long established reputation for success that is based on hard work and high standards and is committed to the needs of all learners. The school believes that every single child is gifted and unique and aims to work with individuals to allow them to realise their potential and to help them find avenues to personal success and self esteem. The school expects children to be honest, tolerant and industrious as well as taking responsibility for their own learning and becoming good citizens.

The school is a happy one, working with local businesses and community groups and has created a dynamic and exciting learning centre that offers something for everyone with excellent sporting facilities, a vibrant creative and performing arts menu and a wide range of clubs and societies.

On admission to the main school, pupils are allocated to a tutor group in one of six houses. These are purpose built houses with common rooms and are the focal point for a variety of competitive, sporting, social and charity fund raising activities in the school. The pastoral care system is strong and popular with close monitoring of students’ progress and a regular flow of information to parents. The house system exists in years 7-11 only. In year 12 there are 8 tutor groups and in year 13 there are 7 groups and a personal tutor monitors students’ academic and personal progress. Registration for the Sixth Form is every morning and afternoon with weekly assemblies for the whole Sixth Form on Tuesdays. There are separate year group assemblies in the week as well, with year 12 on Thursdays and year 13 on Wednesday’s. There is an extended tutor registration period for the Sixth Form on Friday mornings.



## **Statement of Values/Aims**

- We consider that our school is a central part of the (name) community and the other communities that we serve.
- We regard each member of our community as a valuable individual.
- We respect the opinions of each individual and will always strive to accommodate differences.
- We regard education as an entitlement for all children.
- We embrace learning as a lifelong and life enhancing activity.
- We value honesty, tolerance, kindness, fairness, trust and mutual respect.
- We believe that all members of our community have a right to be safe, cared for and to live without fear.
- We believe that learning takes place within a calm, ordered and disciplined environment.
- We believe that every child and every adult possesses unique talents and qualities.

## **Admissions Policy**

The school serves the local community and the number for admissions in September 2005 was 281. As new accommodation is being developed, the school anticipates this number to rise. Admission to the Sixth Form is open to all who can benefit from the variety of courses on offer with entrance based upon applicants' suitability for and commitment to the courses offered and where they can be expected to have a reasonable chance of success. Students make their application and are subsequently interviewed by the Head of Sixth form. Advice and guidance is offered to students and parents/guardians when selecting appropriate courses.

## **Sixth Form**

The school has a large and lively Sixth Form, which caters for students with a wide variety of interests, talents and career aspirations. Some 65% of students stay on into the Sixth Form to AS and A2 levels or GNVQ courses, and the facilities are of good quality. There is a specialist Sixth Form area with facilities such as a common room, teaching rooms, private study rooms and information technology rooms with access to PCs and Internet access. The school offers a wide range of courses including over 30 different 'A' levels at AS, A2 level as well as Intermediate GNVQ and GSCE courses. All students are expected to follow a wide range of broader activities as part of their education and on entry sign a Code of Conduct contract and receive their own personal planner and academic diary.

The 'A' level results for 2004 were a 97.4% pass rate with 54.4% at A or B grade and 78.4% attaining grades A-C. In most subjects there was a 100% pass rate.



## **6. Phase One Methodology: Preliminary Theory Building**

### **6.1. Introduction**

In this chapter we describe the first phase of the research the purpose of which entailed three types of data collection and analyses. Firstly nine focus group interviews with students, secondly repertory grid interviews with a subset of students from the focus groups and thirdly semi structured interviews with teachers with responsibility for student pastoral and academic development. The rationale, methodology and findings are discussed for each of these steps, concluding in a synthesis of the findings and development of our conceptual rationale for constructing our questionnaire.

### **6.2 Focus Groups: Data Collection**

The purpose of this phase of research was to collect data that would show how students and their teachers construed the concepts of virtues and values and the formation of ‘good’ character. At this stage the intention was to listen, as far as was possible, to the voices of the students, rather than to impose a particular set of constructs, or a language and set of values that would lead to a predetermined outcome. The term ‘values’ was used with students because it was more familiar to them than the less common language of ‘virtues’.

The literature review provided a basic ‘field’ for discussion in the focus groups. The working definition of ‘character’ was ‘an interlocked set of personal virtues and values which normally guide conduct’. Theoretically we assumed that active character development is not simply about the acquisition of academic and social skills, but is ultimately about the kind of person a student wants to become, and that the processes of learning and becoming a person are therefore closely related (Arthur, 2003: p3). Thus we were concerned with the concepts of virtues, values, dispositions and attitudes, which involve cognition, affect, volition and action.

The research started with student focus groups facilitated by the researcher, and framed by an open-ended schedule of topics for discussion. The focus group schedule can be seen in Appendix 1.

### **6.3. Focus Group Discussions: Data Analysis**

The transcripts were entered into a qualitative software programme (MaxQDA) designed to analyse emerging concepts and themes. These were coded and categorised and frequencies of occurrences were computed. The categories and codes, which reflected the research questions for the study, can be seen in Appendix 2. These were independently validated by a second researcher and presented to the research steering group for further analysis and validation.

The result of these analyses was the identification of eight themes. These provided evidence of what students thought were important virtues and qualities of character for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, examples of the ways in which they understood how those virtues operated in

practice in their lives and in the community, as well as some insights into those influences in students' lives which shaped those virtues.

#### 6.4. Emergent Themes

1. Student understanding of virtues, values and qualities of character
2. Actions associated with virtues and character dimensions
3. Students' evaluations of themselves in relation to virtues and qualities of character
4. Students' perceptions of the primary influences upon their character both as a person and as a student
5. Students' perceptions of how people demonstrate different virtues, values and dimensions of character in different contexts
6. Reasons students give to explain why a person's behaviour may not be consistent with his or her beliefs, thoughts and feelings
7. Students' perceptions of the ideal character
8. Students' perceptions of the complexity and inter-relatedness of the dimensions of character

##### **Theme 1: Student understanding of virtues, values and qualities of character**

Students were asked what they thought were the qualities of a 'good' person. Table I (below) shows that the most frequently mentioned virtue was honesty, followed by generosity and trustworthiness, kindness, caring, good sense of humour, being open minded, helping and consideration.

**Table I: Most frequently mentioned virtues, values and qualities**

<b>Virtue</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Honest	9
Generous	6
Trustworthy	6
Kind	5
Caring	5
Good sense of humour	5
Open minded	4
Helpful	4
Considerate	4

Using their own language, students identified 58 different qualities, which were mentioned a total of 130 times across the nine focus groups (see Table II). They tended to refer to a number of dimensions at once, for example: being unique, sensible, hard working, altruistic and persevering. From these qualities we identified seven overarching qualities, virtues or values by which all except five individual statements could be described. These five were removed because they were arguably not qualities of character: nice handwriting, atheism, beliefs, Mathematics and money. The largest group of virtues, values and qualities was that

of the kindness, caring and love group indicating that this theme appeared to be the most important dimension of character to students.

**Table II: Categories of virtues, values and qualities named by students**

<b>Truth</b>	<b>Kindness, Caring, Love</b>	<b>Trust</b>	<b>Positive Outlook</b>	<b>Fair and Respectful</b>	<b>Respect for Self</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Honesty 9	Generous 6	Trustworthy 6	GSOH 5	Open minded 4	Confidence 3	Enthusiastic 2
Insightful 1	Kind 5	Reliable 3	Happy 3	Respect 3	Individual 2	Active 1
	Caring 5	Loyal 2	Interesting Personality 2	Listening 3	Unique 1	Hardworking 1
	Helping 4		Joyful 2	Understanding 3	Self knowledge 1	Dedicated 1
	Considerate 4		Fun 2	Accepting 3	Strong 1	Responsible 1
	Sensitive 3		Positive 2	Non- Judgemental 1		Perseverance 1
	Sociable 2		Cheerful 1	Polite 1		Conscientious 1
	Friendly 2					Sensible 1
	Approachable 2					
	Complimentary-2 Selflessness 2					
	Thoughtful 2					
	Charitable 2					
	Love 2					
	Empathy 2					
	Supportive 1					
	Constructive 1					
	Altruistic 1					
	Sympathetic 1					
	Appreciative 1					
10	50	11	19	18	8	9

Students understood these virtues, values and qualities of character in terms of the cognitive and affective dimensions embodied in a person's behaviour. For example, empathic kind and caring thoughts and feelings were associated with empathic, kind and caring behaviour. According to the students, kind, caring and loving people would probably think kind and

selfless thoughts, be thoughtful and consider what they are going to say before speaking, would think of someone's best interests before their own, would respect confidences, are quite open minded, not prejudiced or judgmental and would more likely be balanced in their opinions, though this may make them annoying if they are unable to make a decision for themselves. For example, one student explained that a caring person might think: *'How can I help? They might be thinking how can I relate to something similar, like that always helps if like someone's gran has died and yours has, then you can say, 'I know what you're going through' and I can help them.'*

Further to this, students gave examples of famous people they knew and the thoughts and feelings they associated with their behaviour, indicating students' understanding of desirable and undesirable virtues for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students thought that a good person was someone who was likeable, interesting and nice to be around. Students frequently mentioned Mother Theresa as a good person because of her charitable and selfless actions, perceiving her to have feelings and thoughts of faith, equality, dedication, compassion, affection, care, sympathy and determination to help others. Conversely, Paris Hilton was perceived as being selfish, narcissistic and materialistic and only having feelings and thoughts for herself and no one else.

## **Theme 2: Actions associated with virtues and dimensions of character**

Students understood character not only by a person's thoughts and feelings but also through their actions, and were able to distinguish between the person and the behaviour. Although they believed some people to be 'good' or 'bad', they also stated that 'good' characters behaved in a 'bad' way and that 'bad' people behaved in a 'good' way (see Appendix 3). Further to this, students perceived that a person might use 'good' virtues for a bad outcome, such as displaying perseverance and determination in order to steal something. Students gave the example of Adolf Hitler as a person whose admirable virtues included determination, organisation and efficiency. They pointed out, however, that these virtues were wrongly applied to carry out mass murder.

When asked to provide examples of behaviour they perceived to be associated with honesty, trust, responsibility, kindness and caring and being fair and respectful, students remarked that trustworthy people kept confidences and secrets, and could be trusted not to *'go gossiping'* with the information they have been told. Furthermore, they perceived trustworthy people to be reliable because they stuck to their word and followed up what they said they would do by doing it. Trustworthy people were dependable because they did not forget when arrangements have been made, so that a reliable person *'did not let others down at the last minute'*.

Likewise, the examples given of the behaviour of a student of good character included consideration towards others because they did not disrupt lessons, therefore allowing others to *'get on with their work'*. They were punctual for lessons, showed initiative by working independently and without being directed to do so, they showed respect for others, were honest, unselfish, met deadlines, listened to advice from teachers, opened doors for teachers, had a sense of calm, were friendly and displayed maturity, would accept when they are

wrong and behaved like adults, as they were in school to learn. Further to this 'good' students were relaxed, happy, behaved in the way they wanted, showed interest in their work, were pleased with progress they had made and liked to contribute their views to discussions, in the knowledge they would not be shouted at or dictated to.

### **Theme 3: Students' evaluations of themselves in relation to virtues and qualities of character**

Students understood their character as the sum of their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. These were categorised under the themes of responsibility, positive outlook, kindness, care and love, fairness and respect, honesty, trustworthiness and respect for self. Initially students were less forthcoming because they found it *'kind of hard to answer about yourself'*. Nevertheless, responses appeared to demonstrate a tendency to self-deprecation, which may be perceived as evidence either of the character virtues of humility, honesty and trust, a lack of self confidence, or a resistance to being seen to be 'too good' in front of peers. Students were aware that they do not behave consistently in ways that manifest good dimensions all of the time, as their behaviour could show both positive and negative aspects of character; further to this, they stated displaying positive or negative behaviour did not necessarily make them a bad or good character.

Students said they were happy, helpful, honest, compassionate, considerate, charitable, bright, clever, confident, laid back, conscientious, polite and had leadership skills. They aspired to lead the best lives they could, and stood up for and respected themselves. Students spoke of their understanding of the need to behave appropriately for the situation in which they found themselves. They also understood their character as being complacent and lazy at times, as well as capable of lying; although while some perceived that everybody told lies at some point, others stated they were completely incapable of lying. Students acknowledged that a lack of a confidence could lead to problems such as a lack of self-esteem, being overly worried, too sensitive and unable to speak about issues or confront people. Others said they could be both talkative and shy at times or both selfish and selfless. On this point, many students spoke of the dilemma of not being the same person all the time, as well as being too honest, too direct, never wrong, selfish, greedy, arrogant, inconsiderate, moody, unkind, hot headed, too opinionated, too forward and too frank at times.

When asked to provide examples of how their actions demonstrated character virtues one student suggested she had shown respect and selflessness by apologising for inconsiderate behaviour towards her mother. Other students suggested they had demonstrated their character through their generosity, helping others, sacrificing their time, kindness, sensitivity, empathy, caring and consideration when they gave something away or offered to do something for someone. One student, for example, said her father had been involved in an accident and had broken both his arms, so she was helping him; *'I've been having to make him food and give him'* and *'I open doors for him'... 'which I think is quite kind'*. This student also understood the thoughts and feelings associated with her behaviour towards her father as *'sympathy'* for him adding that she *'felt quite sorry for him'*.

Further to this, students talked about how they acted when they felt selfish, angry, irritated

or worried, sharing that sometimes their thoughts, feelings and actions depended on how tired they were. One student said she got *'fired up'* when she felt belittled by customers in a shop where she worked part time because she felt they looked down on her and treated her badly?, saying she had to *'walk away'*.

#### **Theme 4: Students' perceptions of the primary influences upon their character both as a person and as a student**

Students were asked to provide their thoughts on what they perceived to be the primary influences on their virtues, both as a person and as a student. This format was necessary to distinguish between the domain-dependent influences associated with schooling and more holistic experiences, perhaps providing data that character dimensions may be influenced by the situations and people within them.

##### **As a person**

Students perceived that the biggest influence on their character dimensions, beliefs and opinions is that of their family, their upbringing and their parents, in particular, by parents passing on values and actions. Students suggested that they integrated their parents' values as their own simply because they were told by their parents, regardless of whether such values were acceptable to society at large and/or different to other families', with, *'if you, for example, were brought up by your parents who were racist and that anybody from another country or from a different ethnic background is not a good person, you'd believe that because your parents have told you wouldn't you?'*

Students stated that character virtues depend upon the individual, their life experiences, different situations and the society in which they live. They perceived that character may be an innate part of a person, and individuals have a degree of influence over their own dimensions of character. There was an acknowledgement that other resources such as friends, role models, teachers, the media and religion have influence on them as people, but to a lesser extent to that of their immediate family.

##### **As a student**

Students understood school/college to have the biggest influence on them as students, and within the school, the strongest influence on them are the teachers/lecturers. They acknowledged having to take responsibility for themselves by attending lessons; and if they did not, it was *'down to them'*. Further influences on dimensions of character as students were school documentation, rules, the home-school contract, parents, expectations from both school and parents, planners, posters in classes listing values, affirmations about positive attitudes to work, Governors, and citizenship lessons; although students indicated that these lessons are sometimes ineffective because *'no one wants to say anything then'*. Other sources of influence upon student character were mentioned such as friends, peers, society and the media.



### **Theme 5: Students' perceptions of how people demonstrate different virtues, values and dimensions of character in different contexts**

Students perceived that they demonstrated different virtues, values and dimensions of character in different contexts and with different people. Responses were elicited around being at home, with their friends, in local, global and school communities.

More personal responses were generated concerning different virtues and dimensions of character, in particular behaviour, whilst at home. These were specifically in reference to housework students could and should do, and their perceptions of their actual and espoused behaviour towards their parents, with individuals stating that the family socialises them into their future roles. Students perceived their behaviour to change at home and in public, with their parents and with their friends. They remarked that they would behave differently with their friends, stating it was important to be loyal, trustworthy and keep confidences.

Some students said they made an effort in their neighbourhoods in terms of being polite, making friendly greetings or tidying up litter. However, they more often stated they did not know or did not see their neighbours. The more general comments concerning the local community appeared to be in terms of 'second hand' knowledge of how people behave towards others in society rather than personal experience. Contributions concerning the global community were the least frequent and students appeared not to refer to how they actually behaved but how they perceived they could behave in relation to the global community, so that, for example, people could '*participate in campaigns for Green Peace*'.

Students perceived they thought and acted differently in different situations, when at home and in public, with their parents, friends, members of society, different members of the school community and also when in employment. They particularly noted their relationship with teachers to be different, more relaxed and less formal now that they were in the Sixth Form. They understood there to be appropriate behaviours for different situations so that how they behaved depended on the situation and the personnel involved. For example, students said when they were with their parents, they did not swear as much as they would when with their friends. Some students said they tried to make an effort to be the same in many situations with different people, but found it challenging.

### **Theme 6: Reasons students give to explain why a person's behaviour may not be consistent with his or her beliefs, thoughts and feelings**

Students were asked about their understanding of the reasons why people think and feel and behave in situations, and how thoughts and feelings may affect the ways they and other people behaved, and in turn the courses of action they took or rejected. This evidence provided indications of students' moral thinking and reasoning of the gap between thoughts, feelings and people's behaviour. Students believed that whilst it is acceptable to think bad thoughts, it is not acceptable for a person to follow through with bad actions and cause harm to others. Rather they perceived it to be acceptable for someone to have 'bad' thoughts as long as they kept these to themselves.

Students stated that there might be a gap between their thoughts and feelings and their actual actions in a situation. Below are the reasons offered by students for why people responded the ways they did in daily situations:

- Students acted because of their values and natural instincts
- Because it was selfish and uncaring not to help others
- Some thought and felt they should help in a situation but did not and walked past instead, despite feeling guilty for not helping and relieved that they did not become involved.
- Involvement depended on the circumstances on the situation, their morals and their emotions
- Students were concerned about what may be involved and how serious the situation was
- Whether it was socially accepted to help
- Whether they knew and liked the people involved
- Whether other people were helping out
- They might not get involved for their own safety,
- They might lack confidence, were confused or worried, or might laugh or behave inappropriately
- People did not want to offend others
- They could not be bothered, did not want the hassle, did not want to waste their time or appear patronising
- Did not want to be judged by others.
- Students also said they might not know what to do, to be held responsible for anything that happened, did not want to be sued and did not want to hurt some one
- They might demonstrate bystander behaviour.

## **Theme 7: Students' perceptions of their ideal character and ideal student**

### **Famous People**

Students named famous individuals whom they considered to be examples of good and bad people. In doing so, students were providing evidence of the virtues, values and dimensions of character they aspire to and those they do not. Students affirmed that famous people may not be perfect and demonstrated that 'bad' and 'good' famous people could be a mixture of various virtues and dimensions of character, with some people appearing on both the 'good' and 'bad' lists such as David Beckham, Elton John, Michael Jackson and Nelson Mandela. David Beckham was mentioned on both because he was a talented footballer and a good role model for fathers, but was also boring on the pitch and had had an affair. Likewise, Elton John had a bad taste in clothes but helped others because of his own experiences. Michael Jackson was entertaining, but hanging around with small children was not regarded as normal. Nelson Mandela was mentioned on both lists because he fought determinedly against apartheid and went to prison for 27 years for his beliefs but was also a bomber and a terrorist.

People were regarded as good characters if they had championed, shown sympathy and cared for the needs of the less fortunate. Students mentioned people they perceived as good characters and explained what they felt these people had done, giving examples of having led civil rights movements and anti landmine campaigns; worked to help the poor, homeless, sick and relieve starvation; worked unselfishly and personally sacrificed many things in the process. This list was headed by Princess Diana and included figures such as Bob Geldof, Gandhi, Mother Theresa and Martin Luther King.

Most frequently, students identified politicians as 'bad' characters such as George Bush, Tony Blair and Adolf Hitler and to a lesser extent Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden. Students gave several reasons for their choices. These included that such leaders had murdered their own people, were liars, wanted to dominate the world, or were somebody's else's 'lap dog'. TV personalities followed behind with some personalities being described as being famous without having achieved a lot or being selfish and materialistic.

### **Qualities of the ideal student**

Students also provided their perceptions of the character virtues, values and qualities of the ideal student. They said that a good student worked hard, took responsibility, sorted themselves out, were industrious, studious, clever, organised, aware of the need to work hard, completed work, kept to deadlines, showed initiative and punctuality and were able to work by themselves.

Whilst students accepted they had to work hard, they also stated that a good student was sensible and able to achieve a balance between working hard and having a social life. They said it was important to make and socialise with their friends and not be '*a loner*' otherwise they might become '*detached from all the other students*'. There was a reference to the level of their parents' education playing a part, with the observation that if '*your parents are well educated it's easier for you to be educated*'.

The personal virtues, values and qualities the ideal student needed were being respectful, setting a good example, be willing to learn, honest, polite, quiet, accepting, friendly, tolerant, broadminded and helpful towards their fellow students. Students' thought that it was important to be motivated to study because being in the Sixth Form was a stepping-stone to a job or university.

### **Theme 8: Students' perceptions of the complexity and inter-relatedness of the dimensions of character**

Students' demonstrated an awareness and appreciation of the complexities, tensions and dilemmas presented by different values and dimensions of character. They perceived virtues, values and character dimensions to be interrelated, evident in behaviour, and contextual, dynamic and relational in nature. They realized that the appropriate way to respond in situations may sometimes conflict with the values they hold, and that managing this is an ability to be acquired. They were also very aware that it could be difficult to know whether a person's behaviour matches their true thoughts and feelings, as they could never fully know

what is *'going on'* for another person. For example, some students said that some people's behaviour was consciously employed as bravado in order to hide insecure feelings or a lack of confidence.

Further to this, students determined that a person was a mix of character virtues, values and dimensions, in having both 'good' and 'bad' character dimensions and behaviour, without necessarily making them a totally good/bad person. However, in their opinion, *'usually a bad person has more bad qualities and a good person probably has more good qualities than a bad person'*. Students discussed the definition of 'good' and 'bad' and whether the perfect person actually existed. Adolf Hitler is an example of someone perceived by students as particularly evil because of his role in the Holocaust, despite being simultaneously regarded as clever, patriotic in his desire to unite and restore national pride to his country, being determined and displaying a talent for efficiency through the planning, managing and organising of a mass extermination of people.

Students commented that they did not want to be seen as politically correct or perfect, as this was thought of as undesirable, annoying and even harmful to them and other people. They wished instead to be seen as balanced unique individuals who were not perfect, and could both have fun and be serious in their everyday lives and relationships. They also perceived a dilemma within the theme of being too honest, in that some considered it to be appropriate to tell lies occasionally so they would not harm or offend others, while others considered this dishonest, highlighting the need for honesty so people would know where they stood.

**Student A** *'If you've got a new hairstyle and you say, 'How does it look?' and they say like, 'It's crap'.'*

**B** *'They don't lie'*

**A** *'Yeah but you asked them a question and they have to say that.'*

**C** *'Yeah they're being honest.'*

**A** *'They're being honest.'*

## **6.5. Personal Construct Theory and Repertory Grid Technique Study**

The focus groups demonstrated that students shared a cluster of core moral values that they felt were important. It was also clear that students understood them as qualities, which were 'good' and that the opposite was 'bad'. For example trustworthiness as opposed to 'letting someone down'. They also indicated that they aspired to embody these qualities but that they sometimes did not, suggesting a dynamic and relatively sophisticated understanding of values as 'ends in themselves' as well as 'ways of behaving' that may vary from situation to situation. These qualities seemed to form part of a 'moral lens' through which the students understood and acted in their lives and their worlds.

In order to explore the extent to which these 'values' were useful as constructs in the ways in which the students construed their worlds, we drew on Kelly's personal construct theory and developed a repertory grid study. The repertory grid technique is a research tool initiated by Kelly (1955) to support research within the framework of personal construct

psychology. Kelly worked as a teacher and as a counsellor and his theory grew out of his need to understand, predict and have an effect upon his clients and his students. One of his major contributions was to insist that the need to understand, predict and have an effect upon, was not simply a need of scientists, but is a fundamental attribute of the way persons exist in the world. Understanding the other person was to Kelly achievable only in so far as one can know how that person goes about making sense of his or her world. Each individual has a personal construct system which is a developed set of representations or models of the world. Some of this is developed through social experience, some of it is pre-verbal and some of it is verbally transmitted although not all of it is readily accessible to the individual in terms of self-consciously held concepts. For all individuals this construct system is to some degree shared with others and to some degree unique to the individual.

Unlike other psychological theories Kelly presented personal construct psychology as a complete and formal statement of a theory. It is a reflexive theory which attempts to redefine psychology as a psychology of persons, rather than reducing psychology to a static, biological or analytical model. He is not proposing personal construct theory as a contradiction of the other psychologies but as an alternative to them. It does not, therefore, deny the 'truths' of other theories but may provide more interesting, inspiring and useful ways of using those 'truths'. In this sense it is a useful tool for this research, with its view of the person as a whole, active learner about the world, whose understanding is constituted in the constructs with which the person makes meaning out of his or her experience.

The theory of personal constructs is formally stated as a fundamental postulate and eleven corollaries. The fundamental postulate is that a person's processes are psychologically channelled by the ways in which they anticipate events. This striving for personal meaning leads to the following corollaries

- Construction corollary: a person anticipates events by construing their replications.
- Individuality corollary: persons differ from each other in their construction of events.
- Organisation Corollary: each person characteristically evolves, for their convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs.
- Dichotomy corollary: a person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs.
- Choice corollary: persons choose for themselves that alternative in a dichotomised construct through which they anticipate the greater possibility for the elaboration of their system.
- Experience Corollary: a person's construction system varies as they successively construe the replication of events.
- Modulation Corollary: the variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within whose range of convenience the variants lie.
- Fragmentation Corollary: a person may successively employ a variety of construction sub-systems which are inferentially incompatible with each other.
- Commonality Corollary: to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, their processes are psychologically similar to those of the other person.

- **Sociality Corollary:** to the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another they may play a role in a social process involving the other person.

One of the criticisms of personal construct psychology is that it is purely a description of thinking and thus only deals with one aspect of the person. However Kelly did not accept this dualist approach to cognition and emotion, which he sees as a descendant of ancient dualisms between reason and passion, mind and body and thinking and feeling. Personal construct psychology is an attempt to talk about people in a unitary language, and the constructs are not simply words just because the theory itself is systematic, articulate and rational. He defines a construct, not as a thought or a feeling but as a discrimination; it is part of the way one stands towards one's world as a complete person.

This theoretical framework that underlies the repertory grid technique is evidently compatible with an interactionist view of social relations and the social construction of reality, and the anthropological understanding of values, attitudes and beliefs which underpins this research project.

### **Repertory Grid - a Research Instrument**

Fransella and Bannister suggest that the repertory grid 'is perhaps best looked on as a particular form of structured interview' (1977: p4) which formalises the process of understanding how the other person views their world, what connections there are within their framework and what is important or unimportant - in other words their values. The grid assigns mathematical values to the relationships between a person's constructs, thus enabling the researcher to focus on particular subsystems of construing. It further enables us to understand what is unique and surprising about the structure and content of a person's outlook on the world, and is really a formalised version of the kind of information which human beings are always in the process of eliciting from each other.

The repertory grid was chosen as an instrument for this research because it offered a formalised and structured means of eliciting the ways in which the students construed their worlds in relation to these core moral values, which they articulated in the first phase of the research. It offered an interpretation of the moral world views of these students and it is less distortable by researcher bias or the students giving the 'right answer'. It was a means of exploring the links between espoused values of the school and the actual values in practice.

The repertory grid is essentially a grid whose vertical axis comprises elements which represent the area in which construing is to be investigated and whose horizontal axis represents the differing ways in which the subject construes those elements. The seven core values identified by students in phase one were adopted as constructs, and two additional constructs were added, drawn from the themes in the transcripts, to include the concepts of spirituality and learning.

- 1) Truth
- 2) Kindness, Caring, Love for Others
- 3) Trust

- 4) Positive Outlook
- 5) Respect for Others
- 6) Respect for Self
- 7) Responsibility

### **Additional constructs**

- 8) Actively changing and growing as a person and a learner
- 9) Awareness of a Higher Power

Therefore, the aim of the repertory grid study was to illuminate students' current understanding of how they apply the framework of virtues, values and qualities generated by the student focus group discussions, the *constructs*, to the many different situations of their daily lives, which we have called *elements*. The research team used this technique because of its potential to allow an exploration of the personal, social, situational and relational worlds of the students through the application of this framework of virtues and values.

### **Elements**

The set of elements were identified as 'me in the different parts of my life' (Banister et al, 1994) drawing on social locations in the present as well as 'me in the past' and 'me in the future'. These were identified by two researchers and were based on the transcripts. The purpose was to include as wide a 'range of convenience as possible' so that all elements of students' potential worlds were included, including their stories and their aspirations for the future.

### **Repertory Grid**

A repertory grid was constructed in which the elements and constructs were already provided. Nine students were then asked to rate the constructs against the elements in answer to the question 'how like me is ..... when I am with my....'. The resulting grids enabled the researchers to identify the range of convenience of these constructs and explore their significance for these individuals. The researchers took the numerical values students assigned to the constructs and elements on the grids and combined these values for analysis of the sum total of the nine grids, seen in Appendix 4. This enabled researchers to identify the weightings of the constructs and the elements, as well as their relationship to each other. The grid was vigorously piloted with nine students, who had not been previously involved with the study, with further reviews leading to refinements to the grid and interview questions. This can be seen in Appendix 4 along with the interview schedule.

### **Repertory Grid Findings**

The following summary shows how useful the constructs were to the students in relation to the elements. The numerical values were computed to identify frequencies and percentages and thus the most 'used' constructs by the nine students as a whole. These were independently validated by a second researcher and presented to the research steering group

for further analysis and validation. The following summary describes how the constructs applied to the domain in order of significance.

### **Actively changing and growing**

Overall students rated themselves the most as people who were actively changing and growing in the different situations represented by the elements. This construct was used most when applied to their careers, their future and at school and they were least likely to change and grow when with their neighbours.

### **Trustworthy**

They perceived themselves as being highly trustworthy in many aspects of their lives, but in particular, in the future as grandparents and as employees and in the present with their friends. They saw themselves as least trustworthy when involved in politics.

### **Having a positive outlook**

Students saw it as important to be positive individuals, perceiving themselves to be most positive when engaged in their hobbies, charity work and as grandparents and least positive when engaged in politics.

### **Respecting myself**

This was also an important construct for students, in particular in their future careers and when they were in a relationship with a partner. Students were portrayed as least likely to have respect for themselves when they were with their neighbours or when they were children.

### **Truthful**

Students rated themselves to be truthful people, but to a lesser extent than the above constructs. They perceived themselves to be most honest when working for charity, and as a future grandparent and parent, but least honest when they were children.

### **Being fair and respectful**

Being fair and respectful to other people was as important to these students as being truthful and honest. Students saw themselves the most fair and respectful when their chance came to be parents and when they were with their own parents. Students reported they were least fair and respectful when they were younger children.

### **Being kind, caring and loving**

Students expressed themselves as kind, caring and loving individuals, but to a lesser extent than the above constructs. They perceived they would be most loving, kind and caring as grandparents, with their friends, parents and partner, and least kind, caring and loving when engaged in politics.

### **Taking responsibility**

Students saw it as less important that they took responsibility but stated they would take responsibility in the future in their careers. They also said they would be responsible as



parents, grandparents and with their friends. They stated they would least likely take responsibility for their neighbours.

### **Being aware of a higher power**

Students saw the least important personal construct as being aware of a higher power or being aware of God. However this construct was significant because it was rated on either end of the scale, rather than in the middle, which indicated a crude construal, but a significant construct, albeit often negative. They stated they had been most likely to be aware of a higher power in the past when they were children and in the future when they were a grandparent but were least likely to be aware when with their neighbours or engaged in politics.

### **Summary**

This information provided the research team with evidence of how students construe core values in the many different aspects and daily situations in their lives.

In summary, it appears that many students imagine that they will be more 'moral' in the future than they are in the present. In particular they imagine themselves as grandparents who are kind, caring and loving, truthful and trustworthy who are perhaps a bit eccentric but are responsible, still changing and growing who respect themselves and others but perhaps less likely to be fair to others. They also saw themselves as being responsible, trustworthy, fair and respectful and honest parents. Significantly, they perceived themselves in their future careers as responsible workers who actively changed and grew, who respected themselves and were trustworthy with a cheerful and positive attitude towards their chosen professions.

It appears the most important present day situation where students 'live their values' is as a friend, in company with their friends, who some students felt knew them better than their family. It appears very important to students that they are, and have friends who can be trusted, with whom they can actively change and grow, that they are kind, caring, loving and empathic, taking care of each other when out socializing and when people need support or helping with coursework. Students also applied these values when they were involved in charity work such as voluntary work in their local charity shop, for example. When engaged in such work, students perceived themselves to be mostly truthful and positive people, who were actively changing and growing through the work they did, and through taking on responsibility and being trustworthy.

Students construed these values in more neutral terms in relation to school, 'A' level classes, siblings and socializing. Some students perceived that while they were truthful and actively changing and growing in school, 'A' level classes and their tutor group, they did not take as much responsibility because they felt this was the job of the teachers. Most of the interviewed students did not relate these values to religion because they did not follow or believe in religion. Students consistently mentioned they were not aware of a 'higher' power the most often and that this construct was most unlike them in nearly all aspects of their lives.

Students reported that they did not practice these virtues very much when they were younger children, in particular, observing they thought they were not as honest or fair and respectful when they were children as they are now. They also stated they did not feel they respected themselves as much as they do in the present. However, they did perceive they were far more spiritually and religiously engaged when younger children than for any other of the different situations they were presented with.

In terms of students applying these virtues and values within the sets of relationships they are nested within, it appears that friends are most important, followed by a boy/girlfriend. The more immediate family relationships are where students perceive they apply these values but these become less as important as the relationships become more distant, for example with siblings, extended family, school, teachers and their tutor group. Relationships with neighbours are where students appear most unlikely to apply their values, with some not knowing who their neighbours were because they had recently moved to a new area or never saw them, and others still mentioning that they did not get along with their neighbours.

Students perceived the situation when they were least likely to practice these virtues was when engaged in politics. This was, in the main, for the reason that most students interviewed stated they were not involved or interested in politics. For those who said they were involved in politics, there were mixed views on being honest, with some stating they were very truthful in politics, whilst others believed that political debate was not an occasion for being kind, caring and loving or being fair and respectful.

Overall, this data appears to suggest that students have reflected on a dynamic sense of themselves changing and growing from past perceptions of who they were to the present day and their future aspirations of the type of person they wish to become, applying these values to their closer and more immediate relationships. They believe they have changed from being younger children who were not particularly fair, respectful or honest but who were more aware of a religious and spiritual dimension to their present day perception of being a trustworthy, kind, caring and empathic friend who is not religiously engaged. They perceive and aspire to continue to grow, and be responsible and trustworthy as parents; professional, trustworthy and truthful members of the workforce; and loving, kind and caring grandparents. It does not appear that being spiritually and religiously engaged will play an important part in their future lives.

## **6.6. Teacher Semi Structured Interviews**

### **Introduction**

Teachers' interviews were designed to provide:

1. A confirmation and an evaluation of student perceptions of character dimensions
2. Evidence of the ways teachers perceived character was and could be communicated in schools through relationships
3. Evidence of the ways character could be provided for through pedagogic and curriculum provision

Teacher interviews were transcribed and returned to the interviewees for validation and accuracy of representation. The analysis of the interviews was then independently validated by a second researcher and presented to the research steering group for further validation.

### **1. Teachers evaluation of student perception of character**

Teachers confirmed findings from the focus group discussions in confirming that the information provided by students was what they expected. Teachers were pleased, encouraged by and agreed with the depth and breadth of dimensions of character perceived by students, specifically in relation to the large number of comments under the theme of kind, caring and loving. Teachers described students as kind, generous and considerate, having a positive outlook, and displaying a competent knowledge of current affairs. Students were perceived as showing maturity and developing the intellectual capacity to identify that a person comprised both of 'good' and 'bad' traits, as well as understanding that the purpose of actions would determine whether a person or their behaviour was good or bad.

Some teachers, however, criticized students' perceptions as simplistic, lacking in qualification, articulation and balance. Further to this teachers identified students' character definition in terms of:

- The timing of current affairs in the media and a school curriculum influence;
- Lacking reference to higher order conceptual awareness in terms of self knowledge and self awareness;
- Simple judgments of what represents good or bad character with little qualification and justification;
- A lack of reference to social responsibility;
- A confining of what it means to be person to themselves and their friends rather than extending these perceptions to citizenship and involvement with the larger society.

Teachers suggested students did not appear to have a sense of what a moral goal is much beyond themselves; and that such a lack of social reference could be the result of students' lack of social experience, still being in the process of personally and socially maturing. Some teachers believed students restricted their values to only one or two domains and school was sometimes not one of them. Therefore, teachers were concerned that schools might have to provide more guidance for students to improve their social and political engagement, and to help them develop self-awareness of what it means to be a person since there was little evidence of students engaging the language of being unique, individual and having self-knowledge.

Other teachers observed that student perceptions of character focused on positive characteristics and did not involve any negative comments. Nearly half the teachers commented on this, in light of their knowledge that some students displayed a negative outlook, lacked confidence and had low self-esteem. Further to this teachers thought students had not mentioned some dimensions of character or lack thereof such as; a lack of a bookish culture, dishonesty; being unreliable, unapproachable, selfish, forceful, rude and in

particular bullying, qualities of a citizen, measured, deliberate, careful in their thinking, forgiveness and justice. Teachers commented students did not see the qualities of a good student in terms of learning skills such as kinaesthetic learning, creativity, researching to follow leads, thinking outside the box, and the rigour of checking more than one source. There were also comments concerning the language of students, which perhaps reflects the present social era.

Teachers remarked that students appear to have lost the language of society 100 years ago where the virtues and qualities of modesty, reserve, humility, meekness and self-control were held in higher regard, or that students have not articulated this because they do not regard them as important as the other qualities mentioned. Further to this, teachers suggested this language is not used possibly because of the current notion for students to be 'out there', expressing themselves, being themselves for who they are and doing their own thing. It was anticipated that perhaps students are confused between this message and what they actually feel inside; that while they are supposed to be expressing themselves, they suffer with anxiety, low self-worth and low self-confidence.

In general, teachers said their students were nice, approachable, considerate, generous, open minded, trustworthy, honest, hardworking, empathic, helping and caring people who made the job pleasurable, with discipline issues rarely featuring. However, they also noted a small degree of self-righteousness which touched on arrogance because some students appeared unwilling to be self critical, to rethink or be open to other ideas, or were dishonest and did not work hard. Finally some students displayed a tendency towards excessive self-criticism, a lack of self worth and a hesitancy in holding opinions, perhaps due to a desire to fit in.

## **2. Ways character can be communicated in school**

Teachers' responses were universal in respect of the importance of the relationship between teachers and students. Teachers regarded this as the most important feature of school life, describing good relationships as '*fundamental*', '*crucial*', '*vital*' and '*essential*'. Teachers said that when they established a relationship of mutual respect and good communication this tended to motivate students and keep stress levels down. Teachers further stated relationships were obviously important because students learned mostly from their relationships with people with who they are often in contact and whom they respect. One observation was that when students leave the school they bring gifts for those teachers they have had the best relationships with, understanding when somebody has treated them the way they want to be treated that is as individuals and adults, not put down or belittled, and in response to those times when teachers have been there for them and acted as a safety net to pick up the pieces where necessary. Several teachers commented that relationships with Sixth Formers were more relaxed and this was what they really enjoyed, as the students were more mature and like adults.

Teachers saw it as crucial that they were consistent in the ways they behaved, the tone of their speech, and the emotions involved, not only in respect to how they treated students but also teachers, particularly when in front of students. Teachers also felt it to be important that they took the time to explain to students why consistency was difficult; but they did

recognise that as students matured, they were able to see why consistency was not as simple as they might have thought. Teachers stated it was essential and important to create opportunities in time, build trust and safe environments so they can talk with students, win their respect, make them feel worthy of another person's attention, to learn about students and to express belief and value in students' ability as this was motivational, but would largely depend on the type of person the teacher is. Teachers believed that it is the teacher who tries to get to the heart of every individual, to build relationship, will get them through their exams, who is seen as good and as helping with the student's self worth.

Teachers said they did this by being supportive, reliable, consistent, competent and confidential, having an open door and being available to talk to the students, being straight and honest with them in a tactful way, following through with actions when necessary and doing what they said they would do because this was how trust was built. Teachers referred to the importance of tapping into the positive and affirming the good things students do, to avoid alienating students. Teachers also explained that they get superficial impressions of students in academic situations but when they actually talk to students, begin to see them in a different light, and with a lot of depth. However, it was also commented that there was little time and space to do this.

Teachers reported positive effects for students coming into the Sixth Form, especially for those who may have had a chequered history. Accordingly, they remarked that attitudes amongst students had to be broken down because some brought an immature '*us and them*' approach, inappropriate at Sixth Form level. Some spoke of the ongoing need to maintain objectivity, distance and order because of their responsibility to teach. There appeared to be a consensus amongst some of those interviewed that it was not appropriate for teachers to lose their temper and shout at students of this age group, but rather to utilise a different approach, which involved sitting down and discussing issues about what was required, and doing things in '*a nice, quiet and sensible manner*'.

Teachers believed it was imperative that they live and model their values through their behaviour, both with students and colleagues, suggesting this to be the most vital, essential and fundamental aspect, with high importance placed on leading by example, and treating others as they would like to be treated, as well as gentle reinforcement through practice and demonstration. Teachers stated that the most powerful influence in a student's life is modeling and that role models make the most difference especially on their ability to articulate character dimensions. Teachers perceived their 'massive' role in guiding people and moulding their attitudes, suggesting that, since education is not just about knowledge, the primary thing is the way people treat each other, leading them to think carefully about what they are communicating about their implicit values when dealing with students.

Teachers perceived their values to be embodied in the way they teach; in their behaviour, in their relationships, in the way they treat the student and the way the school is run, with an awareness of the importance that teachers practice what they preach. Teachers could communicate values such as having a good attitude; being positive, enthusiastic, having positive expectations of independent learning and student achievement, listening, fairness, communication, being honest if they could not do something and being competent and

knowledgeable in their subject area. Some teachers mentioned that they had to uphold certain values in order to be a teacher and felt there were high expectations held of them but suggested that they should be allowed a private rest as long as they do set high standards when in the public eye. Teachers said that they could not expect students to behave in a certain way if they themselves behaved differently, since students are apt to sense when a teacher cannot be bothered, is not organised, or is dishonest or economic with the truth. Teachers said it would be hypocritical if they behaved in ways that students were taught were undesirable ways to behave.

When considering the sources from which students absorb their values, teachers identified a number of different sources beyond the school, including parents, family, media figures, famous people and society. Teachers perceived family and parents as having the biggest impact on students, while other people, society and role models were seen as having an in appearing to exert pressure. Family values were considered as being evident in career orientation. This because values discussions occurring in school tend to revolve around career, with the majority of values arising from parental expectations and experiences based in the family and home. The observation was made that when parents are graduates, students tend to look further a field than just their local community.

### **3. Pedagogy and curriculum provision for character formation**

Teachers perceived that character virtues could be better communicated through processes, relationship and context rather than providing an actual pedagogy for teaching character. They placed the emphasis on character and values being reinforced through being lived across the whole school rather than curriculum imposed. However, they also believed current policy to be squeezing out time to work on values and character development. Teachers remarked that to teach values across the school is more difficult in terms of the curriculum. It was suggested that values and virtues could not be *'laid on with a trowel'* because students would feel patronised and the effect would therefore be lost. Instead, teachers commented that it was important to have a whole school approach, connecting with things that are currently occurring in students' lives to teach values and desirable behaviour.

On the whole teachers said that character dimensions are more caught than taught, in particular through teachers' role modeling and student observation of how teachers relate, behave and speak to their colleagues, with students in different situations, and with parents. Specifically students would learn from people they have regular contact with and for whom they have a lot of respect. Teachers believed themselves to be more instrumental when they encouraged students to think about their values through discussions. They likewise questioned the impact of just talking about desirable character dimensions and stated they did not have a sure way to check what messages students were registering. However, college teachers commented that character dimensions were learnt quickly in the college setting, as students were not as protected as in school, learning quickly from their mistakes and from people they respected.

Some teachers said they would communicate character dimensions in their lessons by pointing out inappropriate behaviour such as letting people down or hurting others feelings,

so that by drawing students' attention to examples and incidents as they happened any issues could be addressed. Most teachers agreed that character dimensions could be explicitly communicated but would also have to be done subtly through assemblies, tutor work, year group tasks, personal and social education lessons, citizenship lessons, posters, by talking to students when issues arose and through exploring values through subject teaching. Some teachers stated that they explicitly teach in the Sixth Form what it is to be a good student whereas the work about what it is to be a good person is done implicitly, with a reliance on students' ability to pick up the messages. However, teachers remarked that sometimes character traits and consequences were not always obvious to students and therefore needed to be pointed out.

With regards to the integration of student learning with character dimensions, the main theme to emerge was that of the importance of facilitating students to take more responsibility for their learning, decisions and behaviour. This could be through providing opportunities for honest and open dialogue and discussion between both parties, but this would depend largely on the quality of the relationship between teachers and students. Some teachers advise their students to speak to their them about any concerns or problems they have, making it clear this was the students' responsibility, and they should do so at the time, rather than, say, leaving it to the end of the year.

Interviewees saw that qualities of character could be integrated with student learning again through their modeling of values *while* teaching, for example being genuinely enthusiastic in the teaching of their subject, having a good attitude, be consistently punctual and by being pleased to be there. Others said qualities could and are explicitly taught through the lesson content of the subject itself. For instance in subjects like English, when reading stories and focusing on the actions of individuals, there were opportunities for the discussion of possible reasons why characters in the stories behaved the way they did and for the students to relate these to themselves and how they are. Teachers would also respond to and utilise the experiences of students or the immediacy of specific occasions that occur, to make connections and meaning of students' experiences and relate them to character dimensions and values.

Others said qualities could be explicitly integrated into student learning through subjects such as drama which was suggested as being crucial for teaching values and that the very nature of A level teaching meant that values came up constantly and in uncalculated ways. Some said these qualities would have to be transmitted subtly because students filter out the majority of what is spoken about, especially if they feel it is being dictated to them. Through classroom management and discipline, teachers would explicitly encourage students to practice qualities while they learn. For example, when involved in group work teachers might point out why it is important to listen when others are talking, to not be rude or judgemental and might remark that it is unacceptable when students are disrespectful.

Specifically in the Sixth Form, teachers stated there were opportunities to communicate and build character through events such as residential weeks, team building activities, the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, student unions, school council, Amnesty groups and other clubs and societies, mentoring schemes, rag weeks and charity work. Teachers commented on the

importance of the school being flexible enough to accommodate ideas and schemes initiated from the students themselves, by providing support for students' brave enough to begin and run schemes and societies themselves. Teachers said they were open to and encouraged student ideas for groups and events and commented on their admiration for the ability and enthusiasm of students to autonomously and effectively initiate and organise societies.

There were also core, higher education, and study skills programmes and careers lessons on the Sixth Form timetable, with the flexibility of collapsing the timetable for a whole day where explicit and implicit teaching for character can occur. Teachers commented that they could talk to students in the core programme to get to know them much better away from the academic setting, talking to them at a depth when previously they had not been able to in the class setting. This helped teachers to gain a better understanding of students' character and motivations, but took time and practically there was not often enough time to talk in such ways.

Within core programmes, the aim was to teach about morality and ethics and teachers would have to be prepared to challenge students to go beyond their comfort zone, to think and open their minds, and invite students to consider other ways of looking at things. Teachers observed that students willingly participated in events and remarked that debates were always good for discussing values and morals where students would express their views and listen to others. Teachers saw these programmes as ways of trying to expose students to other approaches which they might like to consider and to enable them to be more open to the opinions of others. Comments revealed a positive attitude amongst teachers about teaching 'non academic stuff' in the Sixth Form. They find this particularly pleasurable and are happier to undertake discussions with students due to a more mature response, where they seldom have to prompt and push to get them to contribute. However, it was also observed that teaching styles should not be prescribed to or forced on teachers who may be uncomfortable with ways of teaching that are different to their normal approach.

Teacher's support for teaching values through a whole school approach was overwhelming and described as an '*invisible drip feed*' effect. Some said it was very difficult not to discuss value related issues, both socially and morally, as these are implicit in the way a teacher treats the students, relates to the class, and the way they approach their work, these all being value laden. There was a view that the teaching of values could occur as an explicit slot on the timetable but most teachers believed that a timetable slot was not appropriate, with dimensions of character and values best transmitted both implicitly and explicitly across the whole school ethos. To do this though, teachers acknowledged that teachers would have to have a shared sense of the common values they were aiming to impart and with so many different people it may not be possible to be totally consistent.

Teachers perceived that care was needed if they explicitly taught students values. Students may think, for example, that they are being taught values because their teachers think they have none. Teachers therefore recognised the need to acknowledge students' values, but raised the notion that students might want to explore further any consequences and opportunities (for what?). Teachers stated that students would be suspicious of any agenda that appeared to impose other peoples' values on them, and it had to be remembered that



they remain in education voluntarily and would balk at compulsory lessons. Teachers raised concerns that if values were a subject on the timetable, students might automatically discount it; and suggested that the long term effect could be negative if, for example students interpreted a poor year in 'values' lessons as a life message that they could not 'do' values which they take with them when they leave.

Teachers perceived some issues relating to how values may be taught in school, including striking a balance between systems, management, teachers, students and parents. Teachers could see their establishments as having a role and a responsibility in challenging students to develop their intellectual, social, moral and political capacities, and their values and character dimensions as active citizens.

College teachers reflected on a generic lack of character building opportunities such as tutor group time and assemblies because these were not provided. The college had addressed this issue with the provision of personal and pastoral support through a team of student support workers and through the introduction of the core programme. On the other hand, lecturers stated that students came to the college environment particularly because of the values it espouses through its collective ethos. These were in terms of providing a relaxed, mature and adult learning environment where teachers have a friendly open door policy; that students are respected as adults and treated as such; and finally that students are actively encouraged to take autonomous responsibility for themselves as independent people and learners. Part of this process explicitly pointed out to them, is their role to voice issues, concerns and questions as and when they arise.

Teachers and lecturers comments corresponded in that students would automatically resist tutorial programmes, with many being overly instrumental toward their studies, in terms of valuing study for the number of UCAS points it is worth. Some students may even be distrustful of teachers, given previous experiences of not being looked after very well while they were at school. Other issues concerned the organisation of the timetable, because at times longer periods are needed, especially when visiting speakers come in. Some of the sites did collapse the timetable to accommodate such occasions but needed careful planning in advance. Issues of credibility in both teachers and students eyes were raised to do with teaching values or character programmes. Teachers stated there had to be a commitment to the provision of resources, teaching materials, timetabling, with teachers knowing and being committed to their subjects. It was also acknowledged that teachers needed to be allowed to operate professionally, without prescribed teaching methods because not all methods will work with all teachers and all students It should therefore be left to the teacher to select the appropriate teaching style to suit the group.

The issues of lesson objectives, the need to teach the content prescribed by the National Curriculum and measuring student achievement were also raised. Concerns were aired that whilst teaching standards had been improved, a bigger picture of the purpose of education, beyond getting children to pass examinations, had been lost. Teachers reflected that it seemed that for a subject to have value it has to be measurable, and that the status of any values programme may be held in lower regard for this reason. . Concerns were voiced that teaching had been reduced over the past eight years to teaching skills about writing

sentences instead of, for example, teaching about, empathising with and relating to characters in a story, and seeking ways to understand and explain at more complex levels the reasons why people might behave in the ways they do. It therefore appears that there is no longer the space in lessons to discuss themes that might develop students' character dimensions through the lesson content.

Teachers commented that students were now, in effect trained in such a way that by the end of each lesson they should be able to achieve a set of objectives, with the focus on teaching skills and the need to test and measure achievement and learning. The system is now results and data led, which promotes a focus on only those subjects that are measurable, and 'values' is not one of these. There appears to have been some erosion of trust in teachers' ability to know what is appropriate to teach students with the introduction of the National Curriculum. Indeed some teachers commented that students actually query teachers that what they are doing is not on the syllabus and teachers have requested that students 'trust them' that they will get there.

Finally, other comments concerned whether the teachers themselves shared values, as well as those of the school, and that sometimes the values imparted did depend on the teacher, their commitment, knowledge and confidence in their ability to teach such a subject. Teachers also mentioned that it would depend on the maturity levels of their audience to carefully consider their opinions and those of others, with the overarching aim of the education process being to aid young people to develop values responses, which are more informed than an immediate snap judgment. Teachers expressed the need for values to be imparted by actions, as students would rather be doing activities than talking about them, and also for schools as communities and students as individuals to own their values and put them into daily practice. The importance of being part of a community was acknowledged in that students do need to perceive they own their values as part of a larger community otherwise they can fail to identify with values in the broader sense.

## **6.7. Emerging conceptual framework**

The focus groups, the repertory grid interviews and the teacher interviews provided a data set which showed that students do have a strong and shared sense of what values or virtues are important and the ways in which they inform students' lives and actions. Teacher interviews confirmed this and included data about how, where and when character can be influenced by what happens in school. This data was subjected to detailed thematic coding, repertory grid analysis and qualitative analysis and from a synthesis of these findings the following elements of a model for character formation have emerged.

### **Development of conceptual framework**

The research team examined the data set from the first phase of data collection in order to theorise a model of character development that could inform the second phase of the research. Concepts which appeared throughout the data were identified and grouped together in themes, which appeared to represent different elements of character development.

These themes related to student understanding of inter and intra personal processes and to the quality of relationships in a personal, social and political context. There was a narrative element as students develop a sense of identity and ‘becoming’, looking backwards as well as forwards. Students appeared to have a sense that character is relational and contextual, in that how a person thought, felt and acted depended upon the environment, situation and people. There was a strong theme of the ‘situated’ and ‘experiential’ nature of values and the need to be critical of both self and others – the concept of a gap between espoused and practiced values, and the concept of a tension between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ values being embodied in the same person or social structure was an important element.

The following summary of these theoretical frameworks, at this stage is described below. It was then used to identify items to build a questionnaire in the next phase of the research, which enabled data collection with the whole sample.

***‘A holistic, dynamic and critical vision for character formation.’***

Holistic – young people in our study form their virtues, values and make decisions as whole people. Their thinking, feeling and actions are all important as they form opinions and decide for themselves ‘what really matters’. They are nested in sets of relationships with other people that help to form their identities. These relationships include parents and family, friends, teachers and wider communities, and typically get weaker as they reach beyond the home and the school. Holistic thus refers to both the intra and inter personal aspects of being.

Dynamic – Young people in our study have a strong sense of history and of hope or aspiration, and understand themselves as being in a trajectory over time. They understand themselves through story. They have a sense of themselves as changing, growing and learning as a person and they are able to look both forwards and backwards.

Critical – Young people were conscious of ‘a gap’ between what they, and others, say is important and the way they actually behave. The way in which the individual explores the gap between espoused and practiced values is the terrain for critique and questioning and thus a site for character formation. It can be understood as a critical conversation between three voices or three stories:

- a) The student’s own voice/story which answers the questions ‘who am I, where am I going, what do I need, what really matters?’
- b) The voice/story of the student’s community and tradition (including religious/spiritual traditions)
- c) The voice/stories of the wider community and society at large, which often produce ‘problems’ or ‘conflicts’ which need to be addressed and responded to (again including religious/spiritual traditions).

Becoming fully human – This refers to the processes to do with realising one’s full potential, becoming mature, achieving a personal vision and ‘becoming the best person I can’. It provides a sense of moral direction and invokes an ideal set of values.

Phase one findings and this conceptual framework were used to inform the creation of a questionnaire which is reported in the next section.

## **7. Phase Two Methodology: Character Questionnaire Design and Administration**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter describes phase two of the research; the design and construction of a questionnaire aimed at a statistical exploration of the emerging theoretical framework. The findings of a factor analytic study are presented and discussed in relation to the research questions and the study so far. The items for the questionnaire were developed directly out of the data; the focus group interviews with students; personal construct interviews with students, and exploratory interviews with teachers, and the conceptual framework that emerged from this first phase of the research.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to confirm and extend the initial findings and to provide further quantitative data for statistical analysis to identify underlying key themes and relationships. In addition it is expected that this dataset can be compared to further data on student achievement and other demographic variables, and with variables that indicate the quality of the students' effectiveness as learners.

### **7.2. Data Collection: Constructing the Questionnaire**

The conceptual framework discussed in the previous chapter, which emerged from the synthesis of findings in phase one of the research, provided the basis for the design of a questionnaire which was administered to the whole cohort of 600 students from the three sites. 81 items were created to elicit data that reflected a 'holistic, dynamic, critical and emancipatory model of character formation'.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to statistically explore the theoretical framework with a larger sample of students, to identify any underlying patterns or themes relating to character formation, and to enable a further exploration of relationships between character formation and other relevant variables that were collected in the course of the research.

Participants were informed of the purpose and process of the questionnaire and asked for their consent, and that of their parents. All information was treated confidentially and anonymously and students were advised of their rights to withdraw at any stage. The questionnaires were completed during class time.

81 items were designed to be as clear and unambiguous as possible and a six point Likert type scale was employed (Likert, 1932) to build in a degree of sensitivity and differentiation of response. The first part of the questionnaire was student self report and the responses ranged from 'very much like me' to 'not like me at all'. The second part of the questionnaire was eliciting beliefs, and the responses ranged from 1=strongly agree, to 6=strongly disagree. Demographic data were collected at the beginning of the questionnaire.

### **Piloting process**

The questionnaire was piloted twice with different students on each occasion. The first used 60 items and the second 81. Both were piloted at a site not involved in the study. The purpose of the pilot was to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Wilson and McLean, 1994). The final questionnaire is presented in Appendix 5.

## Questionnaire Administration

Briefing meetings were held with tutors and class teachers before questionnaire administration, which provided teachers with the opportunity to preview and discuss the questionnaire items, to clarify the administration procedure, to ask questions and to discuss follow up procedures for absentees. Teachers were provided with information briefs and guidance to pass onto students when administering the questionnaire, reminding participants about the purpose of the research and the procedures to follow. The researcher briefed students separately. The questionnaires were administered in the three sites over a period of five weeks during October and November 2005, including follow-ups for absentees.

## 7.3. Data Analysis

### Sample Characteristics

**Table III: Sample characteristics**

Number of participants		Potential	Actual	Return Rate
Site 1	Faith school	241	230	
Site 2	FE College	169	157	
Site 3	Community school	141	128	
<b>Total</b>		<b>551</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>94%</b>

### Gender and Ethnicity

The gender breakdown of the sample is 57% female and 42% male and the ethnicity of the group was 84% white British.

**Table IV: Ethnic Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	White - British	456	82.8	84.0	84.0
	White - Irish	1	.2	.2	84.2
	Any other White background	10	1.8	1.8	86.0
	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	8	1.5	1.5	87.5
	Mixed - White and Black African	3	.5	.6	88.0
	Mixed - White and Asian	9	1.6	1.7	89.7
	Any other Mixed background	4	.7	.7	90.4
	Asian - Indian	9	1.6	1.7	92.1
	Asian - Pakistani	7	1.3	1.3	93.4
	Asian - Bangladeshi	1	.2	.2	93.6

	Any other Asian background	1	.2	.2	93.7
	Black - Caribbean	6	1.1	1.1	94.8
	Black - African	10	1.8	1.8	96.7
	Any other Black Background	1	.2	.2	96.9
	Chinese	1	.2	.2	97.1
	Other Ethnic Group	2	.4	.4	97.4
	Information not obtained	14	2.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	543	98.5	100.0	
Missing	System	8	1.5		
Total		551	100.0		

## Religious and Spiritual Tradition

**Table V: Religious and Spiritual Tradition**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Christianity	218	39.6	42.3	42.3
	Judaism	2	.4	.4	42.7
	Islam	15	2.7	2.9	45.6
	Hinduism	6	1.1	1.2	46.8
	Sikh	1	.2	.2	47.0
	Buddhism	7	1.3	1.4	48.3
	Humanism	2	.4	.4	48.7
	None	196	35.6	38.1	86.8
	Other	25	4.5	4.9	91.7
	I don't know	43	7.8	8.3	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

### 7.4. Initial descriptive data: Understanding student responses

The scores for each of the 81 items in the questionnaire are presented here in rank order (see Table VI), according to the cumulative percentage sum of the positive responses on the Likert scale: 'very much like me', 'like me', 'somewhat like me' and 'strongly agree', 'agree' and 'slightly agree'. As the data set is large, a factor analysis was undertaken in order to reduce the data and to identify emerging themes relating to the qualities, virtues and values of character, which would draw on groups of items and thus have more explanatory power for analysis. This is presented in section 7.6.

Of note are the virtues or values students intuitively feel are very important to them such as trustworthiness, honesty, fairness and respect, being kind, caring and loving, taking responsibility, being able to communicate and being optimistic and cheerful. Students indicate they have a sense of ambition and career and, a desire for fulfillment; they are

aware of social justice and see themselves as characters whom are continually changing and growing, open to challenges, can work in teams, are willing to stand up for their beliefs and will assert themselves when necessary.

There is evidence that students reflect upon, use and try to maintain their core virtues to decide what is best in a situation and to guide their behaviour in their daily lives. They recognize that their actions may not always be consistent with their thoughts and feelings, but they do allow their feelings to influence their behaviour. Students have a sense of perseverance if they struggle with problems and state they often change as a result of what they have learnt. They report having overcome difficulties in their lives, knowing they will have to make sacrifices in the future, and have a sense of meaning and purpose to their lives.

Students believe their mother has a great deal of influence on their values, as do friends - both more so than their fathers. Being liked and valued as an individual by their teachers is very important, as it is that their friends approve of them, although they maintain they prefer not to fit in with the views of others. Community and media figures were reported as having less influence on students' virtues than grandparents and the extended family, and school appears to have a very important role in developing students as effective lifelong learners and good citizens.

There are aspects of school which students report do not help them in values and character formation such as tutor time, assemblies and non qualification subjects. Further to this, not many students appear very involved in their local community, or spiritually and religiously engaged and are not engaged politically even though a large majority intended to vote.

**Table VI: Percentage agreements of questionnaire items**

ITEM	Cumulative Yes %
I am usually trustworthy	98%
I like it when people are honest with me	98%
I am usually fair and respectful to others	98%
I am usually kind, caring and loving	97%
I have changed a lot as a person in the last five years	97%
I believe that each person is entitled to hold any opinion	97%
I am ambitious to do well in my exams	97%
Even though the truth may hurt, I think it is important	96%
I am ambitious to do well in life	96%
I notice situations which I feel are offensive and socially unjust to someone or to a group of people	95%
I feel angry when I see people being unjustly treated	95%
I am usually truthful and honest	94%
I am determined to follow a fulfilling career	94%
I stand up for what I believe in	93%



I usually take responsibility	93%
I am able to communicate my ideas to others	93%
I am continually changing and growing as a person	93%
My teachers/lecturers like me	92%
I have an inner sense of my moral values	91%
My teachers/lecturers respect what I have to say	91%
I am usually cheerful and optimistic	90%
The following people have an influence on my values: Mother	90%
I try to maintain my values in all aspects of my life	90%
I am able to take full responsibility for my own learning	89%
Being able to work in a team is important to me	89%
I can generally draw on my values to help me decide what is good in a situation	88%
My school/college has prepared me well to go on learning after I have left	88%
I know I will have to give up some things to get where I want to go in my career	88%
I feel able to ask for what I need	87%
My teachers/lecturers value me as an individual	87%
I am open to be challenged myself	87%
The following people have an influence on my values: Friends	87%
I allow my feelings to influence how I behave	86%
My school/college has helped me to become an effective learner	86%
I spend time thinking and reflecting on issues that are important to me	86%
When I struggle with something I persevere with it	86%
Subjects that we don't get a qualification in are not taken seriously by students	85%
I think about and reflect on my values and behaviour	85%
I challenge other people's opinions	83%
I have a lot of respect for myself	83%
I have overcome lots of difficulties in my own life which have helped to make me the person I am today	83%
It is important that my friends approve of me	82%
I know how to become a better person	82%
My school/college is a place where we can always engage in dialogue and learning about current affairs and how they affect our lives	82%
I plan to vote	81%
I often change as a result of my learning	81%
I try to do something about it when I see injustice done to other people	80%
There is sometimes a gap between what I think and feel and my behaviour	80%
The following people have an influence on my values: Father	79%
I talk with my parents about my life and my future	78%
Passing exams is the most important reason for school/college	78%

My school/college has helped me to know how to find my own solutions to problems	78%
I have a strong sense of meaning and purpose in my life	76%
I behave in ways that conserve our environment	76%
Assemblies do not help me to develop my spiritual life	75%
Earning a good income is my key objective in life	73%
There are teachers/lecturers in my school/college who inspire me to become the best person I can be	70%
I frequently encounter values in my subject lessons	70%
I often come across situations which challenge my values	70%
I have a strong sense of what I would like to be doing in ten years time	70%
School has made me a more competitive person	69%
The following people have an influence on my values: Siblings	69%
I think and behave in the same way in different situations	66%
My teachers/lecturers have influenced the person I am today	63%
I know most of my neighbours	62%
Recent events in London have made me think more deeply about the meaning and purpose of life	61%
The following people have an influence on my values: Grandparents	60%
My teachers/lecturers help me to think critically about my values	58%
I have a good understanding of our political system	58%
I am a member of a club or a community organisation, outside of school/college	54%
I prefer to fit in with the views of others	48%
The following people have an influence on my values: Other family	47%
School/college engages me in political debate	46%
I help out in my community	41%
My tutor time helps me to develop my values	40%
I am developing my spiritual life	37%
I am often aware of God	37%
My school/college does not help me to become a better citizen	34%
Religion plays an important role in my life	34%
I sometimes pray	33%
My values are influenced by my faith	33%
The following people have an influence on my values: Media figures	32%
The following people have an influence on my values: Community figures	31%
I attend a place of worship	29%
I am developing my spiritual life through my faith	27%
I participate in political activities	18%
The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development	18%

## 7.5. Factor Analysis

Data were entered manually into an SPSS database (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and basic descriptive computations were performed. The data was validated and analysed further by an independent statistician.

A factor analytic study was selected as the most appropriate means of exploring whether there were any coherent underlying themes or factors that could be understood as dimensions of character formation, which could explain the data and confirm, or otherwise, the emerging conceptual rationale (Gorsuch, 1983; Foster, 2002; Hinton et al, 2004; Kinnear and Gray, 2004).

Prerequisite tests to assess whether the data met the criteria necessary to conduct a factor analysis were met to the extent that the data was ordinal and ranked. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at the  $p$  value  $< 0.0005$ , indicating relationships between the variables (Hinton et al, 2004; Field, 2005). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was very good at .851 (Kaiser, 1970; Hutcheson and Sofronious, 1999; Pallant, 2001; Field, 2005). This indicated that the variables were adequate to correlate and not susceptible to multicollinearity. The ratio of items to participants was 1:5. Some texts recommend 1:2 or 1:10, whilst others recommend 1:5 as adequate and coefficient correlations between the variables greater than .3 (Nunnally, 1978; Flynn and Kunkel, 1987; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001; Hinton et al, 2004; Field, 2005). The study met both of these recommendations. Missing values were treated by replacement with the listwise options offered by the SPSS package.

A principal component factor analysis was performed which indicated the presence of 23 theoretically coherent factors. Eigen values were set at 1. Table VII below shows the total variance explained by the 23 component with Eigen values over one. Because of the large data set and in order to increase the interpretability of the factors a Varimax orthogonal rotation at 40 iterations was used (Field, 2005). This rotated the data to maximise the loadings of some of the items to better identify the meaning of the factor (Bryman and Cramer, 2001; Field, 2005). Items loading onto factors at .3 and above were included (Gorsuch, 1983; Hinton, 2004; Kinnear and Gray, 2004; Field, 2005). The factor loadings can be seen in Appendix 6.

**Table VII: Total Variance Explained by 23 components**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	12.673	14.567	14.567
2	6.465	7.431	21.998
3	4.758	5.469	27.467
4	3.604	4.143	31.610
5	2.750	3.161	34.771
6	2.548	2.929	37.701
7	2.301	2.645	40.346

8	2.106	2.421	42.767
9	1.924	2.211	44.978
10	1.704	1.958	46.937
11	1.574	1.810	48.746
12	1.532	1.761	50.507
13	1.518	1.745	52.253
14	1.411	1.622	53.875
15	1.346	1.547	55.421
16	1.277	1.468	56.889
17	1.250	1.437	58.327
18	1.213	1.395	59.721
19	1.179	1.355	61.076
20	1.163	1.337	62.413
21	1.078	1.239	63.652
22	1.053	1.211	64.863
23	1.012	1.163	66.026

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

## 7.6. Factor analytic study: key dimensions of character formation

Key dimensions of character formation emerged from the study and are named and described here. The original 23 components were reduced to 15 groups of items that were theoretically coherent, through combining some and Cronbach's Alpha scale was used to rate the internal reliability of the scales derived from each factor; the final groups and their reliability scores are presented in Appendix 6. These factors are described here, following as closely as possible the wording of the items, which, where appropriate, are put in the 'first person'. At this stage the dimensions are listed in order of statistical weighting in the factor analysis, although they fall theoretically into different categories of 'the student self', 'school context' and 'wider influences on character formation':

### 1. 'Spiritual and religious engagement'

*I am aware of my own spirituality and I am actively developing this. Religion is important to me, and I develop my spiritual life through my faith. My faith also shapes my values. I am often aware of God, and I engage in spiritual practices, such as worship and prayer.*

### 2. 'Critical values and school'

*School and my tutor time are places that help me develop in my values. My teachers encourage me to become the best person I can be and have influenced the person I am today; I am someone who knows how to learn and go on learning and I think for myself. I often encounter values in my lessons and my teachers help me to think critically about what matters to me. School has made me more competitive and is a place where we can enter into dialogue about contemporary affairs and events and how they affect our lives.*

### 3. 'Living my virtues and values'

*I have an inner sense of my own moral values, which I try to maintain in all aspects of my life. I think about, and reflect on my values and behaviour and I consider myself to be generally caring, trustworthy, truthful and fair. I spend time thinking and reflecting on important issues and can draw on my values to decide what is right in a situation, and I come across situations that challenge my values. I stand up for what I believe in and believe that each person is entitled to hold any opinion.*

**4. 'Political engagement'**

*I understand our political system, and actively participate. I expect to vote and my school engages me in political debate. The Prime Minister influences my values.*

**5. 'Identity in relationship'**

*I have a healthy sense of my own identity and I am able to ask for what I need, thinking and behaving the same way in different situations. I am able to work in a team, I can communicate my ideas to others and I am optimistic and cheerful about life.*

**6. 'Ambition, meaning and purpose'**

*I have a strong sense of my own purpose and meaning in life and what I would like to be doing in the future. I am ambitious to do well in life and my exams, which are the most important reason for school. I am determined to have a fulfilling career and earning a good income is a key objective in my life.*

**7. 'Family influence'**

*My immediate family influence my values and I often talk with my parents about what matters in life.*

**8. 'Influence of peers'**

*My friends influence my values, and their approval is important to me. I tend to fit in with the views of other people.*

**9. 'Critical social justice'**

*Seeing injustice makes me angry. I tend to notice it when people are treated unjustly and I want to do something about it. I take care of our environment.*

**10. 'Teacher respect for students'**

*My teachers/lecturers like me, and respect what I have to say. I am valued as an individual.*

**11. 'Wider family influences'**

*My wider family influences my values, particularly my grandparents.*

### **12. ‘Challenge and responsibility’**

*When I struggle with something I will persevere with it, I challenge others’ opinions and am open to being challenged myself. I am able to take full responsibility for my own learning.*

### **13. ‘Critical learning and becoming’**

*I know how to become a better person, am continually changing and growing as a person, and I have overcome lots of difficulties in my life, which have helped make me the person I am today. Current events make me think about the meaning and purpose of life and I know that there is sometimes a gap between what I do and what I know is right. I value people being honest with me, and I am honest with myself even though it is sometimes difficult. I am prepared to give some things up in order to get where I want to go. I often change as a result of my learning and I usually take responsibility.*

### **14. ‘Community engagement’**

*I am involved with my neighbours and in my community.*

### **15. ‘Media and community influences’**

*People in the community and in the media influence my values.*

## **7.7. Creation of new character dimension variables**

The factor analytic study enabled the creation of new scales for each of the factors, which include all of the items that loaded onto the factor. These scales were tested for reliability using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficients. The reliability values of these factors range from .62 to .96 and are presented in Appendix 6.

The new scales enabled the creation of new variables, which we describe as character dimensions. A score for each student in the study was computed for each of the new character dimension variables. This allowed further statistical and theoretical development.

Table VIII shows the mean score for the whole population in the study for each of these new character dimensions.

**Table VIII: Rank of mean scores for new character dimensions**

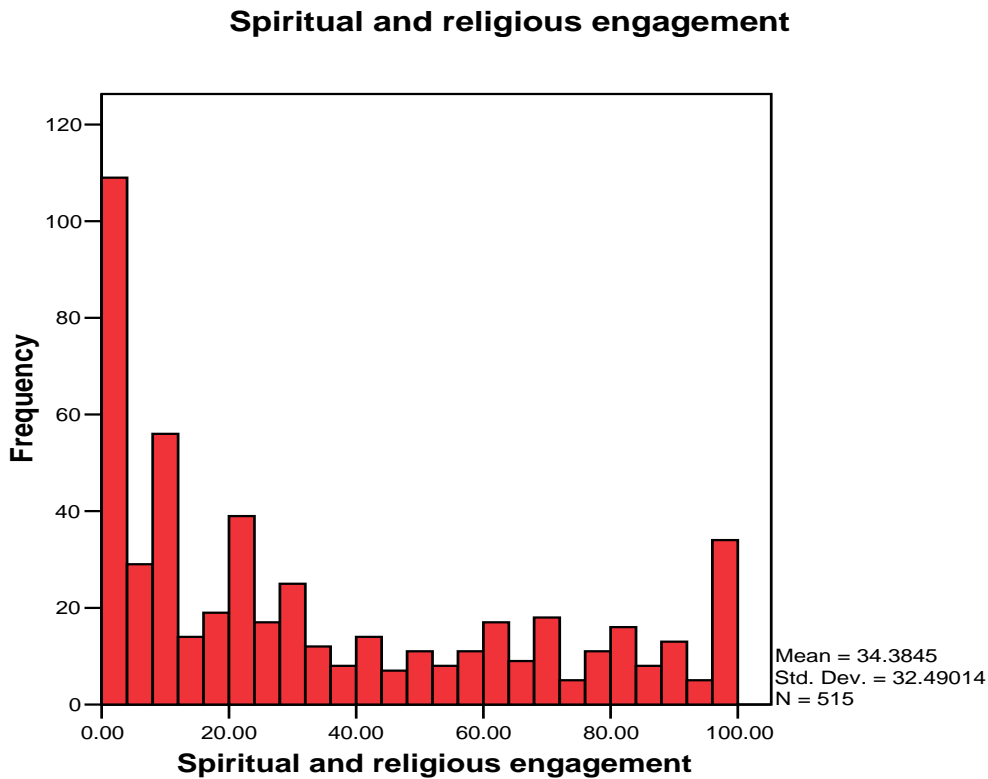
<b>Character factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Living my virtues and values	76.16	10.71
Critical learning and becoming	74.01	11.15
Ambition, meaning and purpose	73.48	15.63
Critical social justice	73.22	14.36
Challenge and responsibility	71.78	14.84

Family influence	70.79	20.43
Teachers respect for students	70.72	15.19
Identity in relationship	69.99	13.39
Influence of peers	62.29	17.90
Critical values and school	58.91	14.38
Community engagement	51.16	25.63
Wider family influences	49.89	25.85
Political engagement	43.50	20.94
Media and community influences	35.01	22.93
Spiritual and religious engagement	34.39	32.49

**‘Spiritual and religious engagement’**

Figure 1 represents the frequency of responses from students in relation to the theme of ‘spiritual and religious engagement’. The mean score for this theme is 34%, which is the lowest mean score for all 15 factors. The graph shows the majority of students scored low on this theme with 109 students scoring under 5% and 34 students scoring above 95%.

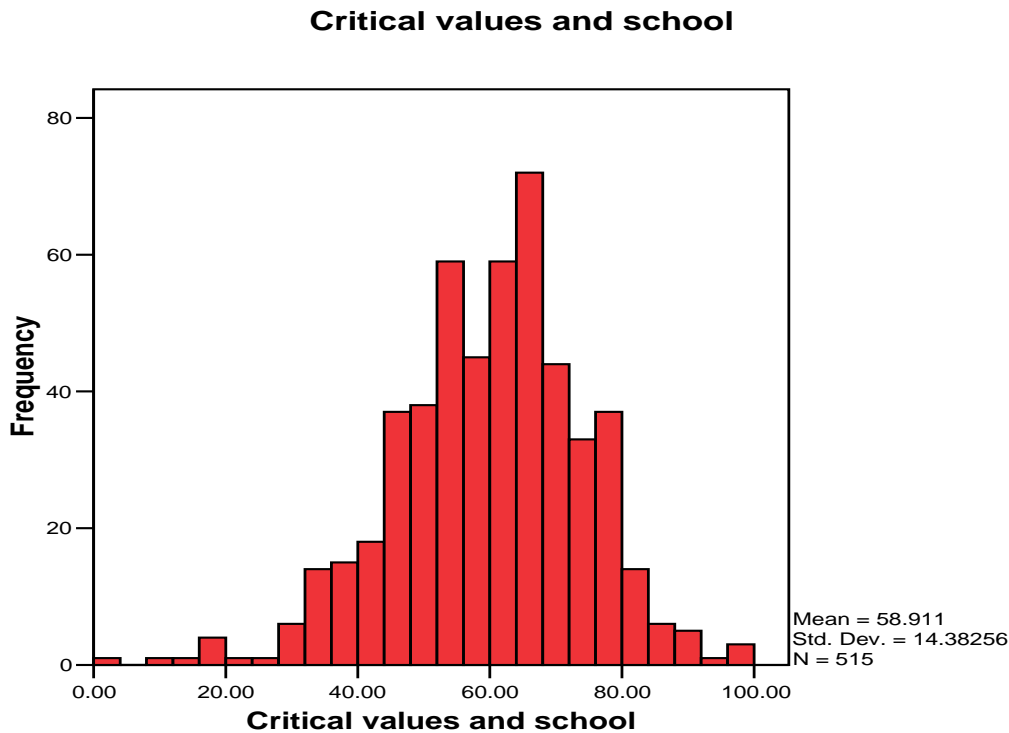
**Figure 1: ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’**



### ‘Critical values and school’

Figure 2 indicates that more students than not see their schools as a place where their values are developed and where they learn to become effective lifelong learners. The mean score for this theme is 59%, with 23% of the students scoring under 50%. The most frequent score for this theme is 66% with 37 students.

**Figure 2: ‘Critical values and school’**

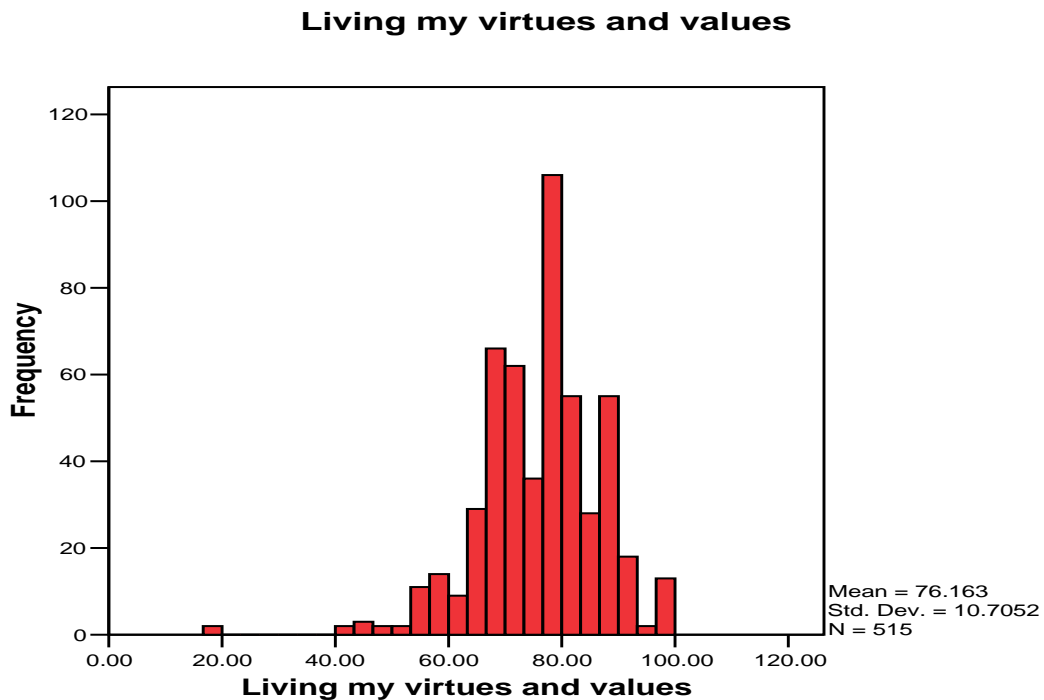


### ‘Living my virtues and values’

Figure 3 represents the frequency of responses from students in relation to the theme of 'living my virtues and values'. The mean score is high for this theme at 76% as most students scored high. Only 2 students scored under 20% on this theme, and most students scored between 67% and 89% with the most frequent score being 80% by 41 students. This is the highest mean score of the 'personal qualities' factors and the 15 character factors and indicates that students report a set of core virtues which guide their daily behaviour and which they try to maintain.



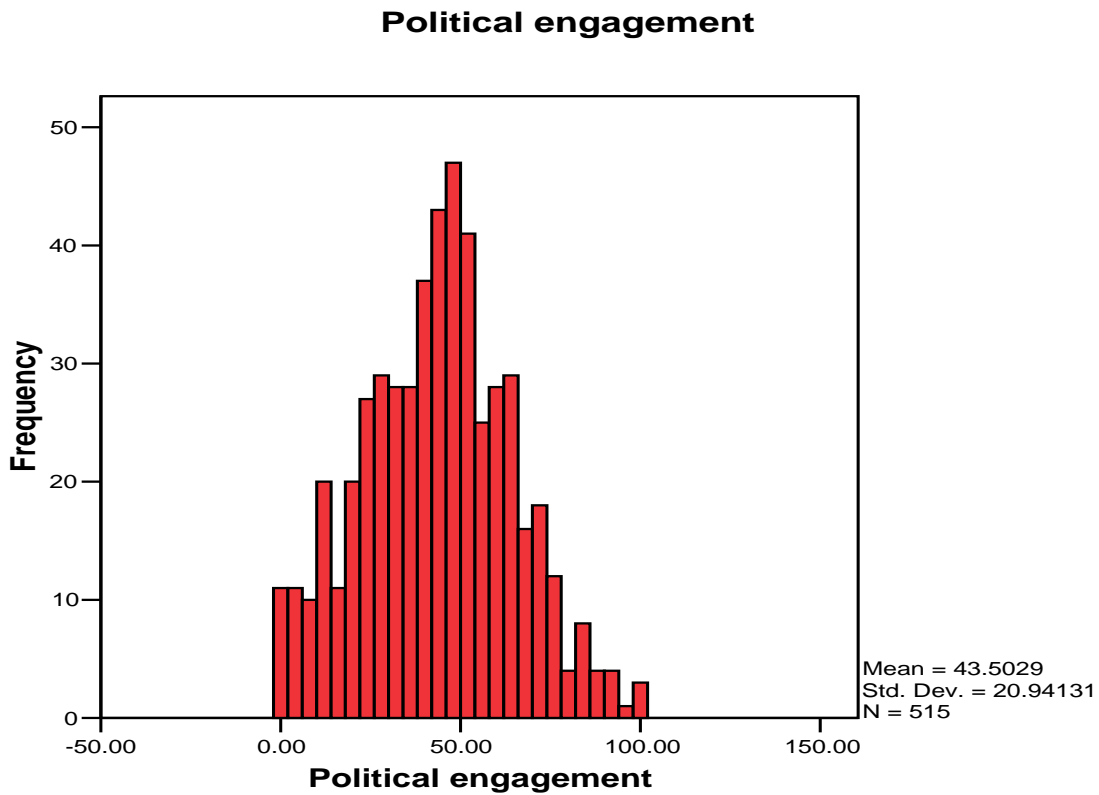
**Figure 3: ‘Living my virtues and values’**



### **‘Political engagement’**

Figure 4 represents the frequency of responses from students in relation to the theme of ‘political engagement’. As student responses varied between very high for one item and very low for two items and two items around the middle for this theme, the mean score for student responses for this theme is fairly low at 44%. The most frequent scores are 43 students at 44%, 47 students scoring 48% and 41 students scoring 52%. 83 students scored 20% or under on this theme whilst 24 students scored 80% or over. This indicates that a majority of students report they are not politically engaged at present though they plan to be in the future.

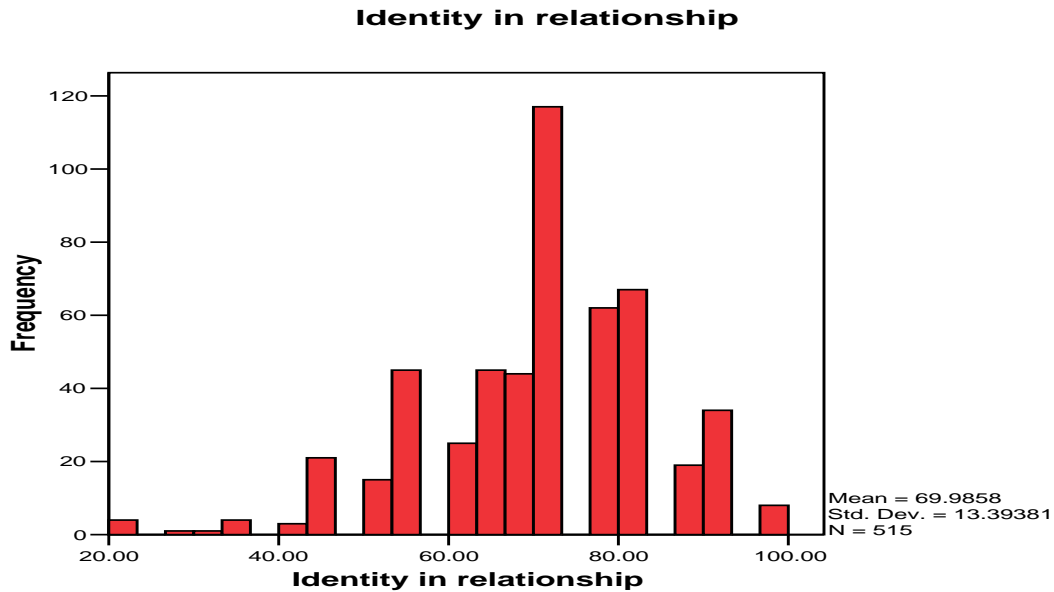
**Figure 4: ‘Political engagement’**



**‘Identity in relationship’**

Figure 5 represents the frequency of responses from students in relation to the theme of ‘identity in relationship’. Students scored mainly high in this theme with the mean score being 70% as most students scored higher than 60% and only 19 students scored lower than 43%. The majority of students scored between 63% and 83% with 73% being the most frequent score with 65 students. Thus most students say they have a good sense of themselves in relationship to others.

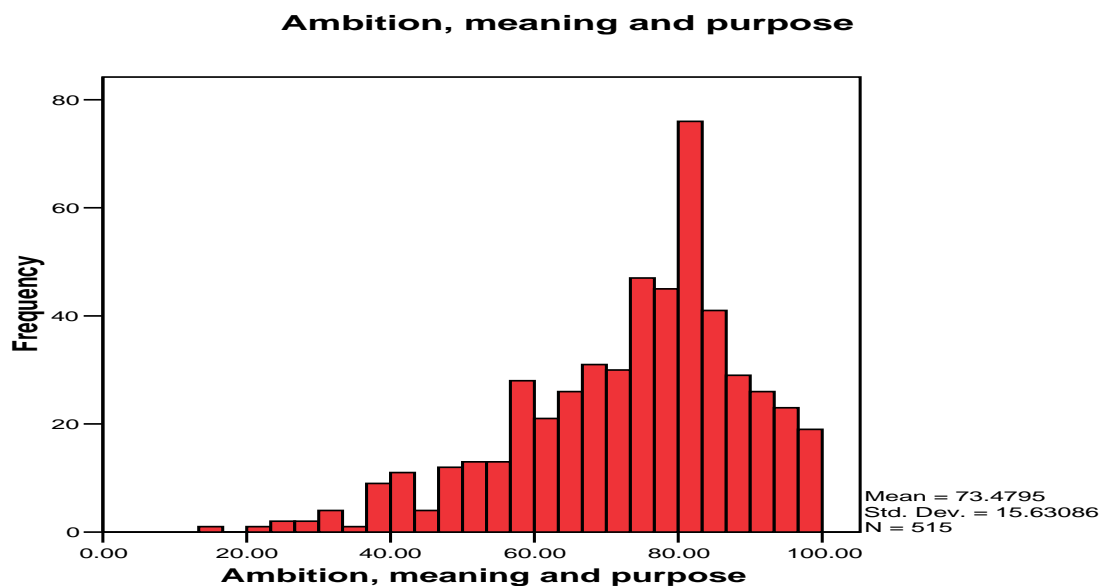
**Figure 5: ‘Identity in relationship’**



**‘Ambition, meaning and purpose’**

Figure 6 represents the frequency of responses from students in relation to the theme of 'ambition, meaning and purpose'. Again students scored high in this theme with a mean score of 74% with the majority of students clustered around this score. Only 20 students scored below 40%. This would indicate the majority of students report they have a good sense of ambition to do well in their exams and to do well in life.

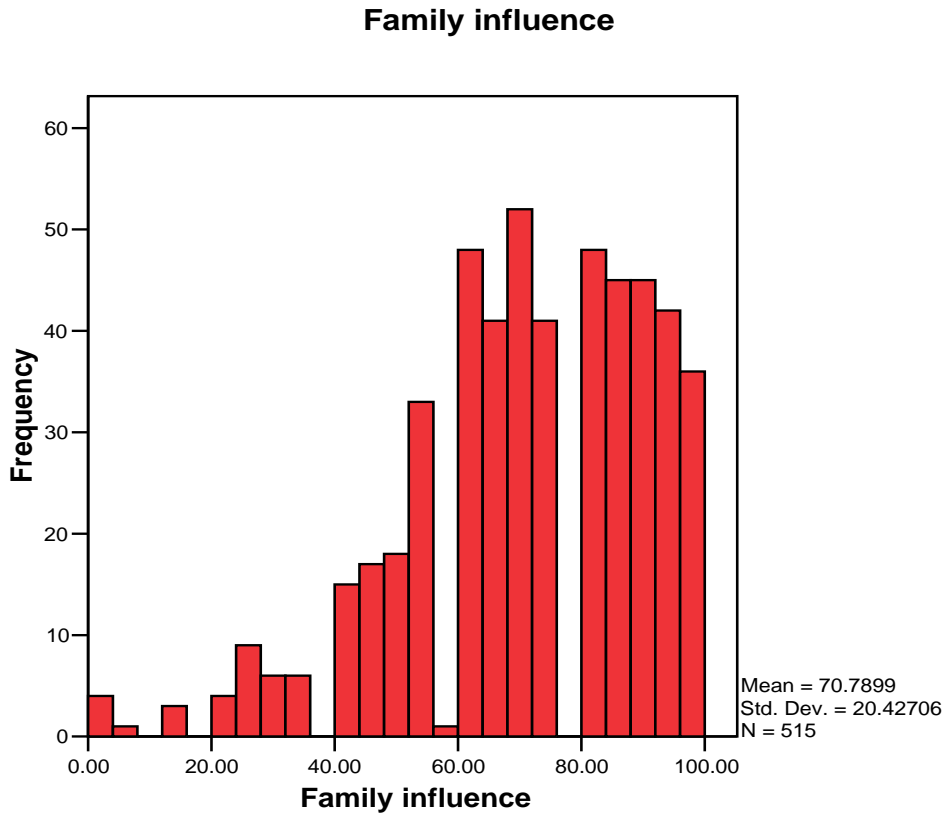
**Figure 6: ‘Ambition, meaning and purpose’**



### **‘Family influence’**

According to our data, the theme of ‘Family influence’ (see Figure 7) is the strongest influence on character formation of the themes in this conceptual category and has a mean score of 71%. Students scored high on this theme with only 16% scoring under 50% and 15% of students scoring over 90%.

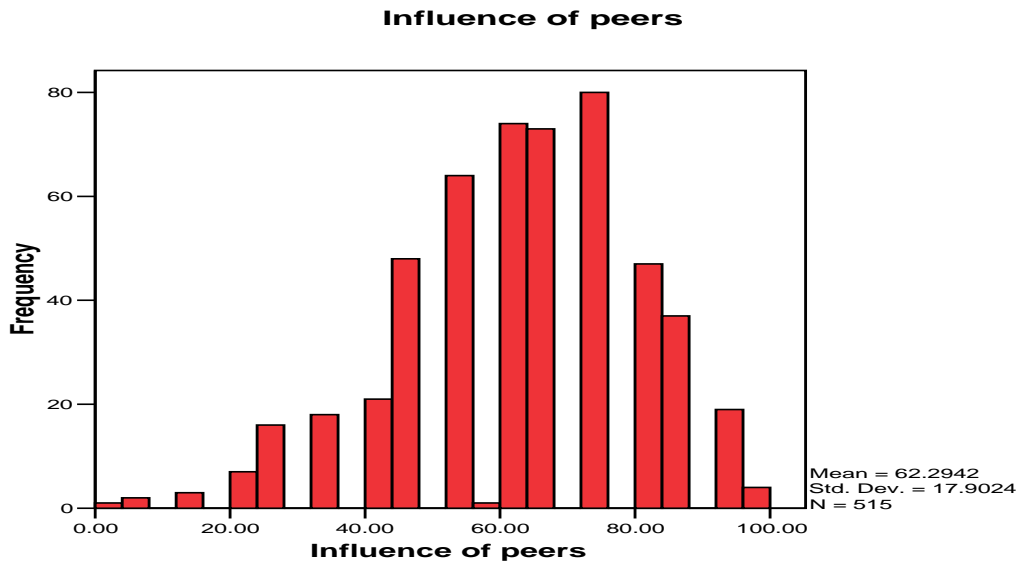
**Figure 7: ‘Family influence’**



### **‘Influence of peers’**

A majority of students report that their peers have an influence on them and their values and most scored high on this theme. The mean score was 62% and only 13% of students scored 40% and under (see Figure 8).

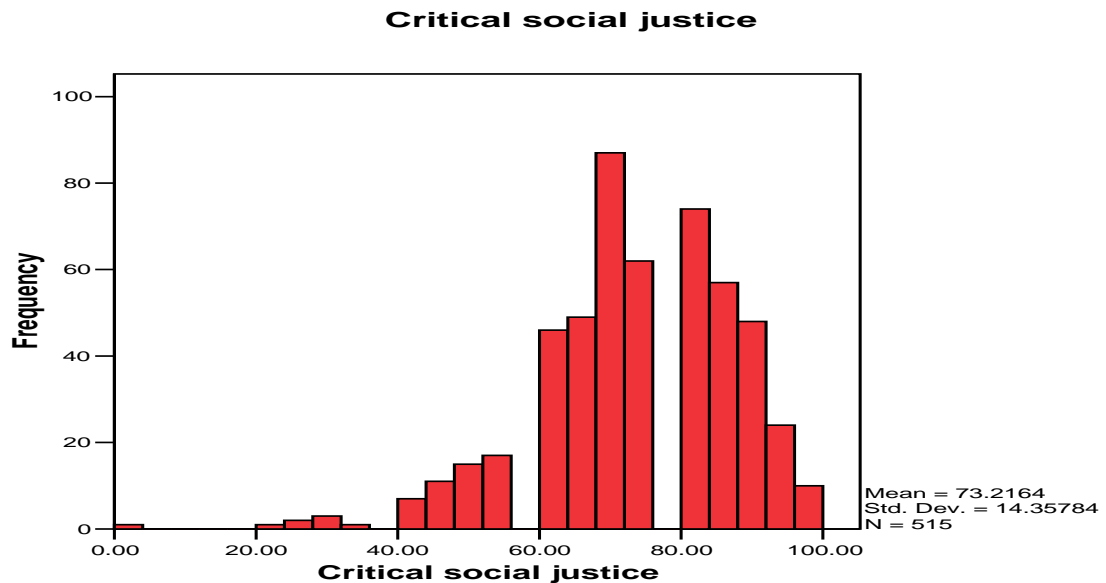
**Figure 8: ‘Influence of peers’**



**‘Critical social justice’**

Students scored high on the theme of ‘critical social justice’ as shown in Figure 9. The mean score was 73% and the most frequent score was 70% with 86 students and the second most frequent score being 80% with 73 students. 58 students scored under 60%. This indicates that most students report a sound sense of social justice.

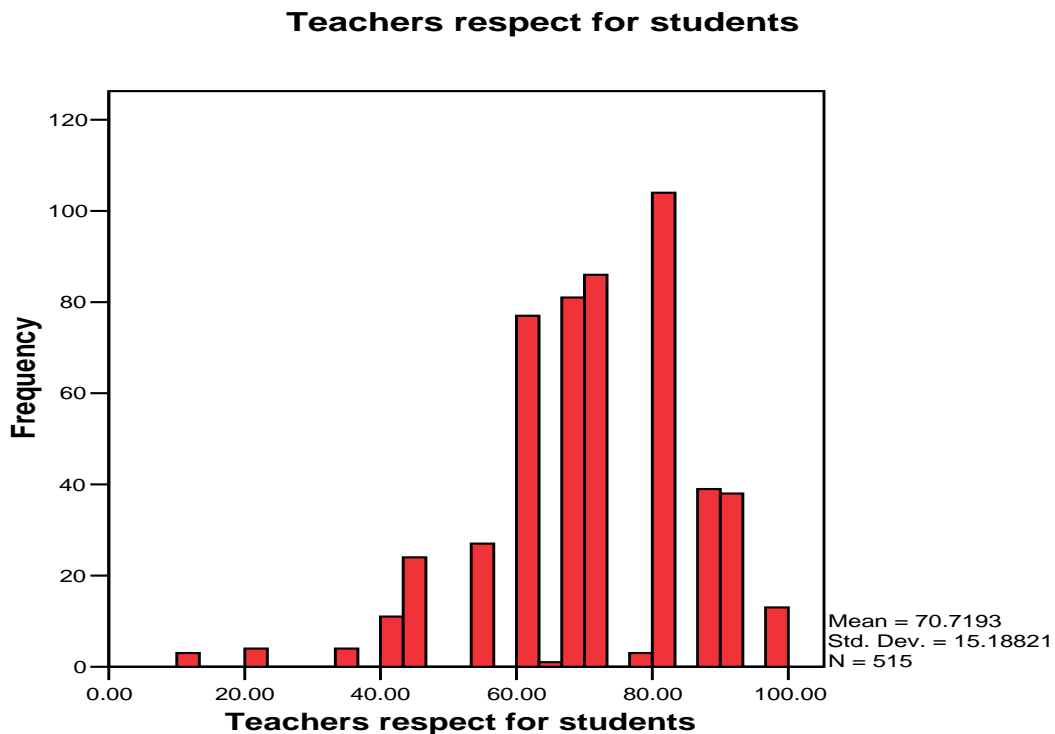
**Figure 9: ‘Critical social justice’**



### **‘Teacher respect for students’**

This theme was the highest scored of the school related themes, indicating that students regard their teachers respect for them as very important, more so than their schools developing their values and becoming effective lifelong learners. The mean score for this theme is 71%, with most students (103) scoring 80%. Only 1% scored under 20% on ‘teachers respect for students’ whilst 18% scored over 80% (see Figure 10).

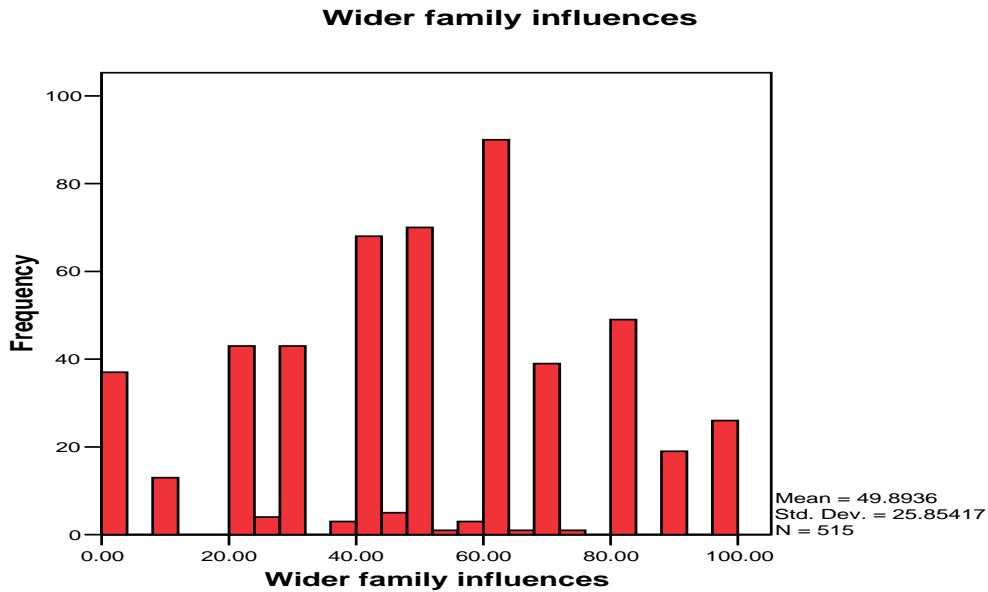
**Figure 10: ‘Teacher respect for students’**



### **‘Wider family influences’**

The mean score for the theme of ‘wider family influence’ was 50%, indicating that only half of students reported that their wider family relations such as grandparents and other relatives have an influence on their values (Figure 11).

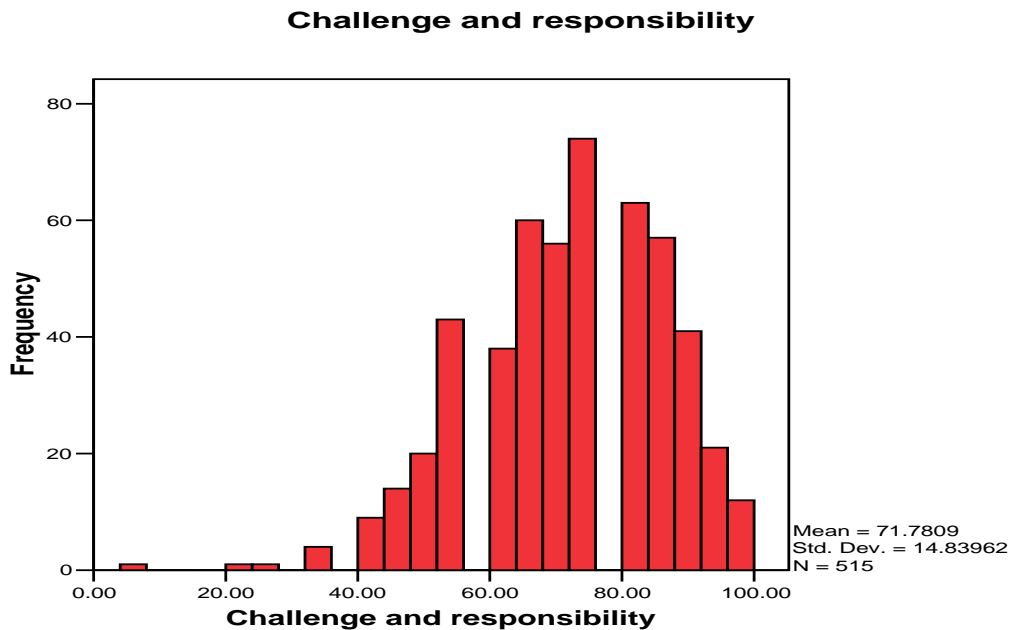
**Figure 11: ‘Wider family influences’**



**‘Challenge and responsibility’**

The mean score on the factor of ‘challenge and responsibility’ is 72% and the most frequent score is 75% attained by 74 students. Figure 12 shows that 90% of students scored 50% and above. This indicates that many students report they will take responsibility for their learning and are open to challenges.

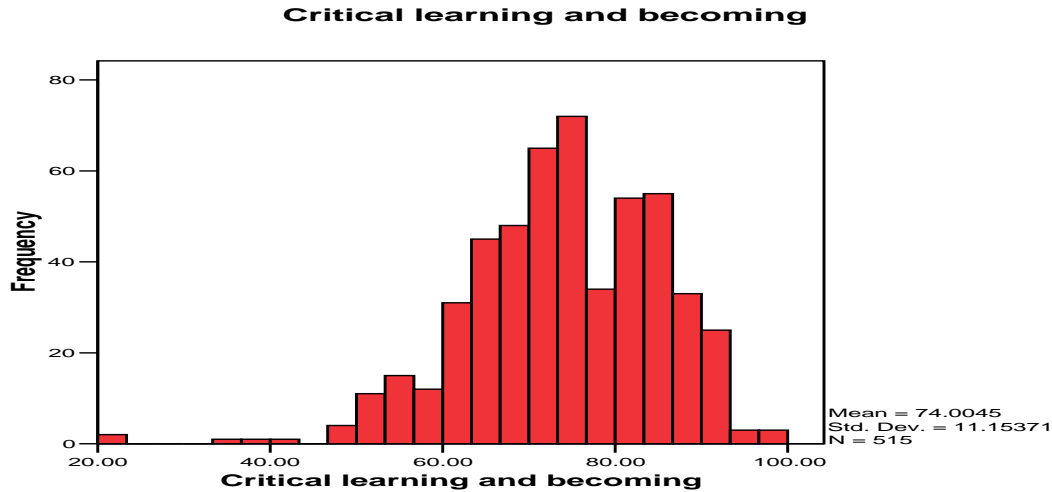
**Figure 12: ‘Challenge and responsibility’**



### ‘Critical learning and becoming’

Students scored highly on the theme of ‘critical learning and becoming’ (Figure 13), with most of them scoring over 60% and the mean score being 74%, indicating that most students report having a good sense of growing and learning to become a better person.

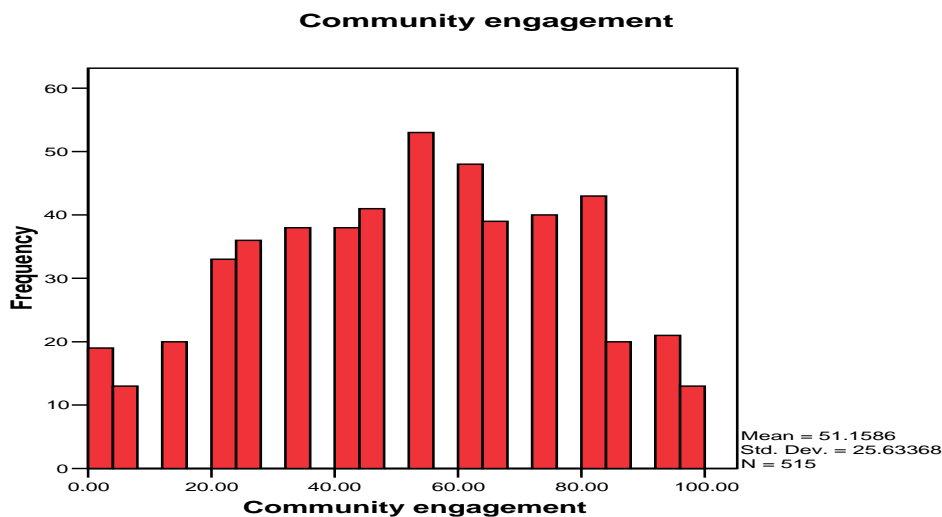
Figure 13: ‘Critical learning and becoming’



### ‘Community engagement’

The theme of ‘community engagement’ (Figure 14) did not score very high, with a mean score of 51%. This indicates that only half of students reported themselves to be engaged with their communities.

Figure 14: ‘Community engagement’

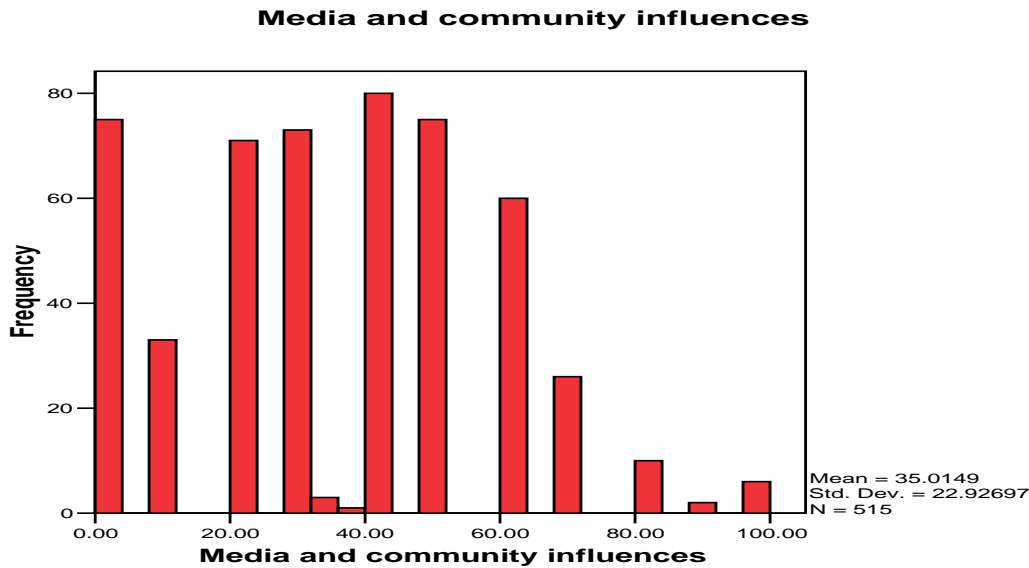




### ‘Media and community influences’

The theme of ‘media and community influences’ was reported as low scoring by students with a mean score of 35%. Most students, therefore, indicate that they did not see figures in the community or media as having an influence on their values (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15: ‘Media and community influences’**



### 7.8. Issues emerging from the data

#### ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’

The descriptive data in Table IX, informs us that a low percentage of students reported themselves to be spiritually and religiously engaged. However, when the factor analysis was used and the items in Table IX were combined to form the group we have named ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’ this was the strongest weighted factor.

**Table IX: Percentage agreements for items loading onto ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’**

ITEM	Cumulative Yes %
I am developing my spiritual life	37%
I am often aware of God	37%
Religion plays an important role in my life	34%
I sometimes pray	33%
My values are influenced by my faith	33%
I attend a place of worship	29%
I am developing my spiritual life through my faith	27%

It is clear from the percentage agreements that the spiritual and religious items are reported by the large majority of students as not playing a significant role in their lives and therefore do not appear to form a significant part of their character formation and who they are. However, the factor analysis informs us that student responses to these items are significantly related and more strongly than any other items from the questionnaire.

### **Distribution of responses for ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’ items**

To assist us in the analysis of these items we looked at the distribution of students’ responses (see tables and graphs in Appendix 7). The percentage agreements for these items show that students frequently chose the most extreme ‘no’ option of ‘not like me at all’ for all of these items, more than any other response, with the item of attending a place of worship attracting the most ‘not like me at all’ responses. It is because so many of the students’ responses are this extreme choice for these items that we can say the distribution of responses is not normal.

### **‘Political engagement’**

The items (Table X) loading onto the ‘political engagement’ factor present another dilemma of interpretation. Statistically, this is one of the strongest factors, and yet the percentage agreements vary with many students stating they intend to vote in the future, but only a very small minority actually participating in political activities at present and affirming that the Prime Minister influences their values and development.

**Table X: Percentage agreement for items loading onto ‘political engagement’**

ITEM	Cumulative Yes %
I plan to vote	81%
I have a good understanding of our political system	58%
School/college engages me in political debate	46%
I participate in political activities	18%
The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development	18%

### **Distribution of responses for ‘Political engagement’ items**

We looked at the distribution of student responses to these items to assist us with our interpretation of this factor (see Appendix 7). The percentage agreements for these items show that students frequently chose the most extreme ‘no’ option of ‘not like me at all’ for the item concerning their present participation in politics and the item concerning the Prime Minister’s influence on their values, while the most extreme ‘yes’ option of ‘very much like me’ was answered for the item concerning their plans to vote. The distribution curves for these items indicate the responses are not normally distributed across the cohort population. The information also makes clear the contrast between student political non-participation at present, the Prime Minister’s lack of influence over their values and their planned participation in the future. The responses to the other two items in this factor appear to be fairly normally distributed across the cohort population.

## **8. Phase Three Methodology: Relationships between character dimensions and other variables**

### **8.1. Introduction**

The factor analytic studies of the character questionnaire data provided fifteen new scales that were computed as new character variables. These were: 'spiritual and religious engagement'; 'critical values and school'; 'living my virtues and values'; 'political engagement'; 'identity in relationship'; 'ambition, meaning and purpose'; 'family influences'; 'influence of peers'; 'critical social justice'; 'teachers respect for students'; 'wider family influences'; challenge and responsibility'; 'critical learning and becoming'; 'community engagement' and 'media and community influences'.

After the character questionnaire data were collected the cohort of students completed their Learning Power Profiles. Learning power data were collected using the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI). Learning power is defined as: 'A set of dispositions, values and attitudes, which support a person's capacity for lifelong learning: changing and learning, meaning making, critical curiosity, creativity, strategic awareness, learning relationships and resilience' (Deakin-Crick et al, 2004: p 249), (please see Appendix 9). Data from these profiles were fed back to students and their teachers for dynamic self-assessment, and school and student self-evaluation. At the same time the raw data were downloaded into the SPSS database and seven learning power variables were computed for each student. These provided a measure of how students perceived themselves on seven learning dispositions: changing and learning, meaning making, critical curiosity, creativity, learning relationships, strategic awareness and resilience.

In addition to this the schools provided basic demographic data (gender, ethnicity, religion) and achievement data (GCSE point scores) for all students. Thus a substantial quantitative data set was produced with 551 cases, 15 character variables, 7 learning power variables, achievement variables, religion, ethnicity, gender and school. This facilitated a range of statistical procedures aimed at exploring relationships between variables in a cross sectional study of 551 16/17 year old students. Some of the findings are reported below. It should be noted that this is a valuable dataset and what is presented here is only a small proportion of the information it could yield.

### **8.2. Relationships between character dimensions**

The relationships between the character dimension variables were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. As would be expected, there were some strong positive relationships between many of the variables, and a selection is reported here. The full correlation table can be seen in Appendix 8.

'Spiritual and religious engagement' correlated most strongly with 'community engagement' ( $r=.261$ ) and 'living my virtues and values' ( $r=.210$ ). It also correlated with

'political engagement' (r=.195), 'critical learning and becoming' (r=.194), 'media and community influences' (r=.190), 'wider family influence' (r=.187), 'family influences' (r=.184), 'ambition, meaning and purpose' (r=.141), 'critical values and school' (r=.132), 'identity in relationship' (r=.098), 'critical social justice' (r=.098), and 'teachers respect for students' (r=.095), N=514 and  $p < 0.01$ .

'Political engagement' correlated most strongly with 'critical values and school' (r=.289). It also correlated with 'critical social justice' (r=.238), 'challenge and responsibility' (r=.229), 'living my virtues and values' (r=.223), 'community engagement' (r=.217), 'spiritual and religious engagement' (r=.195), 'teachers respect for students' (r=.183), 'identity in relationship' (r=.161), 'media and community influences' (r=.156), 'critical learning and becoming' (r=.154), and 'ambition, meaning and purpose' (r=.114), N=515,  $p < 0.01$ .

'Living my virtues and values' correlated very strongly with 'critical learning and becoming' (r=.611), 'critical social justice' (r=.523), 'challenge and responsibility' (r=.509), 'identity in relationship' (r=.421) and 'ambition, meaning and purpose' (r=.406). It also correlated with 'family influence' (r=.249), 'political engagement' (r=.223), 'teachers respect for students' (r=.221), 'critical values and school' (r=.214), 'spiritual and religious engagement' (r=.210), 'community engagement' (r=.152), and 'wider family influence' (r=.134), N=515 and  $p < 0.01$ .

'Critical values and school' correlated most strongly with 'critical learning and becoming' (r=.414), 'ambition, meaning and purpose' (r=.384) and 'teachers respect for students' (r=.378). It also correlated with 'influence of peers' (r=.333), 'media and community influences' (r=.311), 'identity in relationship' (r=.296), 'political engagement' (r=.289), 'community engagement' (r=.280), 'family influences' (r=.273), 'wider family influences' (r=.272), 'living my virtues and values' (r=.214), 'challenge and responsibility' (r=.207), 'critical social justice' (r=.137), and 'spiritual and religious engagement' (r=.132), N=515 and  $p < 0.01$ .

### **8.3. Differences between Schools**

In order to explore the impact of the schools on how students rated themselves on character dimensions, a one-way between groups analysis of variance was performed, between the three school sites. There was a statistically significant difference between the sites at the  $p < .05$  level on four character dimensions: 'spiritual and religious engagement' ( $p = .0005$ ); 'political engagement' ( $p = .0005$ ); 'community engagement' ( $p = .0005$ ) and 'media and community influences' ( $p = .037$ ) and the character dimension of 'influence of peers' was close to significance ( $p = .058$ ).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that students who attended the faith-based school had statistically significant higher levels of 'spiritual and religious engagement' than students at the college and community school. They also indicated that students at the college site reported statistically significant lower levels of 'political engagement', 'community engagement', and 'media and community influences' than students at the faith and community schools. It was close to significance that college students were least likely to be influenced by their peers than at the other two sites. Students

at the faith school reported the highest levels of political and ‘community engagement’ and were slightly more influenced by ‘media and community influences’. Table XI below shows the mean scores for these dimensions.

**Table XI: Mean scores for character dimensions significant across the sites**

Character dimensions	Site	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spiritual and religious engagement	Site	230	46.8941	35.17025
	Faith school	157	25.7111	26.01826
	College	128	22.5446	26.31894
Political engagement	Community	230	47.3043	20.27418
	Faith school	157	36.7134	21.14906
	College	128	45.0000	19.97163
Influence of peers	Community	230	63.3333	18.39509
	Faith school	157	59.4741	18.60061
	College	128	63.8861	15.73684
Community engagement	Community	230	57.7681	24.18280
	Faith school	157	40.3822	25.68982
	College	128	52.5000	23.86899
	Community	515	51.1586	25.63368
Media and community influences	Faith school	230	36.9565	21.74380
	College	157	31.1147	24.43333
	Community	128	36.3100	22.67754

#### 8.4. Relationship between character dimensions and gender

In order to explore whether gender had an impact on how students reported themselves on the character dimensions a Mann Whitney test was computed. Table XII below shows the five dimensions where there was a significant difference between males and females: ‘living my virtues and values’, ‘political engagement’, ‘family influence’, ‘critical social justice’ and ‘critical learning and becoming’. Table XIII shows the differences in the mean ranks for each gender on these variables.

**Table XII: Mann Whitney scores: Gender differences on significant character dimensions**

	Living my virtues and values	Political engagement	Family influence	Critical social justice	Critical learning and becoming
Mann-Whitney U	27255.500	26851.000	27503.000	26560.500	25810.000
Wilcoxon W	51565.500	70511.000	51813.000	50870.500	50120.000
Z	-3.114	-3.358	-2.968	-3.549	-3.980
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.001	.003	.000	.000

a Grouping Variable: Gender

**Table XIII: Differences in mean ranks for Gender in significant character dimensions**

	Gender	N	Mean Rank
Living my virtues and values	Male	220	234.39
	Female	295	275.61
Political engagement	Male	220	283.45
	Female	295	239.02
Family influence	Male	220	235.51
	Female	295	274.77
Critical social justice	Male	220	231.23
	Female	295	277.96
Critical learning and becoming	Male	220	227.82
	Female	295	280.51

Thus females report a significantly higher level of ‘living my virtues and values’, ‘family influence’, ‘critical social justice’ and ‘critical learning and becoming’. Males report a significantly higher level of ‘political engagement’.

### 8.5. Relationships between character dimensions and GCSE achievement

The relationships between the character dimensions and GCSE achievement, as measured by average GCSE point score, were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There were positive correlations between achievement and ‘living my virtues and values’ ( $r=.143$ ), ‘political engagement’ ( $r=.246$ ), ‘critical social justice’ ( $r=.151$ ), ‘challenge and responsibility’ ( $r=.096$ ) and ‘community engagement’ ( $r=.167$ )  $N=492$ ,  $p<.01$  (see Appendix 8).

In order to explore these relationships further the cohort was divided into groups of low, medium and high achievement, as measured by average GCSE point score. These groups were then used to perform a one-way between groups analysis of variance to explore the impact of achievement on character dimensions. There was a statistically significant difference at the  $p<.05$  level in ‘living my virtues and values’ ( $F=4.43$ ,  $p=.012$ ), ‘political engagement’ ( $F=15.69$ ,  $p=.0005$ ), ‘critical social justice’ ( $F=4.29$ ,  $p=.014$ ), ‘teachers respect for students’ ( $F=6.14$ ,  $p=.002$ ), ‘challenge and responsibility’ ( $F=3.84$ ,  $p=.022$ ) and ‘community engagement’ ( $F=5.85$ ,  $p=.003$ ). As can be seen from Table XIV below, ‘spiritual and religious engagement’ and ‘ambition, meaning and purpose’ were close to significance.

**Table XIV: Analysis of Variance Character Dimensions and Achievement groups**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Spiritual and religious engagement	Between Groups	5626.343	2	2813.172	2.674	.070
	Within Groups	514393.557	489	1051.930		

	Total	520019.900	491			
Critical values and school	Between Groups	438.351	2	219.175	1.047	.352
	Within Groups	102330.617	489	209.265		
	Total	102768.968	491			
Living my virtues and values	Between Groups	1011.671	2	505.835	4.430	.012
	Within Groups	55832.124	489	114.176		
	Total	56843.794	491			
Political engagement	Between Groups	13031.079	2	6515.540	15.699	.000
	Within Groups	202953.181	489	415.037		
	Total	215984.260	491			
Identity in relationship	Between Groups	341.727	2	170.864	.941	.391
	Within Groups	88757.953	489	181.509		
	Total	89099.681	491			
Ambition, meaning and purpose	Between Groups	1151.704	2	575.852	2.335	.098
	Within Groups	120616.378	489	246.659		
	Total	121768.082	491			
Family influence	Between Groups	670.161	2	335.080	.803	.449
	Within Groups	204039.316	489	417.258		
	Total	204709.477	491			
Influence of peers	Between Groups	787.788	2	393.894	1.230	.293
	Within Groups	156591.512	489	320.228		
	Total	157379.300	491			
Critical social justice	Between Groups	1716.399	2	858.199	4.299	.014
	Within Groups	97621.753	489	199.635		
	Total	99338.152	491			
Teachers respect for students	Between Groups	2711.969	2	1355.984	6.145	.002
	Within Groups	107909.592	489	220.674		
	Total	110621.561	491			
Wider family influences	Between Groups	1195.175	2	597.588	.906	.405
	Within Groups	322465.389	489	659.438		
	Total	323660.564	491			
Challenge and responsibility	Between Groups	1675.403	2	837.701	3.848	.022
	Within Groups	106455.274	489	217.700		
	Total	108130.677	491			
Critical learning and becoming	Between Groups	89.319	2	44.659	.362	.696
	Within Groups	60320.435	489	123.355		
	Total	60409.754	491			
Community engagement	Between Groups	7483.697	2	3741.849	5.859	.003
	Within Groups	312296.158	489	638.642		

Media and community influences	Total	319779.855	491			
	Between Groups	2250.039	2	1125.019	2.208	.111
	Within Groups	249156.666	489	509.523		
	Total	251406.704	491			

To further understand predictive relationships between character dimensions and achievement, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was computed. The purpose was to investigate the relative amounts of variance accounted for by character dimensions. Even though all of the character dimensions were entered into this stepwise regression model they did not reach significance and were excluded. The average GCSE score was entered as the dependent variable. Table XV below shows that 14% of the variance of achievement can be accounted for by five character dimension variables: ‘political engagement’, ‘community engagement’, ‘living my virtues and values’ and ‘critical learning and becoming’ and ‘identity in relationship’.

**Table XV: Stepwise regression model – character dimensions and achievement**

Model	R		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	R	R Square	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.367	.135	62.542	1.656		37.767	.000
Political engagement			.164	.034	.210	4.776	.000
Community engagement			.106	.029	.165	3.710	.000
Living my virtues and values			.406	.084	.268	4.850	.000
Critical learning and becoming			-.333	.082	-.226	-4.079	.000
Identity in relationship			-.162	.059	-.134	-2.735	.006

a Dependent Variable: GCSE average percentage

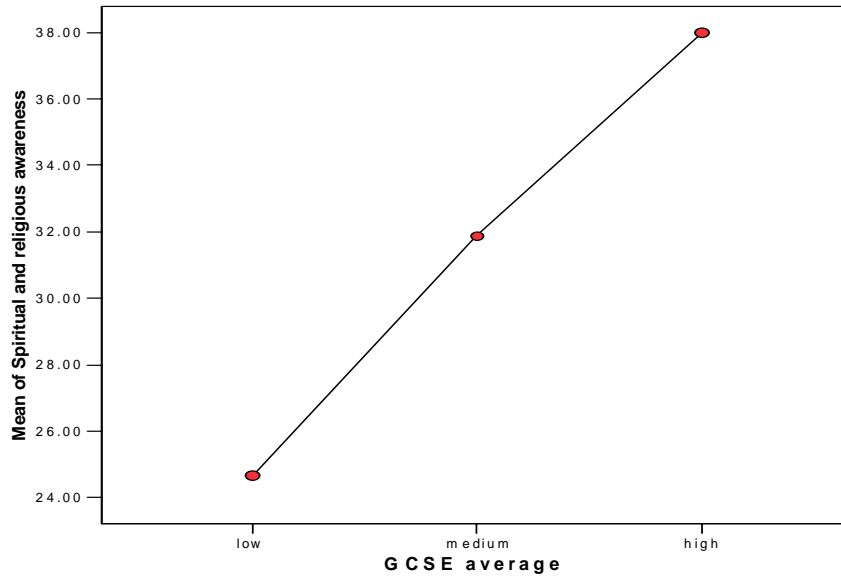
### Analysis of Variance Means plots

The means plots, generated by the ANOVA computation give an indication of the significances and trends in the relationship between character dimensions and GCSE achievement. Examples of these are presented below in Figure 16:

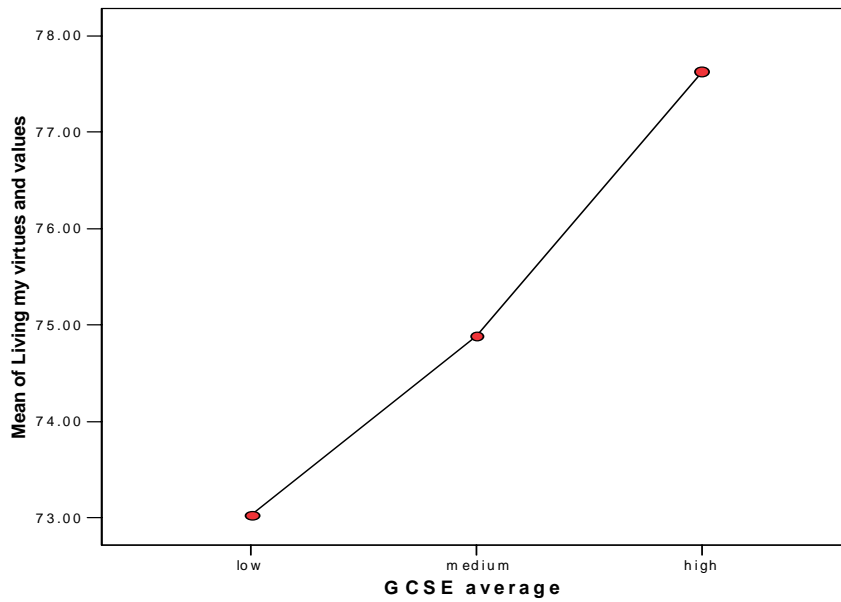
**Figure 16: Means plots of significant relationships and trends between character dimensions and GCSE achievement**

### ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’ and achievement

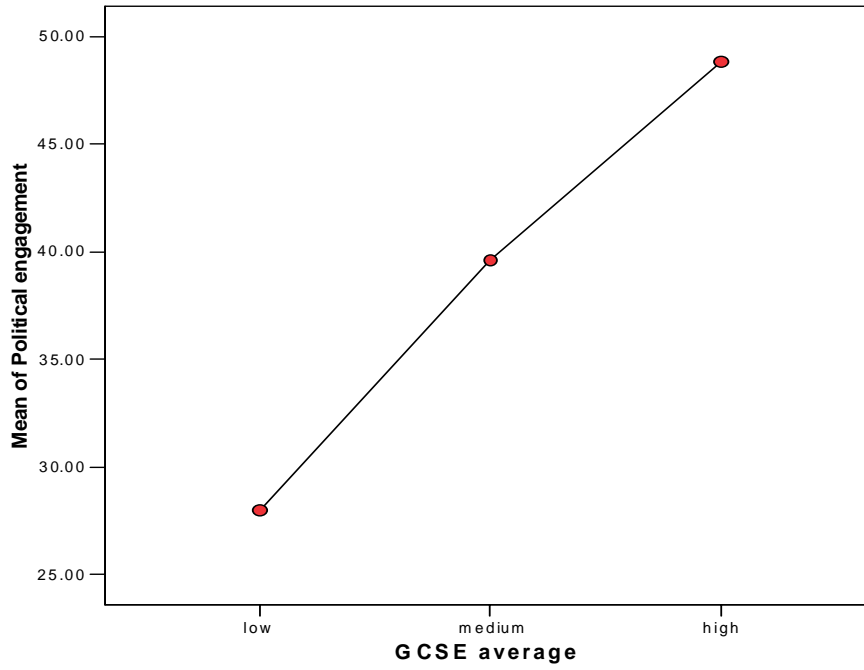




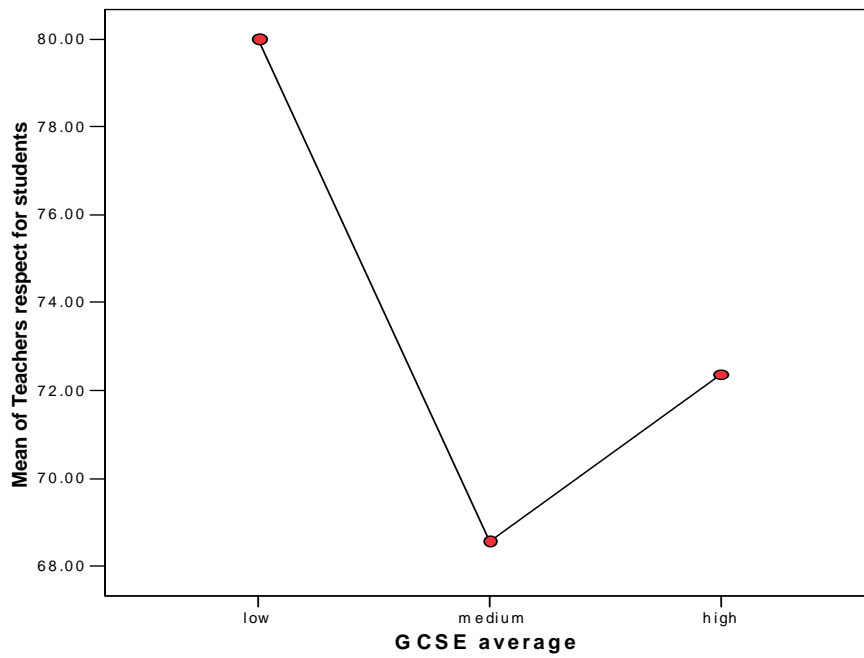
### **'Living my virtues and values' and achievement**



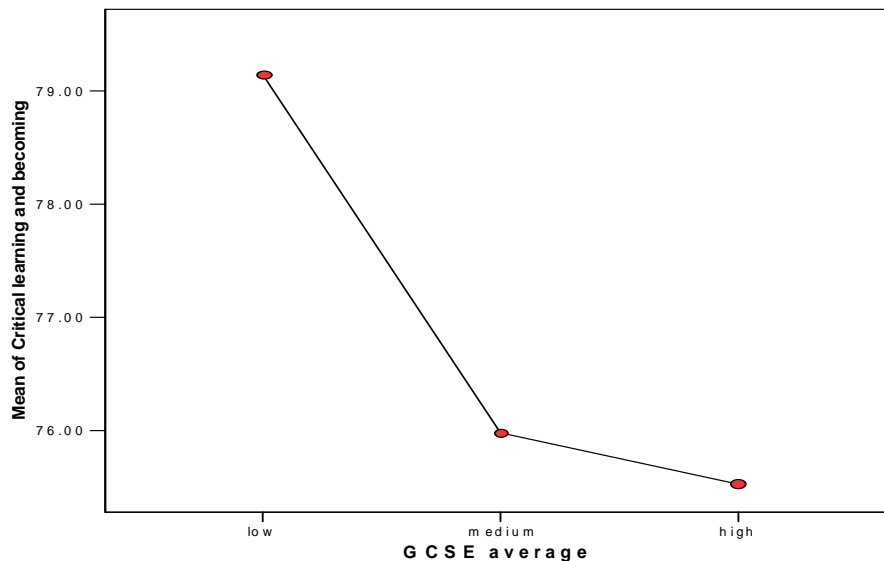
### 'Political engagement' and achievement



### 'Teachers respect students' and achievement



## ‘Critical learning and becoming’ and achievement



Although not all of these differences are statistically significant, it is interesting to note the trends. In particular ‘critical learning and becoming’ and ‘teachers respect students’ have negative relationships with achievement.

### 8.6. Relationships between character dimensions and learning dispositions

In order to understand the relationships between the values, attitudes and dispositions, which support and strengthen a person’s capacity to learn and to go on learning, and the dimensions of character emerging from this study, further statistical explorations were performed. The learning profile data were computed into the seven dimensions of learning power (Deakin Crick et al, 2004) and a cluster analysis was performed which produced three groups with low, medium and high levels of learning power.

In order to explore the relationships between students’ learning power and their character dimensions, a one-way between groups analysis of variance was performed, using the three learning power groups. There was a statistically significant difference between the groups at the  $p < .05$  level on nine character dimensions: ‘critical values and school’ ( $p = .0005$ ); ‘living my virtues and values’ ( $p = .0005$ ), ‘political engagement’ ( $p = .0005$ ), ‘identity in relationship’ ( $p = .001$ ), ‘ambition, meaning and purpose’ ( $p = .0005$ ), ‘critical social justice’ ( $p = .0005$ ), ‘challenge and responsibility’ ( $p = .0005$ ), ‘critical learning and becoming’ ( $p = .0005$ ) and ‘community engagement’ ( $p = .003$ ). The relationship between learning power and ‘teachers respect for students’ was close to significance with ( $p = .068$ ).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test (see Appendix 9) indicated that students who reported higher levels of learning power had statistically significant higher levels of those character dimensions reported above. However, students who reported lower levels of ‘community engagement’ reported lower levels of learning power. Further to these

significant relationships, there also appears a trend that students who reported higher levels of learning power also reported higher levels in other character dimensions with the exception of ‘influence of peers’. Students who reported higher levels of influence by their peers reported lower levels of learning power. Table XVI below shows the mean scores for each learning power group on each character dimension.

**Table XVI: Means of Learning Power Groups for each character dimension**

Character dimension	Learning power group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spiritual and religious engagement	low self report of learning power	110	30.9819	30.92165
	medium self report of learning power	201	36.5316	33.88444
	high self report of learning power	150	37.9619	33.56928
Critical values and school	low	110	55.0691	14.33370
	medium	201	58.9262	13.67462
	high	150	61.9530	13.84797
Living my virtues and values	low	110	71.8939	10.29008
	medium	201	75.6777	9.80271
	high	150	79.9292	10.99166
Political engagement	low	110	35.6727	22.07664
	medium	201	43.3035	19.58143
	high	150	50.4533	18.35540
Identity in relationship	low	110	66.3939	13.44852
	medium	201	69.6486	11.96650
	high	150	72.5556	14.00659
Ambition, meaning and purpose	low	110	68.9091	15.58078
	medium	201	72.5754	14.23969
	high	150	77.3714	16.40309
Family influence	low	110	67.4834	23.46505
	medium	201	71.6444	17.61747
	high	150	72.0154	20.30843
Influence of peers	low	110	64.4242	18.26919
	medium	201	62.5079	16.70465
	high	150	60.7384	18.65369
Critical social justice	low	110	68.0455	15.10051
	medium	201	73.6318	12.86444
	high	150	75.5096	15.35578
Teachers respect for students	low	110	68.5875	13.74022
	medium	201	70.0905	15.07737
	high	150	72.8031	15.92885
Wider family influences	low	110	47.7390	26.50727
	medium	201	51.1383	24.06953
	high	150	49.9008	26.81066
Challenge and responsibility	low	110	63.6108	14.12044
	medium	201	70.7463	14.13118
	high	150	78.7000	13.29114

Critical learning and becoming	low	110	70.4479	10.83451
	medium	201	72.8392	10.14737
	high	150	77.5915	11.80372
Community engagement	low	110	44.6667	23.17421
	medium	201	55.1244	23.98839
	high	150	51.4667	28.87004
Media and community influences	low	110	32.0696	20.93840
	medium	201	35.8708	21.68209
	high	150	36.7668	24.44783

## 8.7. Conclusions

The character dimensions represent a coherent set of inter-related personal qualities. Students who are spiritually aware are likely also to have a strong sense of living their values, of ambition, meaning and purpose in life and political and community engagement. The formation of identity in young people seems to be relating to self-knowledge, to the capacity to stand up for one's beliefs and values, and to challenging and being challenged. These students had an intrinsic sense of social justice which was related to personal growth and change and living their values. The schools that students attend also appear to have a significant impact on their character.

These statistical procedures suggest that there are significant relationships between the dimensions of character, achievement and lifelong learning. It appears that students who are politically engaged, living their values, aware of social justice and were more likely to be high achieving students; and less influenced by their peers in what they believed. The dimensions of character include personal qualities, which embrace values, attitudes and dispositions, and these qualities are related to the values attitudes and dispositions of learning power.

From the studies so far, there is evidence to suggest that personal development, the formation of character, and learning and achievement are all important and inter-related elements of education, which are significantly influenced in particular by the contexts and relationships students are nested within. In particular, wherever students find themselves, the evidence points to a 'centrality of relationship' as the most important medium and potential for character formation and the communication of virtues and values. In the school setting, evidence from both staff and students, points to the 'crucial' importance of a respectful relationship between students and their teachers where students feel liked, valued and respected by their teachers. Outside of the school, the most important relationships for character formation appear to be that of the immediate family with the mother playing the most significant role in student character and virtue formation, whilst both inside and out of school, the role of peers and friends continues to play a very important role in student virtue formation, more so than fathers. These issues are discussed further in Chapter 10.



## **9. Phase Four Methodology: In depth interviews: Student voice about character dimensions**

### **9.1. Introduction**

This section reports on the final phase of data collection designed to understand in greater depths the ways in which students understand the character dimensions. It was based on a series of in-depth interviews with nine students.

### **9.2. Data Collection**

In order to listen more carefully to student voices about character virtues, values, dimensions and themes emerging from the research so far, nine semi-structured interviews were conducted. The students were selected on the basis that they had high scores on the personal qualities of the character dimensions, and thus were likely to be able to be articulate about what they believed and why. The interview was structured on the nature of all the character dimensions. These character dimensions appeared to qualitatively fall into three conceptual categories: ‘personal qualities of character’, ‘schools as places for character formation’ and ‘influences on students’ character formation’. These categories formed the rationale for our interview framework for student interviews.

#### **1. Personal Qualities of Character**

- ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’
- ‘Living my virtues and values’
- ‘Political engagement’
- ‘Identity in relationship’
- ‘Ambition, meaning and purpose’
- ‘Critical social justice’
- ‘Challenge and responsibility’
- ‘Critical learning and becoming’
- ‘Community engagement’

#### **2. Schools as places for character formation**

- ‘Critical values and school’
- ‘Teacher respect for students’

#### **3. Influences on students’ character formation’**

- ‘Family influences’
- ‘Influence of peers’
- ‘Wider family influences’
- ‘Media and community influences’

### 9.3. Data Analysis and Findings

Of the nine students who consented to be interviewed, five attended the Christian faith-based school, three of whom were Muslims and two Christian and are referred to as faith school students. Two interviewees attended the college with one having no religion and the other reporting that she ‘did not know’; these are referred to as college students. The other two interviewees attended the community school and described themselves as Christians although religion did not play a big role in their lives; these are referred to as community school students. Student interviews were then transcribed and returned to the interviewees for validation and accuracy of representation; with the analysis independently validated by a second researcher.

#### Section 1. Theme: Personal qualities of character

##### ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’

##### Difference between spiritual awareness and religious awareness

To gather further insight about why fewer students reported a development of their spiritual life through a faith based tradition than others developing their spiritual life, interviewees were asked whether they thought there was a difference between religious awareness and spiritual awareness. Students presented a mixture of responses. Those who practiced a faith stated that religious and spiritual awareness were the same, while the two college students thought that there was a difference. Responses from the community students were inconclusive.

Faith school students commented that they had never thought of religious and spiritual awareness as being different because they developed their spiritual awareness through their religion, with the two being almost the same thing. They described religion as meaningless without faith, the two being linked to each other because *‘there’s a lot of spiritual awareness involved in religion’* (FS63) and *‘that’s just the way religions are, I think they’re kind of really spiritual’* (FS63). One faith school student did make a distinction between religion and the spiritual by saying they had religious ceremonies but *‘just the awareness of a higher being can be spiritual’* (FS46).

The college students expressed different opinions from those above. One student said she did not believe in religion but *‘spiritually like I still believe there is something and I still believe in doing things right’* (CS360). She believed there to be a difference between *‘spiritual and religious awareness’* remarking that *‘religion is more like conforming or kind of about control or telling people what to do whereas spirituality is more about you and doing what you think is right’* (CS360). Another said she thought there was a difference between religious and spiritual awareness, justifying her Wiccan beliefs by explaining that *‘God is a spirit’* (CS362).

One of the faith school students stated that she thought people did not go to church because *‘it’s not cool to be a Christian or to have a belief’* (FS216), adding that some may have



switched off from it *'and then decide to totally go the other way, maybe they've been pushed into their religion too much by their parents and I think that might make them want to rebel'* (FS216).

One of the community students said that not many people went to church because it was no longer important to them or possibly because of a lack of time due to more demanding jobs. They suggested that it was not the done thing to be seen to be going to church and that *'religion is not so important in schools any more as it used to be'* (SS528). This student also believed that popular activities such as yoga, are *'where people are getting their spirituality from'* (SS528, while the other community student stated that people's *'values are more or less the same, it's just the way people express them differently if they're religious or have a spiritual overview'* (SS497).

### **A spiritual overview to student values**

Over half of the students interviewed stated they did not have a spiritual overview to their value, while others felt that their faith played a big part in the values they held, with one stating *'when making moral decisions I do often refer to what my religion says about it and sort of spiritual values and so it does have quite an influence on my life'* (FS63). One of the students explained that when she became a Christian she found that she already held what were deemed as Christian values. Another stated that she would treat *'other people how you would want to be treated'* (FS60). One of the faith school students said she did not have a spiritual overview to her values whereas a college student answered that doing what was right would have an impact on her behaviour. The two community students stated there was no religious element to their values with one stating there was *'nothing religious about my values really, it's just the way I've been brought up and how I live my life'* (SS497).

### **Extent organised religion plays in student lives and values**

A number of students stated that organized religion plays a part in their lives and values, with most of the faith school interviewees confirming that organised religion did play a part in their lives but to differing degrees. One stated that it affected the way she looked at things and the ways in which she behaved, in terms of what she did or did not do. This student went further by remarking that *'a lot of my foundations of my values come from my religion and they shape what I do and what I don't do'* (FS60). Others said they tried to keep a Christian ethos in their daily actions by *'being considerate, kind and trying to help people'* (FS46). Two students, one Christian and one Muslim, said their religions were a way of life and played a huge role, regularly attending church and youth groups, reading the Holy Book the Koran and the sayings of the prophets respectively. One commented *'it's not like something I put aside or is apart from my life, it's more that my life is a part of my faith'* (FS216). One of the community students said she used to go to a place of worship every week but it got too much with school so she now goes only on major holidays.

Three of the students had nothing to do with organised religion even though one said they thought about it, whilst another said she was christened and used to go to church with her mum in the past. One of the college students said she also used to go to church regularly but although she still had a belief in 'something', it was 'not for her'.

### **Importance of religion for a person to have values**

The majority of the students said it was not important to be religious in order to have morals or hold values as most people held values but were not religious. They said *'you can have values and not be religious'* (FS63) and *'every one has values whether they like other people's opinions are good or bad but I don't think you have to be religious'* (CS360); another adding *'every one can have values if they're not religious, it's just what you think is wrong and what you think is right and the way you promote yourself'* (SS497).

A couple of faith school students described using their religious books as guides to help them and feeling it to be important to be religious, because people needed *'a main focus in life to keep you going otherwise you can get a bit lost really'* (FS60). One faith school student said that religion can help a person understand values better, but a community student stated that religion can affect people's open mindedness to the views of others in remarking that *'some people are tunnel visioned by their religion and don't open up to the views of other people and their religion maybe and see their values'* (SS497).

### **Students' current spiritual or religious practice**

The majority of interview respondents indicated that they participated in a range of spiritual and religious practices, albeit in degrees of involvement. The two community students did not follow any religious practice and a college student said she did not pray as such but would ask for *'help when there's no one to talk to'* saying that, to her, it was more like *'just letting your thoughts out'* (CS360). Faith school students said they prayed, attended places of worship such as a church or mosque regularly or less often, read their 'holy books', went to clubs such as Christian Union, Sunday school at the Mosque and church youth club. One college student reported that she thought a lot and had many discussions about God, adding she was very open minded and liked to try different things. She said she did go to church and prayed for her grandmother, but she also made spells, which made her *'feel at ease, I feel peaceful and I just feel protected'* (CS362). Another student said *'I'm doing a GCSE in Islam as well on top of my A levels. It's really interesting, I'd love to learn more about it'* (FS63).

The students who said they prayed explained that their prayer routines varied; some prayed daily, nightly and weekly and would also pray whenever they felt the need. Some of the faith school students talked about their routine of praying five times daily, two of them saying they should be following a daily routine but did not as yet. One in particular said she did not pray as she thought she was lazy, describing how she gets told off for not doing it but thought she would do it when she was ready. Another faith school student thought it wrong for parents to pressure children to pray, saying instead that she would do it when she felt she had *'enough faith to give up five portions of your time during the day and you're actually feeling that spiritual connection, then I think it's actually worth doing it. But at the moment I'm not that strong on the faith side and I hope that I will be able to develop that faith within myself as I grow older'* (FS63). Neither this student nor her siblings prayed five times a day, although her mother did. She did, however, feel she had a better understanding

of her faith now that she was older and thought about life a bit more, as well as witnessing events around her. She explained that as she was older she thought more about the purpose and reason to her life and this led her to develop her religion. Another student found prayer difficult to fit into her school day *'I'm a Muslim which means I pray 5 times a day or I try my best if I can. It can be quite difficult in school, but normally I get home because of the time of the year I can just about fit it in now with the change of times. I have a prayer mat and read the Koran as often as I can'* (FS60).

### **Religious or spiritual tradition within students' community and the extent students follow this**

Most students indicated there were religious traditions in their communities which they were involved in but to varying degrees. The two community students stated there was not really a religious tradition in their community.

One of the faith school students commented that her religious tradition played a part in her life in terms of the *'clothes that I wear, my attitude towards other people. I have respect for my teachers and parents'* (FS38). Others stated that the Mosque was central to where they live and there was a strong community around it. One student felt not many people went to Mosques unless it was a specific religious festival, otherwise it was *'just the men that go, the women just do everything in the house'* (FS63). The same student said she did not think her Muslim community was *'that closely knit, because we're sort of spread out across the city and I don't really have that much communication with the rest of the Muslims'* adding she thought her household reflected her parents Pakistani culture so they did not *'really need the community to be there because we've got our parents influence'* (FS63).

Other students said they did not attend their local church but went elsewhere whereas one reported the church she attended to be *'about 15 minutes from where I live, I'm there quite a lot, I sing with the church and it's built into my life quite a lot as I do a lot at the church'* (FS216). The same student described how her friend had introduced her to the church and she goes to church with her friends, although not all her friends were Christians. She also commented upon the religious tradition of the school she was at, stating it was a nice change from her previous school and that it was *'a nice shock'* (FS216) to be in a Christian community. This contrasted with her home life where her parents were not Christian.

Of the college students, one reported attending *'Pagan fests and meetings'* and being involved in *'protests as well to stop the War and things like that'* (CS362). The other explained that her mother was a Quaker and went to meetings. She said she that she found this approach more interesting and had attended meetings herself but stopped because she worked on Sundays. Members of her family still attended and she is still interested by what they tell her about the Quaker community in the respect that *'instead of there being a religion such as 'we are Christian and we do it this way', it's really free and easy and you don't have to be a Christian to be at a Quaker meeting you can be any religion, and they don't really have anyone who's above anyone else like in a meeting some one might say to sit in silence but anyone can talk at any time about anything you like, so it's all about you*

*being yourself and making a point you think might influence someone else. I find this a lot easier because it's not quite so controlling' (CS360).*

### **'Living my virtues and values'**

#### **Importance to cohort of values such as being kind, caring, trustworthy, fair and respectful**

The interviewees were unanimous in their agreement that these values, in particular trust and honesty, are very important and *'should play a major role in people's lives' then 'it(the world/) would be a good place' (FS46).* One student observed that values are fundamental to human nature *'whether you're religious or not...everything just falls apart if they're not there' (FS60);* or, people would not get very far without these qualities. One student commented that *'I've always thought you should treat other people how you want to be treated, I was always saying that in school. I always remember keep your hands and feet to yourself and that's what I think people should do' (CS362).*

Trust appeared to be an important theme for the students, who made several comments concerning this quality, in the respect that *'if you gain someone's trust, then it's easier to make a bond with them and share things with them' (SS497),* and if a person was *'trustworthy and honest you get more respect, people think you're more loyal and trust you more' (FS38) (?).* Further to this, an interesting observation was made by one of the students who remarked that *'I reckon trusting is harder, to trust someone than be trusted, but I think it is quite easy not to trust people as well, then if you do then you feel more secure in yourself, and in the people around you. I think just the fact that people can get hurt and they can start putting it onto other people as well that might have nothing to do with it, you might get hurt by one person but you assume everyone else is going to do the same, but obviously that's not true' (CS360).* Another student added that a person could get a bad name for himself or herself if they were untrustworthy, and that people were not actually practicing their values even though they know about them.

#### **Values important to students**

Students reported on the values that they thought were important specifically to them; being themselves, being honest and true to themselves and not changing for others, being loyal and caring, considerate, having respect for themselves and for others were all seen as important. One student commented that, *'I think there are a lot of people that don't have respect for other people nowadays. I think if they think something is a little bit different from someone they just don't like it. I think that's wrong, I think they should just be open minded, we can't all be the same, if we were all the same then it would be an unpleasant world' (CS362).* Students also expressed the importance of being honest, especially with friends, open minded and trustworthy, fairness, treating others how you want to be treated, being diverse and being able to get along with all sorts of other people and to be expressive of what they think, whilst not holding really strong opinions.

## **The role of student values in students' daily lives and how far student's maintain them**

Nearly all interviewees said it was important to maintain their values for the sake of other people, with the additional insights that it is not always easy to maintain them. One student stressed that values can contribute in a major way to her own life and those of other people in her comment that, *'values play a pretty big part in my life because even the little things can play a big part in your life. Obviously everything you do pretty much, because what ever you're doing, it is your choice, you make a decision to do something. It's your choice to be honest about something, it's whatever you do, not matter how little'* (CS360). Another went into detail regarding how her religious values, in terms of her daily prayer routine, affected her and was important in order for her to not take on too much and stay *'really well balanced out in my life, it really helps me stop and think at every point during the day. It reminds me why I'm here, what I'm doing'* (FS60).

One student's values of fairness made her aware that bullying was not appropriate at their age and she stated that she had talked to people in order to stop it. Another commented that she valued trustworthiness and being honest to people, but found it very difficult to trust her fellow female students, *'you can't trust anyone, girls in particular, people will say stuff about you behind your back, you think you know people, but you do not know anyone'* (SS528). This student further reported that her age group appeared to be in competition with each other as if *'everything is a popularity contest and every one wants to be the best, it's competition, if one person has one thing, one's got to have something better'*. After sharing how she thought it horrible, she concluded that *'I don't know what it is, I think everybody wants to be the best'* (SS528).

The students were aware that sometimes it is hard to maintain values, especially when they are faced with certain situations such as being *'truthful all the time because you might not want to do something when someone is trying to make you do it so you come up with a small white lie to get yourself out of doing it. And being fair is also very hard, with me I have quite a large group of friends and it's hard to treat everybody the same and spend time with everyone fairly'* (SS497). Another student said it was not always easy to maintain her values as *'everyone finds it hard to maintain all the time; no one can be perfect'* (FS216). This student added that she thought students were *'exposed to quite a lot and it's really hard for teenagers to be like a good person all the time because of what they're exposed to'* and that *'the media has a major influence on teenagers'* (FS216).

## **Reasons people behave the ways they do such as stealing or helping**

All students consistently referred to people's behaviour being affected by *'the way you're brought up'* (SS528) and the influence of their families, their parents, role models and family atmosphere. One student expressed her belief that there is no excuse for *'children to be brought up in a way that disrespects others'* (FS216). Students also suggested behaviour is affected by the situation they are faced with at a certain point in time, their spiritual beliefs and by *'what morals you've been given by your parents or been taught and what morals you practice'* (FS60). One student stated that behaviour was *'all to do with*

*conscience and also I think it's a lot to do with the way you're brought up and the company you keep' (FS63).*

Two students commented that their parents would affect how they behaved and vice versa ?, *'if your parents are really kind and helpful etc, then it's going to rub off on you, it might rub off on your friends, I think it's all to do with upbringing' (FS63)* and believed that it is easier to help others if they have seen or heard of examples of it in their community. Other views about behaviour expressed that people know what is right and wrong but still may not help because they are scared, or they may act in a certain way just to be accepted, to fit in with society; *'I think a lot of it boils to family and the way you're brought up, because if you haven't seen your parents being nice and kind then you're not going to be, if you haven't been in a community where that happens then that's not what you're going to do' (SS528).*

### **Character definition and the role of values in the character of a person**

Students' defined character as the morals, values, personality and characteristics a person has, being *'who you are or what you are' (FS60)* and as *'sort of a display of how a person has been influenced by life or how they've been brought up' (FS216)*. Values likewise make what a person is, such as being trustworthy; *honest more than anything' (SS528)*; accepting people who have different values; being respectful to others; and maybe following the rules of society, in order to have friends. Having values might also dictate the way a person behaves and knowing the ways to behave in school, the workplace and in life in general; *'I think to be a good citizen you have to be sort of helpful, trustworthy and fair, all the good values, but then also you can't because if everyone was like that then the world would be quite boring I think if everybody had the same values' (SS497).*

Students stated that who they are would really depend on different situations and people might fall into different categories of character. One student felt that at this stage in their lives they are mainly concerned with wanting *'to find themselves and that's why they go through a big stage because I went through this big long stage and once you've found yourself, you become sensible, you find out what you want to do and things like that' (CS362)*, adding further that once they know themselves better and *'get your own opinions and once you find yourself, you are so strong minded then you'll do well, but until then you are so easily influenced, there's nothing you can do. If they have values of their own and their own opinions, it makes you more of your own person and a different person' (CS362).*

### **Ideal person for present day society**

When asked what students thought was the ideal character for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, their responses suggested the ideal person to have their own views and be: - different; trustworthy; quite tough; determined; upbeat and have a bubbly personality; to get out there (as there are more opportunities for people who go out and look for them); completely honest; kind; considerate; clever; caring; helpful; loyal; diverse; make something of themselves; can judge situations and what the appropriate values are for each situation; understanding of other people's opinions; take on board other's opinions; understanding the

values of other communities, cultures and ways of bringing up their children and not offending others.

However, a student observed that this may be difficult to maintain since *'no one is perfect, because everybody has an off day, it happens'* (FS38). Another student's response corroborated this with, *'I don't think everybody can have the exact ideal characteristics they want to have as much as they try'*. One student joked that she was the ideal person and another added that she felt the ideal person would be different for every one but for her it would be a person who *'could balance everything because nowadays in society every one is a bit rushed off their feet all the time. A lot of people forget the balance and they lose a lot of one thing and gain a lot of other things but I also think that keeping the balance is key. To balance it you'd need some time, or cut down on what you're are doing and just stop and think for a bit because I think we can get too caught up in life sometimes and not realise what's happening and then you think 'Oh my God!''* (FS60).

### **'Political engagement'**

#### **The extent of student political participation and involvement in democratic debate.**

The majority of interview respondents were not involved in political activities either because they did not understand the system, did not find it useful, disliked politics, it did not bother them or they saw it as arguing for the sake of arguing.

Some interviewees suggested that they might get involved when they could vote and that politics was useful because *'we need to maybe criticize people who are in charge of people'* (FS46). One student said she really did not like politics, *'I can't stand it because a lot of it is just arguing and I think it's arguing for the sake of it, so I really just don't like politics at all'* (FS216). Another said she understood the system but did not participate.

One student believed that the voting age should be lowered, *'the reason being that in two years time when we apply to University, we're going to be faced with huge amounts of money, tuition fees, top up fees they've introduced and so at the end of the day, we are going to be affected by who is in government, and who's in power at that time, and so I think we should definitely have a chance to vote at sixteen'* (FS63).

Several of the interviewees said they got involved in debates at school, with one girl very involved in discussions about issues such as global warming, although she did not think the voting age should go down because she saw it as another opportunity to introduce poll taxation. One student said she was likely to have discussions with her friends and that she does challenge others when *'people feel completely the opposite way, I do like to know why, so I need to challenge them. I may do it afterwards to find out why someone else thinks why they do'* (FS60).

Another said that, due to living at home, she knew very little as the issues did not really affect her at present, but was still very interested to know how the country is governed. One of the college students said that her mother was quite interested in the Middle East and had

brought her up to be interested as well, so this student was regularly involved in debates because *'it is quite important and so I am involved when it comes to debating and I do make a point of trying to find out what's going on'* (CS360). Another student stated that he had not been to any public debates but did take part in a local demonstration about a traffic issue, which he said was a good experience. He said the mock election in the school the previous year was quite useful as it showed him how democracy worked and how the country is run.

### **'Identity in relationship'**

#### **Importance of teamwork and asserting self in groups**

All respondents saw being able to work in a team and being able to assert themselves as being of paramount importance.

Students stated it to be very important and a valuable skill to be able to work in teams because most things are done in teams and it *'happens all through your life, with your friends, your family, I suppose it is important just to make sure you get on with other people, but it is important that you make your point as well'* (CS360). Several used phrases such as *'two heads are better than one'* (FS63) and *'one mind isn't enough'* (FS60) and *'everyone is putting their ideas forward so you can't be, there's no 'I' in team'* (FS38). One student liked and loved working with others, *'I feel so comfortable to work in a team and it makes you stronger if you can work with other people'* (FS216).

Students expressed their understanding of the social skills involved in team work such as having to listen to others, appreciating people's differences and various qualities, trying to understand others views, making sacrifices for other people, getting along with others in order to; socialise, have more friends, build self esteem and confidence, get a lot of help, get things done faster, get more out of it and improve communication, as well as the importance of different opinions, views and perspectives and getting their own point of view across. Students suggested different perspectives were necessary because *'sometimes you can feel you're so right but then being proved wrong has to be an important thing as well. Sometimes you're wrong and you have to admit that you're wrong whether you like it or not and I think the teamwork helps that, helps build confidence and relationships as well'* (FS60).

Furthermore, they indicated their understanding of the democratic nature of teamwork with one student saying, *'every one is free to their own opinions'* but *'you just can't be 'yeah, this is what I'm going to do' and that 'you have to negotiate basically'* (FS38). Students thought it important to be able to have the opportunity *'to get their view across but I don't think any one person in the group should take on a leadership role and stamp their authority of what their view is and not listen to any other views. That's not working as a team, that's dictatorship'* (SS497). The importance of leadership was acknowledged with *'I think leadership skills are very good'* (SS528), and *'being able to lead is really important as well as teamwork'* (SS528). However, it was also seen as important not to single people out.



Another student demonstrated awareness of the importance of being able to work in a team in regard to holding down a job in the future. He thought teamwork to be *'one of the most important things, to be able to share your ideas with other people and communicate properly and working as a team these days in the workplace or school is, if you can't get along with other people that you necessarily don't know or can't work as a team then you're going to struggle in later life to get a good job, well not necessarily get a good job but maintain a good job'* (SS497).

### **Importance of fitting in or standing out from the crowd and reasons why people do this**

Interview respondents expressed mixed views on this question, by stating it was both important to fit in *and* stand out, but if they did either, it had to be for positive and not negative reasons, and not compromise their values.

One student said people fit in *'just to get by really'* or *'because they want to be cool'* (FS38) or to please their peers, with another observing that some do things to stand out for the wrong reasons and perhaps need to *'tone themselves down'* (SS528). Others do this perhaps because they are challenged to, in order to be accepted or to get attention and are not aware of the possible implications. To some of the students it depended on the situation and how the person felt at the time, the important point being that they followed and held onto their values as *'sometimes you want to stand out, sometimes you want to fit in with the crowd, but when you do stand out to try to do it in a positive way as opposed to a negative way'* (CS360) and *'I think the most important thing is that you don't break your values to make you stand out from the crowd or fit in'* (SS497). A student suggested reasons that some tried to fit in as insecurity and feeling *'they have to be something they're not to try to fit in'*, adding that if a person was happy with their efforts then it should not *'matter whether you fit in or not'* (FS60).

One student illustrated the paradox and complexity of trying to be different but fitting in, by suggesting this was a superficial way of being and that it was to do with something deeper, remarking that *'well obviously it's good to fit in with friends, it's good to have friends and things like that, but to fit in I think is a totally different question. Like to stand out means quite a lot to me, to have an impact on people is quite important, to be different is something I find a good value because I don't want to be like anyone else, I don't want to be a sheep, you know. I like to think I'm quite different but I don't think it has to be in the way you appear, the way you dress, the music you listen to, it doesn't have to be about those things, those things are a bit superficial, it has to be about your morals'* (FS216).

Other students saw it as equally important to fit in and be an individual with their own opinions and being themselves. One student said that people have *'to fit in to a certain extent'* but *'you've got to be yourself because it can make your life harder,'* adding, *'but then again I wouldn't want to be the same as everyone else'* (CS360). She went further, stating, she would not like to be the same as others but choosing when and how to express differing views and standing up for her rights was an important skill that she had learnt; she said *'in a way you do have to make your point but you also have to accept that not everyone*

*is going to think the same and once you've made your point then you give somebody else the right to choose to accept it or go like 'no, I've got my own opinion'* (CS360).

### **'Ambition, meaning and purpose'**

#### **Future hopes, ambitions and key objectives in life**

All interviewees spoke of their aspirations, ambitions and key objectives. The majority of interview respondents said they wished to go to university, get a degree, get good jobs and also to have families; *'I'd like to have a family and help teach my children my values, not force my values upon them but say this is what I do and are my views and it's up to you and sort of teach them right from wrong really'* (SS497). Another said she wanted to *'finish university, get a degree, find a good job, work for a bit, get married, have children, just basically that and I'd love to travel the world though'* (FS38).

Students expressed aspirations to follow professions such as radiography, pharmacology, medicine, human rights law, police, translation, fashion design, the media, music industry and running their own company. Students stated they would have to work very hard and be resilient to achieve their ambitions *'I've been working hard since 7 or 8 years old to be able to get into the field so I'm in a position to apply for medicine'* and *'I want to be a doctor. It's going to take a lot of hard work, so you've got to be resilient and carry on'* (FS63). Further to this, students also aspired to work with people and to travel and live abroad, whilst others wanted to maintain their religion, maintain their character, develop their personality, be happy, be popular, and *'to have nice things and a nice comfortable lifestyle, I think material things are nice things to have, I've always been surrounded by them'* (SS528). Others wanted to make their mark, to work with the disabled, give to charity and to work for others.

#### **Purpose of having a sense and meaning in life**

The interviewees unanimously agreed on the importance of having a sense and meaning to the purpose of their lives. They said this was central to them in comments such as, *'it means a lot to me, I mean without it where would we be. I think my religion at the end of the day keeps me going, thinking that's the reason why I'm here, that life is a test, that's why I'm here, to complete the test... Otherwise, sometimes you just sit down and you think ' why am I here? What am I doing here?' And you think about the origin of the Universe etc, and you think where did we come from and why are we here. And for me the answer is my religion, God created us and life's a test'* (FS63).

Students suggested without a sense of meaning and purpose in life they would be left wondering what the point was and having no sense to their lives. One of the college students commented *'I have a sense to feel the need to help others, if I didn't have that sense I'd don't think I'd be doing anything to be honest'* (CS362). Another student said *'I think if I didn't know why I was living or what I was here for, I think it would be quite weird actually'* (FS60), whereas another stated that it was the main thing that drives people to do what they want to do, and echoed the above statement with *'I think if you don't have a purpose then*

*it's just nothing'* (FS216). One student shared about the stage in her life when she was questioning the purpose to her life, *'a while back, I kept asking what's the point in life. Someone said to me the point of your life is making a point to your life and I suppose that is what guides me now – the fact that if I want to be important I've got to find something to make my life worth living, so for me its making a difference with human rights law, I wouldn't mind doing that'* (CS360).

Students observed it was important to make the most of every day, as life is short, and to have targets to aim for which serve as a motivation to work hard rather than just drifting through life aimlessly, and that it was important also to have other plans should they not succeed in their original career aspirations, *'you need to know where you're going in life, if you don't then you haven't got a hope'* (SS528).

### **'Critical social justice'**

#### **Understanding of justice and why people pursue it.**

The interviewees demonstrated a good understanding of the meaning of justice and why people pursued it and a couple said they did act to seek fairness; *'I would like to make things a lot more fair'* (CS362). One student stated that *'injustice is when something is wrong, you want to make it better, when somebody is treated cruelly or as inferior'* (FS46) whilst another student expressed *'justice is about equality and being fair and I just think people want to treat people how they want to be treated, I think it's really important'* (FS60).

Others thought justice meant everything being just and fair, with people being treated more fairly and people seeking justice because they think it is right and want to make a difference, so that if all people sought it then *'we could actually change how we live'* (FS38) and *'justice is like fair and fairness, everyone being fair, everyone living in an egalitarian society where everyone is equal, there's no difference'* (SS528). One student remarked *'I'm sure every one has views about it and you should do something about it, question it, just do what ever you can to get rid of the injustice'* (FS63) and that *'everything has to be done justly and fairly'* (FS60). Another student stated if a person valued justice and fairness *'then you're going to try and change things and make them just so it's not just fair for one person, but it's fair for everyone'* (CS360).

One student complained that one of his pet hates was people who moan about things but do not take action. He stated that fairness and justice was important because it could put people off from doing things and that fairness was *'about getting an equal balance in society I think, because if someone does something that is unjust and they get away with it then people are going to start thinking 'well I can do that and do that, if that person is'. If someone seeks justice against that person and they get some sort of retribution like a community service order or something like that, then people are going to think twice about doing it again'* (SS497).

### **'Challenge and responsibility'**

## **Importance of students values being challenged, understanding of challenge and why people challenge**

Interviewees indicated it was extremely important to challenge and be challenged. Students felt that challenging others or being challenged was very good because *'you become a better person for it, it means basically that you're not always right'* (FS38). Students felt that if they challenged others or were challenged then it might make people: think in a different way, look at different values, examine their beliefs and those of others, making them stronger and helping to overcome shyness and a lack of confidence; *'a lot of people say that they don't like to be challenged but I think it shows weakness if you don't want to be challenged; everyone has weakness but if you won't challenge yourself then you won't grow'* (FS216).

Students thought being challenged meant they and others would be more thoughtful about why they believed in something but it was important to students to do so in an open, respectful and understanding way: *'I think that's really important to have your morals challenged because I think it defines whether you know why you believe them for or not, because I believe that's the key for keeping them up, you need to know why you believe in your morals and then you can tell other people and it helps other people as well'* (FS60); and *'you aim to understand other people's points of view so it's good to challenge other people's points of view and say 'look I don't agree for this, this and this reason''* (FS63).

### **'Critical learning and becoming'**

#### **Aspirations for values and type of person students wish to become**

To gather information concerning the type of person they aspired to become students were asked about people they admired and the values they perceived them to have.

Three of the students said the person they looked up to and aspired to be like was their Mum because *'she works hard and she makes sacrifices for us'* (FS38); *'I also think my mum. It's just considering her life and things, it's a real good example for me to follow, and I think it should be like that for all children and their parents because if their parents aren't a strong role model then there's no hope'* (FS216); *'there's like my mum, she's brave and has got herself a really good job, she's come through difficult circumstances and I admire that'* (CS360). The latter student also mentioned what she admired in her father saying, *'there is other stuff like in my dad, I admire his determination, like when he's decided what he's going to do, he goes ahead and is going to do it'* (CS360).

A couple of students said they were happy with themselves and along with the others, also mentioned they had been inspired by a particular person, for example, *'Miss World'* (SS528), a peer or a best friend, several people and by people they had studied in lessons such as Martin Luther King; *'who stood against injustice towards black people, he was confident at speaking against the injustice, truthful Christian, perseverance really'* (FS46). Some students reported they were inspired by different aspects of different people and may try things out for themselves. One student commented that *'everybody has got their good or*

*bad points, I'm not perfect, I don't think anyone is perfect but if you take all the good bits out of people you do get something perfect'* (FS60).

The values that were particularly admired were self-motivation, being trustworthy, and people who can keep life in balance, who can work, play and have fun, *'have a laugh and be serious at the right times'* (FS60), do not go to extremes, being strong, offering help, support, confidentiality, sympathy and empathy in the form of a shoulder to cry on. Being accomplished and skilled at their job, being able to relate across different levels, friendly, kind and understanding, good at talking with people, not chatting back, smiling a lot, being diverse and able to converse with all sorts of people. A spiritual role model was Jesus for one student.

### **The extent students perceive they have changed from the past and think they will continue to develop**

Interview respondents perceived themselves to have changed a lot in terms of maturing, *'got wiser'*, and *'developed my values'* (FS46). Students thought they had changed a lot, growing in confidence, with less trying to fit in, accepting differences and being able to accept that not everyone will agree with them, becoming more philosophical and aware of events around them; *'as you grow older and you see things happening around you, sort of injustices and you begin to think and use your conscience more and think moral and immoral decisions'* (FS63). Another student felt she was totally different before she found her faith and found herself to be really confused but has learnt from her experiences.

Another student believed she had started to balance herself and her values, feeling that she had grown up. She was less reliant on other people, more independent and became aware of her own values and this had happened *'about halfway through secondary school I started seeing things differently, not just accepting things and started challenging more'* (CS360). One of the college students believed she had changed *'a hell of a lot. My views are completely different now, I've changed so much in the last few years'* (CS362) and she could *'see myself growing and I see myself changing every day'*.

School was an environment, mentioned by other students that influenced them, *'my time at secondary school has changed me quite a lot. It has made me tougher as a person mentally because just of the way the school system is, not that it's bad but with just getting to know other children when you come in from primary school and with all the work. Yes, it's slow to start with whilst you find your feet, but then you grow as a person and it's good if you take bits of everyone you talk to and try to form your own person, which is quite good'* (SS497).

### **The extent students feel they will have to overcome difficulties or give things up in order to progress in life**

Interview respondents said that they had overcome difficulties in their lives and were aware that things did not *'just fall into place and have everything handed to you on a plate, you've got to work for everything, I've been taught that, you've got to work'* (SS528). Others are prepared to make sacrifices if they really care about something if the rewards are well worth

it. One community student explained that he would never want to compromise or give up his values though, and would not *'disagree with something I've been brought up with just to get a job'* (SS497).

Another perspective was offered by a college student who suggested that everybody had to overcome their own 'stuff' and it helped to have something to look forward to, like 'getting somewhere' in life, but what really mattered was *'the way you deal with it'* (CS360), expanding further with *'every one has difficulties but as long as you know how to deal with them'*. The other college student knew she would *'have to give up things I know that. I know I will have to give up quite a few things that I enjoy doing but I'm willing to do it. I'm willing to do anything I can to get where I need to, to have a future, have children, get married'* (CS362).

### **'Community engagement'**

#### **Extent students know their neighbours and are involved with them and the local community.**

Student interview responses were varied concerning their knowledge of their neighbours and their community engagement. Some knew their neighbours, were living in close-knit communities, mixing well and learning a lot from other people. One said her neighbours helped her a lot because she forgot her house keys quite often and got locked out. She explained that it was nice to have lived in the same, small community all her life because it meant she had grown up with the same people, and they were really good friends. She said this had some influence on her and that trust was very important in such a situation. Some whose parents were born in a different culture observed that there can quite easily be a culture clash between their tradition, religion and culture.

A few said they did not help out in their communities and were not involved in any local organisations, while others were part of organisations and clubs. One of the faith school students had gone to a youth club in the past, but did so no longer. One student coached in a gym club and another said she was *'involved in an organisation that helps disabled children, on a Saturday I help out in a play scheme that's run by my mum and some of her friends and they look after disabled children or children with learning difficulties, quite a wide range of difficulties over the weekends, and they look after them and play with them and give their parents a little bit of a rest as well and they have fun and they love it and it's voluntary'* (FS63). One of the students said she did not know her neighbours very well even having lived there for seventeen years. She conceded that they will exchange pleasantries and greetings but that was as far as it went in the neighbourhood, with the exception of the people who lived opposite. She had gone to school with the daughter, and the two families have become friends through this connection.

## **Section 2. Theme: Schools as places for character formation**

### **'Critical values and school'**

## **Role of school in student character development and how students think school can help them to become the person they want to be**

Most interviewees said their school helped them to become better citizens and that school had an important role in their character development.

One interviewee remarked that school could *'help you so much because it can give you a head start in life, it makes you broaden your horizons to see so much that's out there, you don't have a limit to things, you can be what ever you want to be'* (FS38). Another student stated that school had an important role *'because it's almost like a mini workplace, it shapes your character and as well as when you're at home you get things from your parents, values and things like that, that when you come to school you get values from your teachers and other pupils as well, so it does shape you quite a lot'* (SS497).

Students commented on the particular features their site had in influencing them such as the faith school with its *'tutor worships'* in the morning *'which were very focused on the school's values of being trustworthy'* (FS46). Other students said although *'school does have a huge effect on the person you turn out to be'* (FS63), it was more the people in the school who have an effect on them, in particular their peers and friendship circles. One student at the college site had left a Christian school because she did not believe or agree with many of the things there. She says the college environment has made her *'more independent and a bit more relaxed and I suppose that has shaped me because at college nobody is forcing you, if you don't turn up to a lesson then it's your problem but you're the one who's going to suffer whereas at school, 'you will be in lessons and we'll make sure you are in lessons'* (CS360).

Another of the college students commented that for her school was *'very hard, it was hard for me because of my family but it's hard for other people because people are just growing up and they have no respect. If somebody comes in with messy hair, that'll be it, she'll have like chewing gum in her hair'* (CS362). This student described further the benefits the college environment has brought her in stating that *'college has a different, it just completely changes you, it makes you grown, you feel grown up, you feel wanted, they chase you up if you're not in and sometimes that can be really good that they actually chase you up because they don't chase your parents like schools will, they chase you up. I think that can be really good because you can really feel, 'I'm wanted for something''*.

## **Role of school in developing students values**

With the exception of one of the respondents, all interviewees stated they felt school had a role in developing their values. The other student felt it did not make much of a difference *'because school you just come to learn, we learn a lot'* although she did acknowledge that school *'could shape you as well'* (FS38).

Others believed that their school did have a role and their teachers can help in developing their values, in particular through religious education, practical routines such as *'meeting deadlines, that gets you used to when you start work, there are a lot and work practice, I*

*suppose it kind of extends stuff you've learnt at home like honesty' (CS360) as well as 'learning about things good and bad, fair trade, RE, other religions and things like that' (FS46). One student commented that her school did have values throughout, and by 'being taught about your religion and from there you are in a position to choose whether you want to believe it or not' (FS60). One faith school student reported that the Christian ethos of the school and being with like-minded people made her feel comfortable and accepted, in that 'every one is just so really nice and if you can follow the example that they're setting, I think it's really so nice that it's a community here' (FS216).*

A college student observed that she was really enjoying college. It had boosted her confidence to speak in lectures and now *'I'm just always talking all the time'* (CS362). She perceived that college people were more accepting of her and there was a greater degree of freedom and space at the college. She was particularly enthused about being able to wear what she wanted without the fear of reprimand, and that not having a uniform meant *'you don't have to feel like uncomfortable, or claustrophobic about what you're wearing and you don't have to worry if you don't take your coat off in class in school you get in trouble for it but in college you don't'*.

Students at the community school saw school as valuable in building character and confidence through the activities and events they put on and through the teachers pushing students on. One student perceived that *'team building, rules and PE lessons, can help the less confident people by putting them in more leadership roles so they can develop their confidence'* (SS497). Another student stated that they might not do as much or as well if their teachers did not motivate them, *'because if you're just left to get on with the work then you just sit back and don't do anything. I think when teachers push you to do stuff, like the PE teachers push you to do all the school sports and push you to be your best at this sport and definitely getting into the teams'* (SS528).

### **Extent students see connections between their values and their learning**

Interview students could see a connection between values and their learning in terms of their behaviour in class, for example *'you don't disrupt, you just get on with the work'* (FS38) and that schools try to provide positive environments in order to *'teach good values and good attitudes'* (FS63) and this can change the way they think. Students said it was important to build up trust with their teachers because *'if you're trusted to do something, you can build on trust. If a teacher can trust you with a bit more freedom, you can learn how your values can help you'* (CS360).

Students explained that their subjects informed them of world events and they wanted to learn more and gain more knowledge. One student said this was important because she wanted to *'be a good doctor, and I think the basis of that would probably be my religion again because it's important to have an ambition and it's important not to forget that, not to lose track of everything, it's good to have one, it gives you a sense of direction to go in'* (FS60).



Another spoke of the connection between the value of respect she held as very important and her love of foreign languages, stating that it was important to show respect for people of other countries by speaking their language because *'if you can talk to someone from another country is really important, and shows you're not ignorant. I know a lot of foreign countries are taught English and I just really think it's important if we return the favour by learning their language, I think it shows real respect'* (FS216). Another student spoke of the importance of showing respect for the teacher because they were doing their job, and one of the state site students stated that they *'learn values but not explicitly'* (SS528). This student spoke of the role of the teachers' approach to students, in the way they talk and their perspectives, in having an effect in moulding students. The subject of sociology was mentioned as helping people understand a lot more and see things differently, learn about different cultures and better understand their own values.

### **Ways schools inhibit development of values**

In terms of the ways schools inhibit the development of their values, three faith school students could not think of any ways school would do so.

Others gave some examples, such as other students leading them in the wrong direction and peer pressure. One student thought that it could *'be quite stressful and it drives people to insanity a lot of the time. You have deadlines to follow, there is a lot of work you have to do and you have to really stay on top of it, otherwise you're going to get totally lost'* (FS216). Another college student commented that the sheer number of students might make it *'a bit difficult to help with all their values, but in the Christian school it might squash their values'* (CS360). One interviewee described her school experiences by saying that *'being strict, in some ways it can do good'* but added that she thought *'French teachers are really aggressive, in my experience. I know they're not allowed to do it but they did do quite a lot of things they weren't allowed to do like one of them tried to throw a chair and stuff'* (CS362).

On the topic of aggression, one student remarked that school may lead to this; *'sometimes if you get frustrated sometimes in a lesson or frustrated with another pupil, it can sort of change your values to get back at some one, you can lie or do something like that just to vent your aggression rather than physically venting it on some one'* (SS497). A state site student suggested that school can *'sometimes cage you up and lead you into things that maybe you don't, sometimes they can trap you and not let you express, or explore other things'* (SS528). The same student added that some lessons were not held in great esteem for instance, *'we do stuff like critical thinking lessons but nobody goes to those lessons, You just get told to take it, it's a waste of time, it's an A/S level and it's the biggest waste of time ever'*.

### **'Teachers respect for students'**

### **Role of teachers in the development of student values and positive teacher-student relationships**

Interview respondents offered some insight as to why and how teachers have a role in developing their values.

Students suggested the quality of attitude a teacher held would have an effect on the way they learn and their values, as well as teachers showing humour, encouragement and leading by example. Students commented that they looked up to them, liked the way they helped them and saw them as people who did them no wrong, saying that if a student liked their teacher then *'you're going to be more interested in the subject, if the teacher's encouraging and influencing you, then you're going to take more interest and try your best. I know that in a subject, if you're doing better and the teacher is really encouraging you, then you enjoy it a lot more, that's something that I've found'* (FS63). Another student suggested it was down to students as well as the teachers with *'there is only so much they can do, because it's really up to you and how much you are willing to do'* (FS60). Other students liked the way teachers offered their own views and invited those of the students as a way to explore different viewpoints.

One of the college students pointed out that *'teachers have to be accepting'* (CS362) and be friendly, understanding and empathetic especially when students are struggling to meet coursework deadlines. Students said that teachers help and guide students particularly in terms of being fair and trustworthy, because when students see teachers *'being fair with students then after a while you think that's quite a good value to have, aids you in your character'* (SS497). Another student said they pick up a lot from their teachers' values through watching them, but highlighted a concern about some teachers not being fair towards all students; *'I think it's the way they talk, or the way if someone asks a question which they probably shouldn't do as it's totally off the subject, and when the teacher answers with a 'I disagree or agree with you', the answer they give because someone always asks an odd ball question. I think it is important that teachers respect individuals, but I don't think teachers do though. I think teachers are very biased and they have their favourites and they don't like certain people, they do things a certain way. I've always, always thought that teachers don't have the respect for individuals'* (SS528).

### **Teachers who inspire students**

Some interview respondents stated they did not have a particular teacher who inspired them but rather many teachers. One student said *'every teacher I have had has played some part in my life to sort of change my character and the way I am'* (SS497). Another stated a member of the reception teachers inspired her *'because she's true to herself and she tells it how it is, not many people do, many are fake and cover something up, she doesn't'* (FS38).

Three students spoke of their teachers who would tell stories about their own lives and experiences to show students what people go through and another two spoke of their English teachers' as they both were humorous and influential. A student spoke of her potential being recognised by her teacher who, as a result, gave her the extra responsibility of being a magazine editor, which pushed her on, making her feel better about herself.

One student highlighted the importance of the way teachers treated them now that they come to school because they want to be there, *'I think they have a lot more respect for you because of that and they treat you a lot more like adults'* (FS216). Another student spoke of her respect for her teacher who was honest with her and respected her students but also because *'she won't let me get away with things'* (CS360). A college student mentioned it being serious work but remarked that it was good to have discussions with her teacher, to share her views and listen to his. She that added her English class was *'a really good class to be in. It's open, with my tutor you can just walk in and talk to her any time, it's an open door and it feels really, really comfortable'* (CS360).

One student suggested that most students she knew said their physical education teachers were mentioned as the teachers students say they got on with the most, adding *'I think because they were always more relaxed and things like that. And definitely my sociology teacher, I get on so well with her and I think it's because she understands all of it'* (SS528).

### **Section 3. Theme: Influences on character formation**

#### **What has contributed to making students the people they are today, where do students think their values come from?**

All but one of the interview respondents indicated that their parents, family and their upbringing had made the major contribution in making them the people they are today and on their values. Some students spoke of the role the church and their faith has had in shaping them. One mentioned that some negative life experiences had had a major impact on the person she perceived herself to be now, adding that her experiences had been very hard and a struggle, but she did not dwell on them, since it had made her a much stronger person. This student also spoke of how her increasing awareness of the environment around her led to changes in diet and behaviour. Students suggested that there were a range of influences on them of which the impact increased, as they grew older. Students reported they picked their values up from values they had learned when they were younger which helped them to intuitively decide what is right or wrong in situations and what to do about it. Other influences mentioned were they themselves, close friends, friends from different backgrounds, people they have met, early school, general life experiences, TV, celebrities, role models and older peers.

#### **'Family influence'**

##### **Role of immediate family in the development of students' values**

Students also gave some insight into the role of their immediate family in the development of their values. Students said their family was most important and both parents influence their values such as getting an education, going to university because they had not had the opportunity to go, wanting their children to have the things they did not have, being truthful, helpful, caring, trustworthy and kind.

However, interviewees responses indicate the mother has more of an influence because *'she's always there for me, she always pulls me through thick and thin'* (FS38). Another student spoke of her mother's influence upon her to be charitable, *'from a very young age we've always had a charity jar in the corner and every time we got pocket money, my mum would go don't you feel guilty are you going to put even a penny into the jar? And since then now, every time I have money I always feel the need to put a little bit in the jar, it's just something inside of me'* (FS60). One student remarked that her mother influences her spiritual values, whilst a college student said her mother influences her in terms of traveling and politics, *'she's a bit more worldly and has been to a lot of places traveling and she's more influential in world politics and stuff like that, and she explains things'* (CS360).

Two students spoke of the influence of their fathers in their values, *'my dad is quite a strong valued person and so that sort of helps me to see that if you have strong values then it's not a bad thing to have strong values then nobody is going to take the mick'* (SS497). Another student spoke of her father as being the type of person whose values were *'more about valuing what you've got and building yourself up'*, adding that *'he's the first person in the village to go to University, he's always telling me about that'* (CS360).

For those interviewees living in a single parent family, this appeared to have an impact on their values and is corroborated by a comment from a student in the questionnaire cohort who said that the absence of her father in her life had had an impact on her values. Interview students perceived their values to be mostly influenced by the parent they lived with and to a lesser extent by their stepparents. Two of these were living with their mothers and one with her father. The student living with her father indicated she was not very close to her mother and that her father pushes her to be on time to college and to go onto university, she listens a lot to him and they do have some discussions.

Being an only child also appeared to have an influence on values as one student describes, *'we're quite a close family and obviously being an only child I think it's different with my mum and dad as I think I'm a bit closer with them as they only have one of me'* (SS528). Students mentioned the role of siblings, with one saying her older sister had a role in her values whilst another said being an older sister had taught her to be caring to her younger sister. One student said she was the oldest so her siblings did not influence her as much as her parents because she was the one who looked after them.

### **'Influence of peers'**

#### **Importance of the role friends play in the development of students' values, the importance of peer approval**

Interview respondents said the role of their friends in the development of their values was important.

One student said that her friends played a big role in her life, *'being an only child, I've always had to have friends to rely on because I don't have any brothers or sisters, so friends have been more important to me than probably to people who have brothers and sisters'*

*because I've always had to fall back on my friends'* (SS528). Some said they could rely on their friends to tell them the truth or when they are not being themselves, although one student said that *'the truth hurts sometimes and I don't want to hear'* (FS38). Another said she was very honest with her friends and would say things if she had to.

Students reported that their friends played a big role, never let them down, were always there for them, could guide them, could learn from them, gave them values different to their family and should respect them. With one student whose friends did not share the same beliefs, she perceived this to have made her more accepting, whereas others said different beliefs, values and morals made them challenge others more to find out the reasons behind their friends' different values. One said she had been influenced by her friend to become a Christian whilst another stated she had *'one best friend and that's all you need, that's all I need anyway'*. (CS362).

Some students said it was important to have their friends' approval and to approve of their friends, particularly if they have the same morals and similar values, as this meant it was easier to get along. Students suggested that if they did not share the same values then perhaps a person should get new friends. The approval of their friends was not always necessary as it was also important for students to be their own selves and individuals. Students stated it was nice to be approved by their friends but naturally there would also be times when there would be a difference of opinions, although this led to debates and discussions which in turn made students see that people were different and held different values.

### **'Wider family influences'**

Most interviewees said they were influenced by their extended family but the degree to which they were, varied, due mainly to a lack of contact because of geographical distance or some relatives being deceased.

Some students enjoy a very close relationship with their extended family, aunts and uncles and their grandparents in particular the grandmother. One said she had been in daily contact ever since she could talk; *'I've spoken to my Nan and granddad on the phone everyday since I could talk. They've definitely had a role in my values. My granddad has got the strongest views in the world. He drives me mad, we spend hours on the phone arguing. He thinks everyone should be an individual, you don't need friends and you don't need one thing or another, ah he just jaffs on so much'* (SS528).

Two described how their grandmothers had influenced their values. One said she loved her grandmother very much and thought she was a very strong woman. She gave an example of how this woman had influenced her views with, *'because she didn't believe in sex before marriage and neither do I and that's very rare for my age students today'* (CS362). The other student shared that her grandmother had a lot of traditional values perhaps because she had been brought up during the war. Because this student had been taught to respect her grandmother, it made her accept that *'you have to learn that people have different*

*backgrounds and they're not necessarily wrong, it's just that they haven't experienced what you've experienced' (CS360).*

One of the students had quite a large extended family on her mothers and fathers side, of half and step siblings, mentioning one of whom was a lot older than herself. She also had an adopted sister of her own age. She said she did not see too much of them as they lived with other adults but did she see her own younger sister more and she influenced her in terms of becoming a vegetarian.

Four of the students did not have close relationships with their relatives as they were either deceased, they lived far away from them or they lived in different countries and so they did not really have an influence on them. One student said her cousins lived nearby but did not influence her as much as her immediate family. Another student said she did not see her extended family much but had a 'God' family who she saw more of and she felt them to be more like family as well as people who were like brothers and sisters to her. One student whose grandparents were deceased did see a lot of her aunts and uncles as they only lived a short drive away.

Two students said they had family back in Pakistan so did not have much contact with them except by phone and one had met her father's family only once. One student stated she was hoping to go back this summer and that she gets back into the culture when she is there which influences her; *'when I'm back there, because you have the call to prayer 5 times a day and so you'll be lying in your bed at 5 o' clock in the morning and you'll be able to hear that all round the city and so that obviously has quite.... When I go I do tend to pray a lot more because you've got the community there and when you know other people are doing it with you, you feel you're in the same boat, you all understand everything, then it makes your faith a lot stronger'* (FS63).

### **'Media and community influences'**

#### **Extent people are influenced by figures in the media or the celebrity culture**

All the respondents said the influence on students by figures in the media and the celebrity culture was a major one. Students said also the media coverage of events also played a role. One student, however, shared that she felt its influence was less than people thought and highlighted the benefits in that it can *'encourage ambition'* and is *'a chance to develop your opinion on that as you may not come across something like that in your life'* (CS360). Another student observed that celebrities can generate publicity more than some one who was not famous; *'people tend to take more interest if a celebrity has opened it, like a street or an event then people focus more it on than if it was just something that had been opened by me, people focus their attention towards celebrities'* (SS497). One individual felt that by showing small children films about how Olympic champions are made, they could be inspired.

Some observed that even though some celebrities appeared to have an easy life, they felt sorry for them as they also *'have it hard'*. Students could see the influence on people by

what they buy and the way they dress and this is linked to being accepted by their friends. One of the faith school students commented on the influence of watching TV, how peoples' lives are based around it and how they aspire to be like someone; *'just watching the celebrities and what they do, we aspire to them as our role models and so their values are going to influence our values'* (FS63). Another student comment was similar to this view in terms of celebrities being role models in that it affects how people behave to make themselves more popular; *'some people model themselves on celebrities to try and further their popularity'* (SS497).

Another felt the media influenced people a lot in all walks of life and was skeptical of the motives of those in the media in how and what they report. One student expressed her opinion that *'the media is taking the meaning out of society'* because of *'people on the front of magazines and people think you have to be size 4 to be pretty'* (FS60). She stated that *'it doesn't matter what you look like, ok fair enough you can't be overweight or underweight because it's dangerous to your health, but then why be a size 4 why not a size 14'*. One student disliked the celebrity culture, saying that a superficial message was being sent out, pressuring people into believing they have to be perfect, have to be thin and beautiful, adding that there is a knock on effect in leading people to feel ashamed about themselves through no fault of their own. One of the college students reported that she was not very influenced herself to go and buy certain items but she was interested in peoples' lives, relationships and their histories.

### **The role of community in shaping students as people**

Overall, students reported that community did not really have an influence on their values development. One student said the reason for this might be because she had moved twice in the last year. Another said she did not really have a community to get involved with and her father does not get involved with anyone, an experience that was corroborated by another making the observation that she thought how involved someone became in the community depended on parental involvement. One of the community students said he was not sure of the community's influence on his values even though he is quite close to some of his neighbours, knows quite a lot of older people, has participated in a public demonstration in the locality and is a member of a sports club.





## **10. Summary of findings and discussion**

### **10.1. Introduction**

This research has provided a rich data set about values, virtues and character formation in 16-19 year old young people in three different Sixth Form centres. In this chapter some of the key issues and tensions emerging from the data will be discussed in the light of the overall aims and objectives of the project and its particular research questions which are repeated here:

What do students consider to be appropriate virtues and values for life in 21<sup>st</sup> century society?

How do they understand those virtues and values?

What resources do students draw upon in the formulation of their virtues and values?

What is the 'language in use' by young people?

What are the links between virtues and learning dispositions?

How and in what ways do schools and colleges inhibit or develop the formation of virtues and dispositions of character in Sixth Form students?

### **10.2. Summary of findings**

This is a summary of the main findings from the five sweeps of data collection for this project; the focus group discussions, student repertory grid interviews, staff interviews, student questionnaire and student interviews.

There were nine personal dimensions of character, which emerged from the data. These are composite qualities, embodied in thoughts-feelings-actions in the world, which are characteristic of this cohort of students:

- 'Spiritual and religious engagement'
- 'Living my virtues and values'
- 'Political engagement'
- 'Identity in relationship'
- 'Ambition, meaning and purpose'
- 'Critical social justice'
- 'Challenge and responsibility'
- 'Critical learning and becoming'
- 'Community engagement'

These dimensions of character reflect a complex and dynamic human process and offer a way of understanding both the process and outcomes of character formation. The nine dimensions are inter-related and should be seen as aspects of a complex whole. In addition to these personal qualities, there was a composite factor which described how students' see schools as places where their values could be developed, and further evidence of influences on their character – drawn from the widening layers of social relationships which constitute

the students' social worlds and their growing knowledge and experience. These dimensions are supported by qualitative and quantitative evidence from the five phases of the research. They are associated positively with attainment, and also with learning dispositions. The dimensions of learning power (see also appendix 9) are presented here:

- Changing and learning
- Meaning making
- Critical curiosity
- Creativity
- Strategic awareness
- Learning relationships
- Resilience

The following sections provide a summary of the findings in bullet form. They allow a more in depth understanding of the nine dimensions of character presented above and the relationship between those and pedagogy.

### **Students' understanding of character**

- Character is 'who you are' or 'what you are' at any given time in any situation. How a person is in a situation depends on the context and on their upbringing.
- Character is embodied in thoughts-feelings-actions in the world.
- Character is a complex and inter-related set of personal qualities and dimensions.
- Students have an awareness of the reasons why they behave as they do in different situations.
- Students are aware of public examples of people with 'good' and 'bad' character – though these appear mediated through the lens of the media and 'A' level syllabi.
- Violence and oppression are an outcome of 'bad' character, whilst valuing human beings and communities; love and justice are outcomes of 'good' character.
- Human beings embody a mixture of 'good' and 'bad' character.
- Students' ideal model character is a loving, cheerful, responsible and trustworthy grandparent figure.

### **Student perception of virtues and values**

- Students have a strong sense of themselves as 'moral agents' in society with clear ideas about what virtues and values matter, a sense of their own growth and change over time, and their own unique identities and responsibility.
- There is an inherent set of shared, core moral values: trustworthiness, kindness, care, love, honesty, truthfulness, fairness and respect, being positive, self respect and responsibility.
- Being a good student involves being hardworking; responsible; keeping deadlines; punctual; an independent learner; organised; able to achieve a balance between work and having a social life; respectful; willing to learn; honest; polite; quiet; friendly; tolerant; broadminded; able to show initiative and set a good example.

- Living and embodying core moral values is important in daily life, but there is often a gap between these espoused values and actual behaviour in practice.
- There is a positive relationship between virtues, values and learning.
- Students spend time reflecting on their values and behaviour.
- Having meaning and purpose in life and a sense of direction is all important for character formation.
- Team work and communication skills are important.
- Students say people are entitled to hold their own opinions but they will challenge them.
- Students say they are personally willing to stand up for their beliefs, will assert their needs and are open to be challenged by others.
- Students report challenging and being challenged helps them consider the strength and validity of their own beliefs and to consider the opinions of others.
- Students are positive, want to take responsibility, be authentic, to persevere and have a strong desire to do well in their lives.
- Students have a strong sense of anger at social injustice, whether that is individual or collective, and an awareness of the need for environmental responsibility.
- Students perceive a person should treat others how they would want to be treated.

### **Teacher's perceptions of student character, virtues and values**

- Students do live their values in practice, though this can be influenced by negative self esteem and low confidence.
- Students' understanding of their values is usual personal and individual rather than applied to the wider community and society.
- Students value self expression and self confidence more than modesty and self control.
- Students lack a language of forgiveness, social responsibility and higher order concepts of self awareness and self knowledge.

### **Spiritual, political and community engagement**

- Students were more spiritually aware as younger children.
- Students have a sense of spirituality but many have antipathy towards organized religion, and dogmatic belief systems.
- A sizeable minority of students does not belong to a religious tradition.
- Spiritual and religious practices help students cope with the stresses of their daily lives.
- Many students do not believe faith plays a role in their lives or in their values.
- The majority of students does not attend places of worship or follow any spiritual practices with few students reporting a strong sense or practice of personal 'spiritual and religious engagement'.
- Some students are exploring their spirituality through an eclectic mix of faith and spiritual traditions.

- Students differentiated between developing their religious life and their spiritual life; fewer students reported they were developing their spiritual life through their faith than those who said they were developing their spiritual life.
- A very small percentage of students stated they were engaged politically but they do want to vote when they can.
- Some students know their neighbours and greet them, others say they do not see or know who their neighbours are.
- Fewer students reported being engaged in their communities with the majority of students stating they do not help in their local community.

### **Influences on character formation**

- Students do not feel that the media influences their values, but there is conflicting evidence from the data which suggests that the media and current events have a very important role in student behaviour and values.
- Students see the biggest influence upon their values as their mother, their friends, then their father. Siblings, grandparents, extended family and teachers come next with community and media figures last. The Prime Minister and perhaps by implication, politicians, have the least influence.
- Some students indicated a lack of a father influenced their values
- Student references to the influences of local and global communities are least evident.
- Geographical location has an impact on the influence of the extended family on values, especially where families are in different parts of the world.
- Students are aware of the complexities of trying to fit in with their friends and also trying to be an individual.

### **Role of schools in character, virtues and values formation**

- Schools are places where students learn about virtues, values and being a good citizen.
- Students say school helps them develop socially, but the majority think that the most important reason for school is to pass exams.
- Students see schools as places where they learn to become effective lifelong learners.
- Some students say that their school workload can be stressful and frustrating.
- There is a sentiment that a school's values may 'squash' an individual's values.
- Students are now trained to meet lesson objectives as defined by their programmes of study and teachers have to ask students to trust them if they go off on a tangent in order to explain or expand upon an issue within a subject.
- College students believe the college system offers them greater responsibility towards their studies.

## **Teacher student relationship**

- Teachers see their relationships with their students as ‘vital’, ‘essential’, ‘crucial’ and ‘fundamental’ and build trusting relationships through being consistent, supportive, reliable, competent, being available, straight and honest and following through words with actions.
- The most important feature of school for students is that their teachers respect them, like them and value them as individuals.
- Teachers who encourage students and lead by example have most impact on students’ values. Students relate to teachers who connect with them by sharing relevant stories of their own experiences, by being firm and fair and respectful to their views, even the ‘oddballs’.
- Teachers think that good relationships are those where the teacher makes time and space to sit down to communicate and connect with students, keeping an open door and are competent to get them through the examinations.
- Teachers say that it is crucial to consistently model good virtues, values and behaviour through their daily conduct in their interactions with students and with their fellow teachers especially when in front of students.
- Teachers say they treat their students how they would expect their own children to be treated in school.
- Students perceive a relationship between good relationships with their teachers and their learning.
- Staff and students indicate Sixth Form education offers opportunities for more relaxed and informal relationships of mutual respect and trust.

## **Pedagogy for character, virtues and values**

- Character, virtues and values are best formed through a responsive whole school approach.
- Staff stated they communicate virtues and values through their teaching by highlighting and discussing appropriate and inappropriate behaviours as and when these arose.
- Teachers’ state in order to avoid student alienation or patronisation, virtues and values should not be imposed on students.
- Staff say virtues, values and character are mainly caught but can be taught in lessons with role-play exercises, assemblies, tutor time and compulsory core programme lessons.
- Students say that assemblies and tutor times do not help them develop their values or spirituality. They do not take non qualification subjects seriously.
- Provision at the college for character development is through a core programme, individual tutorials and the student support system.
- Activities such as residential trips, the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and students organising their own clubs, societies and discussions groups were instrumental in developing character, virtues and values.

- When in school, the biggest influence on students' values is their teachers, but home/school contracts, teachers and parental expectations, information in planners, affirmation posters of positive behaviour and lists of school values in class rooms also have an impact.
- There are fewer opportunities to discuss virtues, character and values across the curriculum because of the pressure to meet national curriculum requirements and the assessment regime.

## **Discussion of Findings**

One of the strongest findings from these data is that young people have a robust experiential knowledge and understanding of values, but they were not able to articulate these within a sophisticated cognitive framework. These values or virtues are not simply beliefs held by students but actively inform their behaviour. There is a strong sense from the data that being 'who you are' is being able to respond appropriately for a given situation and is a journey towards a 'hoped for future', with students articulating a dynamic process of change and growth rather than a static set of beliefs. The consensus in a core set of values which inform student behaviour and provide an 'ideal' or a 'sense of direction' is powerful and consistent with other data (Kidder, 1994; Farrer and Hawkes, 2000; Deakin Crick, 2002). These values seem to be innate and instinctive, regardless of ethnicity, culture or religion.

There is substantial evidence that whilst these values are 'ideals', these young people have a sophisticated sense of a dynamic process as a *modus operandi* for virtues. Students understand that virtues and values are 'lived' and 'experienced' and that different situations require considered reflection and differentiated action but they recognise there is frequently a gap between their aspirations and their practices – and it is this gap which is the 'site' for moral reflection and development. Students have a strong sense that the application of their values may vary in each situation, deeming they aspire to apply what is appropriate, that values can conflict with each other (i.e. truth and care) and that values are recognised and apprehended in action, feelings and thoughts.

However one feature that emerges from consideration of all the data is the paucity of language in which to discuss character and its formation. This is true of the students and also of the schools. It may be a consequence of increasing specialisation over the course of a student's education, and the difficulty in the secondary school of finding time and space in which to hold together the education process so as to give attention to the whole person.

Students identify values that in many cases are admirable but they seem unable to articulate them into a responsible conceptual framework. Moreover, although they express a desire to 'be better' and frequently comment, for example, on the fact that they have two sides to their natures, they lack the language, or involvement with a tradition of enquiry in which to discern what steps they could take to become 'better persons'. It is striking that many students report that they were more spiritually aware as primary school children than they feel themselves to be now. Given that the National Curriculum lays stress on spiritual growth, this raises questions about the ethos of schools and the impact of the current curriculum on the education of persons for responsibility in our society. A public language

of spiritual, religious and moral enquiry is a necessity for the future; otherwise we run the danger of indifference or contentious relativism.

Students are aware that critique is in order because 'living by one's values' is not a simple matter and there are rarely right or wrong solutions. However, an underlying 'bad' or 'negative' value, which informs their ethical frame of reference, is violence that may be expressed as social, psychological, political or physical violence against the person, community or society. The contrast is the positive value of each human being, and supporting and acting on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed, enabling and empowering human well being in individuals and communities.

The young people share a strong awareness of issues of social justice, expressed as anger when they see or experience injustice. They have a sense of their personal development over time – of story and of hope as well as history. This sense of 'becoming' or growing and changing over time as engaged, values-led human beings seems to be linked with their sense of lifelong learning, and meaning and purpose in life. Where there were students who belonged to a religious tradition, this formed part of the social and historical resources, which they would consciously bring to bear on their values choices and provided another voice in their personal reflection and debate.

The study provides substantial evidence that the young people were self aware, reflecting on their own stories and hopes, as well as being influenced in the formation and expression of their values by their immediate families (particularly mothers), their friends and their school. The strength of influence and engagement in questions of values with the local community, and the wider society becomes progressively weaker in these young people's lives. How they are 'embedded' in successively wider networks of relationships seems to be important – there is a persistent theme of individualism and a focus on the self, rather than a focus on community. Students appear to live in a 'private' and self referenced world, without engaging in wider community traditions and practices, which would expose them to the values and influences of other traditions and world views.

In summary, the data suggests that character is expressed in a number of ways. Firstly, it is relational because it is informed and shaped by the network of relationships, worldviews and traditions in which a student is located, with the most important being the most proximate and personal. Secondly, it is dynamic, emerging over time and storied in the trajectory of a student's life, including their hopes and aspirations for the future. Thirdly it is integral because it is embodied in an ongoing process of reflection on their own values, feelings and actions and those of others. Fourthly, it is critical because there is a tension between 'good' relating to human well being and 'bad' relating to the oppression and violence and it is not always straightforward to distinguish between these, and this is reflected in the 'gaps' between espoused and practiced values on a personal, societal and global level.

The term 'value' is a popular one, which denotes something that is of worth. Our data suggest that these students' understand and have appropriated a distinct set of core moral values which are internalized more or less as a moral compass which will lead towards a notion of human well being *and* which are intrinsically part of human well being. For

example the value of 'love' or 'justice' or 'truth' are both expressed in the values, dispositions and attitudes of people – that is they form part of a person's character – and they are an 'end in themselves', and the process of character formation takes place over time and is marked by the dynamic tension between 'being and becoming' and between 'well being and violence'. The term 'virtue' may be a more appropriate term to describe this composite concept.

Thus a dynamic, critical and holistic vision for character education is about the formation of virtues, which will lead towards human well being for individuals, communities and society.

### **Spirituality, religion and virtues**

Spirituality and religion emerged in the data as problematic. On the one hand spiritual and religious engagement loaded onto the factor analysis as the strongest factor, whilst on the other hand students' views about spiritual and religious engagement were polarized, with the majority of those being negative. In addition, a new character variable 'spirituality and religious engagement' was associated significantly with several other new character variables. Among these were 'critical values and school'; 'living my virtues and values'; 'political engagement'; 'identity in relationship'; 'ambition, meaning and purpose'; 'family influence'; 'critical social justice' 'teachers respect for students'; 'wider family influences'; 'critical learning and becoming'; 'community engagement' and 'media and community influence'.

There may be several explanations for this. First, for these students, spirituality and organized religion may be conflated as one thing, and organized religion, understood as an externally imposed set of rules or beliefs is not popular in contemporary society, particularly by young people whose developmental task is to become 'independent'. Beaudoin's (1998) study suggests that the spirituality of generation x is characterised by antipathy towards organized religion, whilst valuing 'experience'.

At the same time, the overall findings of the data could suggest that these young people have a strong sense of spirituality in Wright's (1998) sense of the developing relationship of the individual, within community to that which is, or is presumed to be, of ultimate worth, value or significance. This overall spirituality is consistent with Beaudoin's key themes of 'lived experience', 'ambiguity', 'anti-authoritarianism' and 'social justice'.

This dilemma may indicate that our constructs used in this study have not proved sophisticated or robust enough to clarify what is going on, and further studies which problematise this area would be necessary before being able to draw any substantive conclusions. It is important because, as our data suggest, there are strongly held views and positions, and this aspect of human life has important political and social implications in a diverse, global society, with the decline of organized religion in British society, and the rise of religious fundamentalism globally.



## **Political engagement**

A similar dilemma emerged around the theme of political engagement. Again political engagement loaded onto the factor analysis as a strong factor, but views were polarized. The majority of students do intend to vote in the future, but very few actually participate in political activities. Less than half of the students said their schools engage them in political debate, and interestingly many of them identified leading politicians as examples of people with ‘bad characters’ because they were perceived as using their power negatively. When this data is combined with the data about the increasing lack of engagement by students with their local communities and beyond, and the apparent influence of the media and the virtual world on their knowledge and learning, then a picture begins to emerge of young people who do not have a sense of how they can contextualize and practice their evident ‘passion for social justice’ in contemporary society. There was a distinct absence in the data of reference to ‘mediating communities’ between the individual in their nuclear family, and the global as presented through the media. The only real examples of this were the minority of students who identified themselves as belonging to a faith tradition.

Therefore, from these results, it may be whilst the spiritual and religious, the political and community are important aspects for character formation, our study suggests the majority of our student cohort are spiritually, socially and politically disengaged and yet they appear to have an intuitive sense of virtue, which shapes the way they construe themselves as moral agents and which is embodied in their thought-feeling-action in the world.

## **Influence of cyber culture**

While students did not think that the media had an impact on their character and values, the teachers did not agree, and our data suggest that in fact the modelling and examples of figures in the media, and the stories presented by the media do have an impact on the way students’ understand the world and their role in it. Their role models, both good and bad, were people that they have never met – mediated to them through cyberspace. This data is not rooted in their own personal relationships, communities and lived experience of life – it is abstract, virtual and pre-selected by other people, often at a global level, serving a variety of political, social and economic interests. Yet it is the quality of lived relationships in real lives and contexts over time that seems to be important in character formation. In the context of education, all too often the knowledge content of the curriculum is also ‘top down’ and ‘abstract’ and transmitted in a didactic manner, which addresses students cognitive processes but not necessarily their ‘thought-feeling-action in the world’. This may be a real issue to be re-addressed by counter-balancing the virtual world with context driven, and object based enquiry that young people are able to own, appropriate and internalize in the formation of their own character and virtue for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Centrality of relationship**

The study provides substantial evidence of the central importance that relationships play in the formation and expressions of character and virtues. As mentioned previously, the more

immediate, proximate and respectful the students' relationships, the more likely the influence on their values and character development.

The family, in particular the mother, friends and the school all have a role in character formation and the communication of virtues and values through the relationships formed. Whilst many students said they talked with their parents about their lives and their future and that their father and siblings had a role in their values formation, it was their mother who had the most significant role in the communication of values. Further to this, students indicated their relationships with their friends played a key role in the formation of their virtues saying that whilst they did not need to fit in with the views of others, it was important that their friends approved of them and their friends were more important than their relationships with their fathers and siblings.

Whilst in school, it appears that for both staff and students', respectful relationships are of paramount importance for character formation and the communication of virtues and values. Staff recognise their role in this in terms of modelling good values through their interactions with students and colleagues and by making themselves available to students as human beings. Both students and staff highlight the importance of staff being approachable both in and out of lessons, with little things such as staff being on time to lessons being perceived as giving big messages to students in terms of respect and value. Staff and students both said it was important to being seen as firm and fair in addressing and genuinely valuing the diversity of opinions presented to them and the diversity of students themselves; staff stated it was very important that students knew they were there for them and were competent to get students through the courses. Teachers said it was through making the time and effort to sit down with students and connect with them, with authentic interest in students as human beings, which led to the best relationships developing. This in turn can be seen as evidence that through the communication of how to relate to each other as human beings can best communicate character formation and virtues and values.

Outside the immediate family, friends and the school, the strength of influence and engagement in questions of values with the local community, and the wider society becomes progressively weaker in these young people's lives. Whilst, it seems the roles of the family, friends and school appear essential in character formation for these young people, however, low levels of participation within the local community is of concern. As involvement in the local community can potentially afford opportunities for the development of social responsibility, character formation, virtues and values, it is therefore of concern that student participation in their local communities appears fairly weak.

### **Pedagogy for character formation**

It appears overwhelmingly the potentially most influential medium within the school for pedagogy of character, virtues and values is that of the quality of interpersonal relationships, as discussed under the 'centrality of relationship' section. However, further to this as far as pedagogy for character formation is concerned, there is substantial evidence that whilst character can be taught across the curriculum it is best caught as evidence suggests virtues and values should not be imposed upon students or staff alike. One of the most interesting

findings from the data in relation to the role of schools in the ‘formation of virtue’ is that it is precisely those curriculum areas which staff reported as generally contributing to character, virtues and values formation – assemblies, tutor time, non-examinable subjects – which the students say do NOT contribute to their character formation. Further to this, the data suggests for staff to explicitly teach values to students implies that teachers believe students do not have any.

Evidence indicates other pedagogies for character, virtues and values formation not explicitly planned for through the curriculum. Teachers indicated they responded through a dialogical approach to the immediacy of what was occurring within the classroom, the lesson subject material, the school and society at large at that time, with teachers making the most of opportunities to engage students in discussions of appropriate values, virtues and behaviours. Evidence from the students corroborates this with students stating they frequently encountered values in their lessons and also evidence that students perceived teachers helped them to think critically about their values. However, staff indicated that opportunities for character formation are restricted mainly by the demands of the National Curriculum requirements; in turn through the demands of meeting lesson objectives; by the measurement agenda; but also and increasingly by student expectations of meeting lesson objectives. Further to this, some teachers felt students had an ‘instrumental’ approach to school, expressing concern students were now trained to expect lesson objectives which they expected to meet. Evidence supported this as students stated they felt school made them more competitive, and it was more about passing exams and ‘doing well in life’.

The association between dimensions of character, attainment and learning dispositions in our data adds weight to the focus on learning and teaching *across the curriculum* as the key context for the formation of virtue and character in schools. There is strong evidence which indicates relationships between higher levels of character dimensions, higher GCSE attainment and higher levels of learning dispositions. Some of these relationships are statistically significant, for example: a high level of ‘political engagement’ is significantly related to a high level of GCSE attainment and a high level of learning power. 14% of the variance in attainment was accounted for by ‘political engagement’, ‘community engagement’, ‘living my virtues and values’, ‘critical learning and becoming’ and ‘identity in relationship’. At the same time most of the character dimensions were significantly positively associated with learning dispositions, such as the character dimensions of ‘living my virtues and values’, ‘critical social justice’ and ‘challenge and responsibility’. It seems that in terms of pedagogy, personal development and character formation operate as ‘the other side of the coin’ to attainment and achievement, and to the dispositions, values and attitudes which are known to contribute to effective lifelong learning.

Therefore, our data suggests a school ethos that underlines the importance of positive relationships in which teachers ‘model’ and ‘embody’ core values, particularly through genuinely respecting, listening to students and inspiring them to become the best person they can; and a general pedagogical climate which naturally highlights questions of values, is one that can best communicate to students what it means to be human and provide a pedagogy for character, virtues and values formation. Since relationships form such a central aspect of character formation and development, it raises questions for the student

about which values, ideals and virtues are held by their ‘the significant others’, and in developing a ‘Pedagogy for Character Development’ this would need to be taken into account. It seems unlikely that any character traits would be influential, or equally influential with young people and this raises a thought that it may be those people whose values and ideals are most closely aligned with the young person will be the most influential, or even those who are perceived to be most virtuous. This would be an important and interesting area for further investigation.

## **Conclusions**

The data have proved remarkably robust over four successive phases of data collection and analysis. What is emerging is a *holistic, dynamic and critical vision of character formation*. It is holistic because it is about thoughts-feelings-actions in the world as whole people, who are located in widening networks of social relationships, which influence character. It has to do with intra and inter-personal elements of ‘being in the world’. It is dynamic because it involves history and hope, and a trajectory over time. It is about the aspiration to become more fully human, to fulfill ones potential and achieve personal and social well being. Virtue can be understood as a set of shared core values, attitudes and dispositions, which are intrinsic to, and lead towards human well being. It is critical because there is a tension between a tendency towards violence and an aspiration to value each human being. Students recognize this tension or ‘gap’ in their own lives as well as in other people. They recognize too, the complexity of most situations where there are often no easy ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers.

The way in which the individual explores the gap between espoused and practiced core values is the terrain for critique and questioning and thus a site for character formation and the development of virtue. It can be understood as a critical conversation between three voices or three stories: the student’s own voice/story, which answers the questions ‘who am I, where am I going, what do I need, what really matters’, the voice/story of the student’s community and tradition (including religious/spiritual traditions, and the taken for granted worldviews that shape culture) and the voice/stories of the wider community and society at large, which often produce ‘problems’ or ‘conflicts’ which need to be addressed and responded to, which are again influenced by the religious, spiritual and worldview traditions which shape culture.

There is an urgent need to address the key pedagogical questions raised by this data to explore ways in which schools can capitalize on the innate virtues which young people bring to their learning and importantly to integrate this important work with the core business of learning to learn and achievement.

## **11. Implications for Research, Policy and Research**

The implications of these findings are potentially far reaching, for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners.

### **Implications for Research**

#### **11.1. Research paradigm**

One of the key findings has been the interactivity of aspects of ‘character’. Attention has been given in this study to matters of philosophy, empirical research, case studies and action research methods of seeking evidence. It is clear that not one of these on its own offers an adequate model for research design. There is a need to have a strategy for research into Character Education that illuminates the issues from many different points of view. Linked to this is a need for a more integrated ‘model of the person’ to inform pedagogy.

#### **11.2. Language**

This needs to pay attention to the use of language, which differs, not only in register, but ‘popularity’. In the field of character education there is a language that goes in and out of ‘fashion’. For example young people (and many teachers) are not exposed to the language of ‘cardinal virtues’. There is a need to ‘rehabilitate’ a language that creates the space for the sorts of dialogue and relationships which facilitate character formation, in a manner which is culturally relevant.

#### **11.3. Research Fields**

Key areas requiring further research emerging from this study include:

A pedagogy for Character Education  
The spirituality of 21<sup>st</sup> Century young people  
The nature and role of interpersonal relationship in education  
Political engagement of young people

### **Implications for Policy Development**

#### **11.4. The nature of policy**

An implication of this study is that policies ought not to be highly prescriptive, focusing only on ‘measurable outcomes’ and overly determining the curriculum content. Effective policies should be developed with an openness that allows relationships to flourish and should be based on the idea of ‘ordered freedom’, allowing diversity and locally devised solutions in a context of self evaluation. They should allow for interpretation that is related to time and place, and should not be narrowly defined and controlling in tone or requirements.

### **11.5. Based on a holistic model of human development.**

Policies should include a concern not only for cognitive development, but also for the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of human development. To ignore the holistic nature of the human condition is to run the risk of missing key relationships and dimensions of “character.”

### **11.6. Relationship to the curriculum**

Character formation should be developed within an overall pedagogy of character formation and should have a clear and significant link to the curriculum. This can be difficult to achieve within a prescribed national curriculum, but failure to see the relevance of character formation will lead to its marginalisation in the eyes of the student.

### **Implications for Practices**

### **11.7. A Culture of Participation**

The ethos of participation and of “student voice” should be integral to school practices and to school development planning. Schools ought to be places in which the students have, and feel that they have, a stake in their own learning. This requires special attention to the nature of the leadership of the school which is community of intellectual and social engagement.

### **11.8. Relationships**

The attention given to relationship should be considered in terms of “a curriculum of relationships” in which attention is given to matters of

Balance

Progression

Coherence

Relevance

This is to take a view of the curriculum and culture of learning that is not driven by “subject matter” but is informed primarily by developing relationships.

### **11.9. Personal and Social Justice**

Throughout the study there is a theme of young people wishing to ensure personal and social justice in its different forms. There is a very strong attachment to these values and ideals, and they ought to be mirrored in the practices for schools and classrooms.

This may also take the form of encouraging personal and social responsibilities supported by others. That lies at the heart of character development.

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# Appendix 1

## Focus Group Schedule

### Introduction and welcome

Firstly welcome to all of you and thank you for coming to this group discussion. I want to remind you that what you say is confidential and nothing will be traced back to individually.

So what we're going to do is look at the characteristics of the type of person that we may wish to develop, grow and change into - the type of person we wish to become. Part of this is to do with us having a set of personal core values that may be good or bad, so what we will be discussing are what sorts of attitudes, dispositions and values people demonstrate in their behaviour. To start off we're going to do some mind mapping – you're familiar with this – and I want you as a group to spend the next few minutes to think of as many qualities/characteristics as possible that you think makes up a good person.

### SECTION A - Society

#### Part 1 – Qualities of the Individual

**1) What do you think are the qualities/characteristics that make a good person?**

*let's expand upon a few of these that you have given... do 3.*

- 2) What in their behaviour shows you they are an ...*honest*... person? What kind of actions show us they are an ...*honest* ...person? Please can you think of some examples?
- 3) If a person has this quality ...*e.g. friendly, caring, compassionate, loving, honesty, trustworthy, reliability, determination, confidence, good looking... etc* what might they be thinking – what kind of ...*honest*... thoughts might they have? Examples?
- 4) If a person has this quality ...*e.g. .... honesty*... what kind of ...*honest*... feelings and attitudes may they have? Can you give examples of these?
- 5) Could you say which if any of these qualities could be regarded as 'good' or 'bad' or both? Could you say why? Please give examples.

#### Part 2 – Qualities of Famous People

- 6) **Can you think of examples of famous people you think have good qualities? What are these?**
- 7) How have they shown these qualities in their behaviour? What have they done?

- 8) What sorts of thoughts, feelings and attitudes do you think they have when they are being this quality e.g. *determined, leadership*?
- 9) **Can you give some examples of famous people who you think have bad qualities? What are these?**
- 10) How have they shown these qualities in their behaviour? What have they done?
- 11) What sorts of thoughts, attitudes and feelings do you think they have?
- 12) Do good/bad thoughts, feelings and behaviour make someone a good/bad person? Why?

## **SECTION B – Self and Others**

### **Part 3 – Qualities of Self**

- 13) **What sort of qualities/values would you say you have as a person? Negative/positive? Both?**
- 14) What behaviour would show you are acting ...*generously*? How do you demonstrate this quality or other qualities in practice? Can you think of one or two examples of what you have done recently that demonstrates this or another quality you can think of? Please tell us about it.
- 15) With this quality .... e.g. ....*generosity*.... if you were in a *generous* mood, what thoughts or feelings might you have? What does it mean to be *generous*?  
  
*let's talk about a few of these qualities....*
- 16) Who has helped you decide upon these? Who has guided you?
- 17) Can you think of moments when you may think and feel that you should behave in a certain way but you behave in another way? For example?  
  
*....e.g. an old lady fallen on the pavement, you think you should help her, you feel that you should help and yet you walk on and don't help*
- 18) Can you explain why this may be?

### **Part 4 – Qualities of Self in different situations**

- 19) **What does it mean for you to be a good person at home, with friends, a citizen in your local community and in the global community?**
- 20) Can you give examples of your behaviour in these different situations?

21) How can you show the same type of behaviour from one situation to another?

## **SECTION C – Student**

### **Part 5 - Qualities of Being a Student**

**22) What sorts of qualities make up a good/bad student/person here? What does it mean to be a good/bad student/person here?**

*...let's talk about some of these...hardworking, respect, punctual –*

23) Do you think these qualities can be negative/positive or both.... ?

24) What does a student/person here think of/feel and behave like? What does it mean to be...*respectful, hardworking*? Can you give some examples?

25) Do you behave differently with different people i.e. friends, teachers? How do you behave differently and do you know why? Would there be some people who you think you would be more, e.g. ...*respectful, honest, caring*... with? Who and why?

26) Who has told you about the qualities of a good/bad student?

27) Do you agree with the qualities? What happens if you disagree with these? What opportunities are there for you to discuss these?

### **Part 6 - Additional Comments**

**28) Is there anything else anybody would like to add?**

End of Discussion

Debrief





## Appendix 2

### Focus group discussion transcript codes

#### Code System

Section A Society

Part 1 Qualities of the Individual

A1-1 - Qualities

- Others
- Respect for self
- Responsibility
- Fair and respectful
- Positive outlook
- Trustworthy
- Kindness, caring, loving
- Truth

A1-2 - Behaviour

- Truth
- Responsibility
- Trustworthy
- Kindness, Caring and loving
- Fair and Respectful
- Respect for self

A1-3 - Thoughts

- Fair and respectful
- Respect for self
- Truth
- Kindness, loving and caring

A1-4 - Feelings

- Others
- Fair and respectful
- Respect for self
- Kindness, caring and loving
- Trustworthy

A1-5 - mixed

- Others-both
- Fair and respectful
  - Negative
  - Positive
- Kindness, loving and caring
  - negative
  - positive
- Responsibility
  - Negative
  - Positive
- Truthful
  - Negative
  - Positive
- Respect for self
  - Negative
  - Positive

Part 2 Qualities of Famous Individuals

A2-6 - famous good

Sport  
 Religious/charity figures  
 Models  
 Business  
 Royalty/National leaders  
 Civil rights  
 Film/TV  
 Pop/Music  
 A2-7 - good behaviour  
     Respect for self  
     Fair, respectful and truthful  
     Kind, caring and loving  
     Responsibility  
 A2-8 - thoughts-feelings good  
 A2-9 - famous bad  
     Business  
     Convicted murderers  
     Sport  
     Poets/Playwrights  
     Film/TV  
     Pop/music  
     Royalty/world leaders/politicians  
 A2-10 - Famous bad behaviour  
     No respect for self  
     Untruthful/untrustworthy  
     No responsibility  
     Unfair and disrespectful  
     Unkind, uncaring, unloving  
 A2-11 - Thoughts-feelings bad  
     Untrustworthy  
     Unkind, uncaring and unloving  
     No responsibility  
     No respect for self  
     Unfair and disrespectful  
 A2-12A Famous both  
     Responsibility  
     Respect for self  
     Others - mixed  
     Fair and respectful  
     Kind caring, loving  
 A2-12B Famous good bad behaviour  
     A2-12FAGBBE/Malcolm X  
         Really violent  
     A2-12FAGBBE/Bill Gates  
         Too much money  
     A2-12FAGBBE/LLCool J  
         Arrogant  
         Doing to look good  
     A2-12FAGBBE/David Beckham  
         Paid a lot for just  
         Boring on pitch  
         Does the boring  
         Named son Cruz  
         Had affair  
     A2-12FAGBBE/Florence Nightingale  
         Stole idea

A2-12FAGBBE/Che Guevara  
 Used violence  
 A2-12FAGBBE/Jesus  
 Could be lying  
 A2-12FAGBBE/Prince Charles  
 Mucked up Diana's head  
 Talks rubbish  
 Extra marital affair  
 A2-12FAGBBE/Princess Diana  
 Had affair  
 Took drugs  
 Media drove her insane  
 Evil  
 A2-12FAGBBE/Nelson Mandela  
 Wrong way  
 Bombed  
 Terrorist  
 A2-12FAGBBE/Bob Geldof  
 Mad  
 Grumpy  
 A2-12C Famous bad good behaviour  
 A2-12CFABABE/Rupert Murdoch  
 Hardworking  
 Cunning  
 Intelligent  
 Worked way to top  
 Clever  
 A2-12CFABABE/Tony Blair  
 Hardworking  
 Loves his country  
 Runs this country  
 Tried to fix NHS  
 A2-12CFABGBE/Rik Waller  
 Achieved  
 A2-12CFABGBE/Osama bin Laden  
 Persevering  
 A2-12CFABGBE/Victoria Beckham  
 Relief in Africa  
 A2-12CFABGBE/Marilyn Manson  
 Smart  
 Nice  
 Intelligent  
 Reasonable  
 Alright  
 Normal  
 A2-12CFABGBE/Hitler  
 Got people out of poverty  
 Good leader  
 Clever  
 Authority  
 Intelligent  
 Determined  
 Responding to injustice  
 Independent country  
 Unite people  
 Persuasiveness

Appealed to people  
Selfless for him  
Trying to do best for country  
Not necessarily personally violent  
A2-12CFABGBE/George Bush  
Patriotic  
Thinks did right thing  
People voted for him  
Must have done something right  
Motivated  
Ability to get ideas across  
Not necessarily violent

## Section B Self and Others

### Part 3 Qualities of Self

B3-13A Self qualities good  
Positive outlook  
Responsibility  
Truthful  
Trustworthy  
Fair and respectful  
Respect for self  
Kind, caring and loving  
B3-13B Self qualities bad  
Unkind, uncaring unloving  
No responsibility  
Negative outlook  
Unfair and disrespectful  
No respect for self  
Untruthful  
B3-13C Self qualities both  
B3-14A Self good behaviour  
Truthful  
Fair and respectful  
Responsibility  
Respect self  
Trustworthy  
Kind, caring, loving  
B3-14B Self bad behaviour  
B3-15 Self good, bad, both thoughts and feelings  
Negative  
Positive  
Mixed feelings/thoughts  
B3-16 - Self influences  
Books/Organisations  
Role models  
Self/experiences  
Religious  
Teachers/school  
TV/Media  
Society  
Friends  
Parents, family  
B3-17 - Act different, thoughts feelings  
B3-18 - Why  
Depends on situation

Society judges  
Apathy  
Fair and respectful  
Respect self  
Caring, kind, loving  
Responsibility  
Own feelings  
Laws  
Censorship

Part 4 Qualities of Self - different situations

B4-19A Behaviour home

Selfish behaviour  
Respect for self  
Responsibility  
Kind, caring, loving

B4-19B Friends

Kind, caring and loving  
Fair and respectful  
Trustworthy

B4-19C Local community

Negative  
Kind, caring, loving  
Responsibility  
Fair and respectful

B4-19D Global community

B4-20 Examples of behaviour

Negative  
Fair and respectful  
Respect for self  
Kind, caring, loving  
Responsibility

B4-21 Different in different situations

Different  
Fair and respectful  
Kind, caring, loving  
Responsible  
Truthful

Section C Student

Part 5 Qualities of Student

C5-22 Good student

Attendance  
Negative  
Motivation  
Respecting others  
Responsibility  
Hardworking/ability  
Balanced behaviour around school

C5-23A Bad student

C5-23B Balanced student

C5-24 Examples of behaviour of good student

Respect for self  
Kind, caring, loving  
Truthful  
Fair and respectful  
Responsibility standard

- C5-25A Same behaviour at school
- C5-25B Different behaviour
  - Kind, caring and loving
  - Truthful
  - Fair and respectful
  - Trustworthy
  - Negative
  - Responsibility
- C5-26 Influences on students
  - Self
  - Money
  - Media
  - Society
  - Parents
  - Friends/Other students
  - School related
  - Teachers/lecturers
- C5-27A Agree
- C5-27B Disagree
- C5-27C Opportunity to discuss

Part 6 Additional Comments

## Appendix 3

### Actions associated with dimensions of character

‘Good’ and ‘bad’ Behaviour and actions associated with famous individuals perceived to be good and bad

**Table 3:1 – Famous ‘Good’**

<b>Famous Good</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Behaviour – good</b>	<b>Behaviour - bad</b>
Princess Diana	7	Royalty/ Charity	Landmines, into hospitals, sick children, charity, looked after people with Aids, compassion, empathetic, sympathetic, caring, saint, emotional compared to royals, kind, not afraid to be different, confidence, worked for third world, worked for equality	Affairs, evil, drugs
Bob Geldof	5	Music/ Charity	Band aid, live aid, charity, compassionate, caring, generous, alright, not afraid to be scruffy in public	Grumpy
Mother Theresa	4	Religious/ Charity	Compassion, affection, sacrificed life, caring, helped poor, helped at all costs, inspired others, ran a nunnery, was a leader, shaped society, affect on others, homeless, sick children, charitable help, determination, average person who did so much for others, gave up material things	
Gandhi	3	Religious/ National leader	Worked towards what he wanted, non violent, peaceful protest, got shot	
Martin Luther King	3	Civil rights	Campaigned for civil rights, fought for black rights, peaceful protest, got shot, helped because of own persecution, caring, peaceful	
Nelson Mandela	2	National leaders/ Civil rights	Brave, anti racist, fought against apartheid, prison for 27 years for beliefs, determined, responsibility	Terrorist, bomber
Bono	2	Music/ Charity		Doing it for publicity
David Beckham	2	Sport	Doesn't smoke, doesn't do drugs, good role model as father, talented	Affairs, extravagant, doesn't give much away, attention

				seeking in spotlight, doesn't do anything on pitch, gets paid lots of money, boring player
Bill Gates	2	Business	Money for medical research – drugs and cancer, massive influence	
The Pope	2	Religious	All round good guy, inspires people	Weird car
Michael Jackson	1	Music	Entertaining	Not cool to be seen with young children
LLCool J	1	Music	Given money to church, generosity	Doing it for show
Michael Jordan	1	Sport	Sports career, talented, determined, hard work	
Johnny Depp	1	TV/film	Touches us with his films, inner beauty, helps us process our emotions	
Elton John	1	Music/ Charity	Work for charities, helps because of own experiences	Terrible clothes
Johnny Wilkinson	1	Sport	Can kick it	
Oscar Schindler	1	Business	Used money and business to save Jews, saw them as people, wasn't prejudiced	
Jesus	1	Religious	Influenced people, inspired people	Could be lying – not son of God
Malcolm X	1	Civil rights	Worked for black people rights	Violent
McFly	1	Music/ Charity	2 songs for comic relief, went to help in Africa, charity work	
Prince Charles	1	Royalty	Nice chap, dedicated to duty	Talks through pants, cheated on Diana
Jennifer Anniston,	1	TV/film		
Jennifer Saunders	1	TV/film		
Rik Mayall	1	TV/film	In Bottom – very funny	
Dalai Lama	1	Religious/ National leaders	Peaceful, lovely, giggles, funny, confident, truthful, caring, fights for all done, trained to think positively	
Florence Nightingale	1	Charity	Dedicated life, helped wounded soldiers	Pinched idea from black woman
Naomi Campbell	1	Models		
Sophie	1	Models	Lost loads of weight	Looks scary



Dahl				
Sir Ranulph Fiennes	1	Sport/ Charity	Ran 7 marathons	
Che Guevara	1	Civil rights	Help people rule themselves, clear their debts	Violent

**Table 3:2 – Famous ‘Bad’**

<b>Famous Bad</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Behaviour– bad</b>	<b>Behaviour - good</b>
Hitler	5	National leader/ politician	Unsympathetic, racist, wanted to do things own way, murderer, killing everybody, went about it in bad/wrong way, lying, manipulative, trying to control others, power mad, determination for wrong things, sadistic, satanistic, wiped out races, carried out holocaust, killed Jews and nearly wiped out Gypsies, power went to his head	Determination, very clever, very well organised, wanted to unite own people and country, make country strong
George Bush	5	National leader/ politician	Liar, corrupt, horrible, father bought power, conspiracy and votes bought, elections rigged, puppet president, wife is brighter, stupid, idiot, right wing, religious, dodgy beliefs that doing God’s work, not bothered, doesn’t care, doesn’t care about the world, narrow minded, conceited, manipulates facts to get rid of people, wants to be the strong one, too much like attack and defence, going to blow people away, wants to take over world, hates the world, arrogant, trying to be dictator, scares people, add libs, speeches written for him	Patriotic, thinks doing right
Tony Blair	5	National leader/ politician	George Bush lap dog, follows George Bush, didn’t stick to campaign promises, screwed up education system, not strong person, scared of George Bush,	Loves country, not violent himself, apologised for not reaching targets

			follows what George Bush says	
David Beckham	2	Sport	Affairs, extravagant, doesn't give much away, attention seeking in spotlight, doesn't do anything on pitch, gets paid lots of money, boring player, got so much	Doesn't smoke, doesn't do drugs, good role model as father, talented
Saddam Hussein	2	National leader/ politician	Murdered own people, just likes to rule, dictator, wouldn't let anybody's views be considered, abused his people, genocide, persecution of million people a year	
Victoria Beckham	2	Music	Done nothing, can't sing, doesn't wear many clothes, extravagant, built weird church for her kids, attention seeking, has to be in spotlight, got so much, doesn't give anything away	Worked with children in Africa
Michael Jackson	2	Music	Seen with young children, raises concerns, odd bod, mad really, like a little kid, quite strange	Entertaining
Osama bin Laden	2	National leader/ politician		Perseverance
Rupert Murdoch	2	Business	Evil, profits on others misery/distress, cunning, ruthlessness, false confidence, breaking law, owns too much of the market, callous	Does not profit on others misery, ambition, clever, intelligent
Mourinho		Sport	Tried to bribe another player to join club	
The Queen	1	Royalty	Does nothing, just sits and waves	
Harold Shipman	1	Convicted murderer	Killed all those patients, murderer, perverse, acted on belief if have no quality of life, no point living	
John Kerry	1	National leader/ politician		
Winnie Mandela	1	National leader/ politician	Evil, bomber	
Elton John	1	Music	Bad quality – awful clothes	Work for charities, helps because of own experiences

James Hepfield	1	Music	Sued a website	
Jade Goodey	1	TV/film	Nothing good	
Rick Waller	1	TV/film	Wanted to be fat singer, gave up	
Michael Barrymore	1	TV/film	Man died in his pool, drugs involved	
Tony Robinson	1	TV/film	Snob	
Rowan Atkinson	1	TV/film	Really horrible, snob	
Marilyn Manson	1	Music	Scary, kills pets, cut of puppies heads, Satanist	Intelligent, reasonable
All politicians	1	National leader/ politician		
John Prescott	1	National leader/ politician		
Myra Hindley	1	Convicted murderer		
Jamie Bulger murderers	1	Convicted murderer		
Moors murderers	1	Convicted murderer		
Condoleeza Rice	1	National leader/ politician	Something to do with George Bush so obviously bad! Evil	
Pol Pot	1	National leader/ politician	Killed anybody in Cambodia for anything, shut country off from rest of world	
Mussolini	1	National leader/ politician		
Franco	1	National leader/ politician		
Carol Ann Dunn	1	Poet/ playwright		
Shakespeare	1	Poet/ playwright		
Oscar Wilde	1	Poet/ Playwright		

Robert Mugabe	1	National leader/ Politician		
Rebecca Loos	1	TV/film	Sold her story to break up a marriage, had an affair, got money for it	
Paris Hilton	1	TV/film	Selfish, thinks of herself, only cares about what she looks like, materialistic, got loads of money, doesn't think to give some away	
Jim Davidson	1	TV/film	Beats up women, don't respect women, egotistical	
Darren Day	1	TV/film	Had affair while girlfriend giving birth, don't respect women, egotistical, no respect	
Pete Doherty	1	Music	Mad man, on drugs, got sacked	

## Appendix 4

### Repertory Grid Study

#### Questionnaire

General purpose – The construction of self-character in relation to the values produced by the cohort in different situations.

General question – How am I as a person in different situations in relation to the emerging and contrast constructs.

#### Scoring

Rating scale - 1      2      3      4      5      6      7

1= low – not like me at all

4= neutral – no strong feelings either way

7= high – very much like me

Please use the full range of the scale as much as possible and feel free to explain your answers

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Description</b>
Being kind, caring, loving	Showing consideration, selflessness, empathy, generosity, sensitivity, support, friendly towards others
Being fair and respectful	Being open minded, listening, accepting and non-judgemental towards others
Being positive	Being happy, cheerful, joyful, good sense of humour
Taking responsibility	Being responsible, enthusiastic, dedicated, hardworking, conscientious
Respecting yourself	Knowing yourself, confidence, being individual
Being Trustworthy	Trustworthy, reliable, loyal
Being Truthful	Honesty, insightful
Actively growing and changing as a person and a learner	Developing as a person and learner, making more decisions for self, maturing, being proactive, taking the initiative, growing in knowledge, confidence and stature, learning from experience, putting what learnt into practice

Being aware of a Higher Power	Being aware of a greater power or God
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### Specific Questions

#### 1) Construct 1 – Being kind, caring and loving

How like you is being kind, caring and loving towards others or being unkind, uncaring and unloving when you're...?

#### 2) Construct 2 – Being Fair and respectful

How like you is being fair and respectful to others or being unfair and disrespectful when you're...?

#### 3) Construct 3 – Being Positive

How like you is being positive or being negative when you're...?

#### 4) Construct 4 – Taking Responsibility

How like you is taking responsibility or not taking responsibility when you're...?

#### 5) Construct 5 - Respecting Self

How like you is respecting yourself or not respecting yourself when you're...?

#### 6) Construct 6 – Being Trustworthy

How like you is being trustworthy or not trustworthy when you're...?

#### 7) Construct 7 – Being Truthful

How like you is being truthful or not truthful when you're...?

#### 8) Construct 8 – Actively growing and changing as a person and a learner

How like you is actively growing and changing as a person and a learner or not actively growing and changing as a person and a learner when you're...?

#### 9) Construct 9 – Being Aware of a Higher Power

How like you is being aware of a higher power or not being aware of a higher power when you're...?

# Appendix 4

## Repertory Grid

Emerging construct	Me and my parents	Me and my siblings	Me and other family members	Me and my friends	Me out socialising	Me and my boyfriend/girlfriend	Me and my school/college	Me and my teachers/lecturers	Me and my A level classes	Me and my tutor group	Me engaged in politics	Me and my neighbours	Me and my religion	Me and charity work	Me and my hobbies	Me in the present	Me as a child	Me as a parent	Me and my career	Me as a grandparent	Contrast construct		
Being kind, caring and loving																						Being unkind, uncaring and unloving	
Being fair and respectful																							Being unfair and disrespectful
Being Positive																							Being Negative
Taking Responsibility																							Not taking responsibility
Respecting yourself																							Not respecting yourself
Being Trustworthy																							Not Trustworthy
Being Truthful																							Not truthful
Actively growing and changing as a person and learner																							Not actively growing or changing as a person and learner
Being aware of a Higher Power																							Not aware of an Higher Power

## Repertory Grid total scores for constructs and elements from students

### Constructs

	Construct		Elements within each construct	Construct within each element
1	Actively changing and growing	1009	1-career 2-friends 3-school/college 4=parent, grandparent 6=charity work, hobbies 8-socialising 9-parents 10-as a parent 11-boy/girlfriend 12-A level classes 13-tutor group 14-teachers/lecturers 15=siblings, religion 17-as a child 18=other family, engaged in politics 20-neighbours	1-parents, socialising, school/college, engaged in politics, present 2-friends, teachers/lecturers, A level classes, tutor group, religion, hobbies, as a child, career 3-siblings, charity work 4-neighbours, grandparent 6-boy/girlfriend, as a parent 7-other family
2	Being trustworthy	980	1-grandparent 2-friends 3-as a parent 4=boy/girlfriend, career 6=hobbies, present 8-charity work 9-parents 10-other family 11=siblings, boy/girlfriend, school/college 14-A level classes 15=teachers/lecturers, tutor group, 17=neighbours, as a child 19-religion 20-engaged in politics	1-parents, friends, boy/girlfriend, as a parent 2-siblings, other family, neighbours, hobbies, present, grandparent 3-career 4-socialising, school/college, teachers/lecturers, tutor group, charity work 5-A level classes, engaged in politics, as a child 7-religion
3	Being positive	968	1-hobbies 2=charity work, grandparent 4-career 5=boy/girlfriend, as a child, 7=friends, as a parent 9-socialising 10=parents, siblings 12=A level classes, present 14=other family, teachers/lecturers 16-school/college 18-religion 19-neighbours 20-engaged in politics	1-siblings, hobbies, as a child 2-A level classes, neighbours, charity work 3-socialising, boy/girlfriend, teachers/lecturers 4-tutor group, religion 5-parents, other family, career, grandparent 6-friends, as a parent 7-school/college, engaged in politics, present
4	Respecting yourself	952	1-career 2-boy/girlfriend 3-grandparent	1-other family, teachers/lecturers 2-socialising, boy/girlfriend, school/college, engaged in politics



			<p>4=friends, hobbies, as a parent  7=other family, socialising  9-school/college  10-present  11-teachers/lecturers  12=parents, siblings  14=A level classes, charity work  16-tutor group  17-religion  18-engaged in politics  19=neighbours, as a child</p>	<p>3-siblings, career  4-religion, hobbies, present  5-friends, A level classes, as a parent  6-tutor group, neighbours, as a child  7-parents, grandparent  8-charity work</p>
5	Being truthful	921	<p>1-charity work  2-grandparent  3-as a parent  4-present  5=friends, boy/girlfriend  7-A level classes  8=tutor group, religion, hobbies  11=school/college, career  13-parents  14-teachers/lecturers  15-other family  16=socialising, neighbours  18=siblings, engaged in politics  20-as a child</p>	<p>1-A level classes, tutor group, religion, charity work  3-engaged in politics, present, grandparent  4-school/college, neighbours, as a parent  5-boy/girlfriend, school/college  6-friends, hobbies  7-career  8-parents, siblings, other family, socialising  9-as a child</p>
6	Being fair and respectful	919	<p>1-as a parent  2-parents  3=charity work, as a grandparent  5=friends, career  7-present  8-boy/girlfriend  9=school/college, A level classes  11=socialising, hobbies  13=other family, religion  15-neighbours  16-tutor group  17-siblings  18-teachers/lecturers  19-engaged in politics  20-as a child</p>	<p>1-parents, neighbours  3-religion, as a parent  4-school/college, A level classes, present  5-other family, socialising  6-tutor group, engaged in politics, charity work, career  7-siblings, boy/girlfriend, hobbies  8-friends, teachers/lecturers, as a child, grandparent</p>
7	Kind, caring and loving	912	<p>1-grandparent  2-friends  3=parents, boy/girlfriend  5-as a parent  6-charity work  7-present  8-other family  9-school/college  10=socialising, tutor group, career  13-siblings</p>	<p>1-parents, grandparent  3-other family, friends, boy/girlfriend, school/college, tutor group  4-present, as a child  5-siblings, teachers/lecturers  6-socialising, as a parent  7-engaged in politics, neighbours, charity work  8-A level classes, hobbies, career  9-religion</p>

			14=teachers/lecturers, as a child 16-A level classes 17-hobbies 18-religion 19-neighbours 20-engaged in politics	
8	Taking responsibility	908	1-career 2-as a parent 3=friends, grandparent 5-charity work 6-hobbies 7-boy/girlfriend 8-present 9-parents 10-other family 11=siblings, school/college, A level classes 14=socialising, teachers/lecturers 16-religion 17-tutor group 18=engaged in politics, as a child 20-neighbours	1-as a parent, career 3-friends, engaged in politics 4-other family, charity work 5-hobbies, grandparent 6-parents, siblings 7-socialising, boy/girlfriend, teachers/lecturers, A level classes, religion, as a child 8-school/college, tutor group, neighbours, present
9	Aware of a higher power	693	1-as a child 2-grandparent 3-school college 4-charity work 5-religion 6-friends 7=other family, hobbies, present, as a parent 11-teacher/lecturers 12-siblings 13=parents, tutor group 15-career 16=boy/girlfriend, A level classes 18-socialising 19=engaged in politics, neighbours	3-as a child 6-religion 8-school/college 9-parents, siblings, other family, friends, socialising, boy/girlfriend, teachers/lecturers, A level classes, tutor group, engaged in politics, neighbours, charity work, hobbies, present, as a parent, career, grandparent

### Elements

Element		Constructs ranking within element	Ratings in each construct 1-7 by students (n=9)
Me as a grandparent	493	1-kind, caring and loving 2-trustworthy 3-truthful 4-actively changing and growing 5=positive; responsibility 7-respecting self 8-fair and respectful	7-7, 6-2 7-7, 6-1, 5-1 7-4, 6-4, 5-1 7-3, 6-5, 5-1 7-3, 6-4, 5-2; 7-4, 6-4, 3-1 7-4, 6-3, 5-1, 3-1 7-1, 6-6, 5-1, 4-1

		9-aware of higher power	7-3, 6-2, 4-2, 1-2
Me and my friends	472	1-trustworthy 2-actively changing and growing 3=kind, caring and loving; responsibility 5-respecting self 6=positive; truthful 8-fair and respectful 9-aware of higher power	7-6, 6-2, 5-1 7-4, 6-5 7-4, 6-2, 5-3; 7-3, 6-4, 5-2 7-4, 6-3, 4-1, 3-1 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 3-1; 7-1, 6-6, 5-1, 4-1 7-3, 6-4, 3-2 7-2, 6-2, 4-2, 1-3
Me as a parent	472	1=responsibility; trustworthy 3-fair and respectful 4-truthful 5-respecting self 6=kind, caring and loving; positive; actively changing and growing 9-aware of higher power	7-5, 6-3, 5-1; 7-6, 6-1, 5-2 7-3, 6-6 7-3, 6-4, 5-1, 3-1 7-4, 6-3, 5-1, 2-1 7-4, 6-2, 5-1, 4-1, 3-1; 7-2, 6-4, 5-2, 4-1; 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 3-1 7-2, 6-1, 5-1, 4-2, 1-3
Me and charity work	465	1-truthful 2-positive 3-actively changing and growing 4=responsibility; trustworthy 6-fair and respectful 7-kind, caring and loving 8-respecting self 9-aware of higher power	7-5, 6-3, 5-1 7-3, 6-5, 5-1 7-4, 6-2, 5-3 7-4, 6-1, 5-4; 7-1, 6-7, 5-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-4 7-1, 6-4, 5-4 6-3, 5-4, 4-1, 2-1 7-1, 6-5, 2-1, 1-2
Me and my career	459	1-responsibility 2-actively changing and growing 3-respecting self, trustworthy 5-positive 6-fair and respectful 7-truthful 8-kind, caring and loving 9-aware of higher power	7-6, 6-3 7-5, 6-4 7-3, 6-5, 5-1; 7-4, 6-4, 4-1 7-3, 6-3, 5-3 7-3, 6-2, 5-2, 4-2 6-3, 5-5, 4-1 6-4, 5-2, 4-1, 3-2 6-4, 4-1, 1-4
Me in the present	447	1-actively changing and growing 2-trustworthy 3-truthful 4=kind, caring and loving; fair and respectful; respecting self 7-positive 8-responsibility 9-aware of higher power	7-3, 6-5, 5-1 7-3, 6-4, 5-2 7-2, 6-5, 5-1, 4-1 7-1, 6-3, 5-5; 7-1, 6-4, 5-3, 4-1; 7-2, 6-3, 5-3, 3-1 7-2, 6-2, 5-3, 4-2 7-1, 6-4, 5-3, 2-1 7-1, 6-3, 4-2, 1-3
Me and my boy/girlfriend	446	1-trustworthy 2-respecting self 3=kind, caring and loving; positive 5-truthful 6-actively changing and growing 7=responsibility; fair and respectful 9-aware of higher power	7-5, 6-3, 3-1 7-5, 6-2, 5-1, 3-1 7-2, 6-5, 5-1, 4-1; 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 4-1 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 3-1 7-1, 6-5, 5-2, 3-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-2, 4-1, 3-1; 7-3, 5-5, 3-1 7-1, 6-2, 3-2, 1-4
Me and my hobbies	441	1-positive 2=trustworthy; actively changing and growing 4-respecting self 5-responsibility 6-truthful 7-fair and respectful 8-kind, caring and loving 9-aware of higher power	7-4, 6-4, 5-1 7-3, 6-5, 4-1; 7-1, 6-8 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 4-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-3, 4-1 7-3, 6-2, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1 6-4, 5-3, 4-1, 3-1 6-2, 5-3, 4-2, 2-2 7-1, 6-3, 4-2, 1-3
Me and my parents	432	1=kind, caring and loving; fair and respectful;	7-1, 6-6, 5-2; 7-3, 6-3, 5-2, 4-1; 7-3,

		trustworthy; actively changing and growing 5-positive 6-responsibility 7-respecting self 8-truthful 9-aware of higher power	6-2, 5-4; 7-1, 6-6, 5-2 7-5, 4-3, 3-1 7-1, 6-5, 5-1, 3-1, 2-1 7-2, 6-2, 5-3, 3-1, 2-1 6-3, 5-3, 4-2, 3-1 7-1, 6-3, 3-1, 2-1, 1-3
Me and my school/college	424	1-actively changing and growing 2-respecting self 3-kind, caring and loving 4=fair and respectful; trustworthy; truthful  7-positive 8-responsibility, 9-aware of higher power	7-5, 6-2, 5-2 6-6, 5-3 6-4, 5-4, 4-1 7-2, 6-4, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1; 6-5, 5-1, 4-3; 6-3, 5-5, 4-1 6-4, 5-1, 4-3, 2-1 6-3, 6-3, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1; 7-1, 6-3, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 1-1
Me and other family members	407	1-respecting self 2-trustworthy 3-kind, caring and loving 4-responsibility 5=fair and respectful; positive  7-actively changing and growing 8-truthful 9-aware of higher power	7-2, 6-4, 5-2, 4-1 7-1, 6-5, 5-1, 4-2 7-1, 6-5, 4-3 7-2, 6-2, 5-2, 4-2, 2-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-4, 4-1, 2-1; 6-4, 5-3, 4-1, 2-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-1, 4-4, 3-1 6-3, 5-1, 4-3, 3-2 6-3, 5-2, 4-1, 2-1, 1-2
Me out socialising	400	1-actively changing and growing 2-respecting self 3-positive 4-trustworthy 5-fair and respectful 6-kind, caring and loving 7-responsibility 8-truthful 9-aware of higher power	7-2, 6-5, 5-2 7-4, 6-2, 5-1, 4-1, 3-1 7-1, 6-4, 5-4 7-2, 6-2, 5-2, 4-2, 3-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-4, 4-1, 3-1 6-1, 5-7, 3-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-2, 4-1, 3-2, 2-1 6-2, 5-3, 4-1, 3-2, 1-1 6-1, 5-2, 4-1, 2-2, 1-3
Me and my A level classes	395	1-truthful 2=positive; actively changing and growing 4-fair and respectful 5=respecting self; trustworthy 7-responsibility 8-kind, caring and loving 9-aware of higher power	6-6, 5-3 7-1, 6-3, 5-4, 4-1; 7-1, 6-4, 5-2, 4-2 7-1, 6-2, 5-4, 4-2 6-4, 5-3, 4-1, 1-1; 6-4, 5-2, 4-2, 2-1 6-3, 5-4, 3-1, 1-1 6-1, 5-4, 4-3, 2-1 6-3, 3-2, 2-1, 1-3
Me and my siblings	384	1-positive 2-trustworthy 3=respecting self, actively changing and growing 5-kind, caring and loving 6-responsibility 7-fair and respectful 8-truthful 9-aware of higher power	7-4, 6-1, 5-3, 1-1 6-5, 5-3, 2-1 7-2, 6-2, 5-3, 3-1, 2-1; 7-1, 6-3, 5-2, 4-2, 3-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-4, 2-2 6-3, 5-3, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1 7-1, 6-1, 5-3, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1 6-1, 5-4, 3-2, 2-1, 1-1 6-2, 5-3, 4-1, 1-3
Me and my teachers lecturers	383	1-respecting self 2-actively changing and growing 3-positive 4-trustworthy 5=kind, caring and loving; truthful 7-responsibility 8-fair and respectful 9-aware of higher power	7-2, 6-2, 5-4, 3-1 6-6, 5-1, 4-1, 2-1 6-3, 5-4, 4-1, 3-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-3, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1 6-2, 5-4, 4-2, 2-1; 7-1, 5-6, 3-1, 2-1 6-1, 5-3, 4-3, 1-2 7-1, 6-3, 4-1, 3-2, 2-2 6-1, 5-3, 4-3, 1-2

Me and my tutor group	380	1-truthful 2-actively changing and growing 3-kind, caring and loving 4-positive, trustworthy 6=fair and respectful; respecting self  8-responsibility 9-aware of higher power	7-1, 6-3, 5-4, 4-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1 7-1, 6-3, 5-2, 4-2, 1-1 7-2, 6-1, 5-3, 4-1, 2-2 7-1, 6-2, 5-4, 2-1, 1-1; 7-1, 6-2, 5-1, 4-3, 3-2 7-2, 5-1, 4-1, 3-3, 2-2 6-1, 5-2, 4-3, 3-1, 1-2
Me and my religion	378	1-truthful 2-actively changing and growing 3-fair and respectful 4=positive; respecting self  6-aware of higher power 7=responsibility; trustworthy  9-kind, caring and loving	7-4, 6-1, 4-3, 3-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-1, 4-2, 1-1 7-2, 6-3, 4-3, 1-1 6-2, 5-4, 4-2, 1-1; 7-2, 6-1, 5-1, 4-3, 3-1, 1-1 7-4, 5-1, 4-1, 1-3 7-2, 6-1, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1, 1-1; 7-2, 6-1, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1, 1-1 7-2, 6-3, 5-1, 4-2, 1-1
Me as a child	356	1-positive 2-actively changing and growing 3-aware of higher power 4-kind, caring and loving 5-trustworthy 6-respecting self 7-responsibility 8-fair and respectful 9-truthful	7-2, 6-4, 5-3 7-3, 6-1, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1 7-2, 6-1, 5-3, 4-2, 1-1 6-4, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1 7-1, 6-1, 5-3, 3-4 6-1, 5-4, 3-2, 2-2 7-1, 6-1, 5-2, 3-3, 2-1, 1-1 7-1, 5-1, 3-5, 2-2 6-1, 5-2, 3-4, 1-2
Me and my neighbours	326	1-fair and respectful 2=positive, trustworthy  4=truthful; actively changing and growing  6-respecting self 7-kind, caring and loving 9-aware of higher power	7-1, 6-3, 5-1, 4-3, 1-1 6-2, 5-3, 4-2, 3-1, 2-1; 7-1, 5-5, 4-1, 3-1, 1-1 6-1, 5-3, 4-4, 1-1; 7-1, 6-1, 5-1, 4-4, 3-1, 1-1 6-1, 5-3, 4-3, 2-1, 1-1 6-1, 5-3, 4-1, 3-2, 2-1, 1-1 5-2, 4-2, 3-1, 1-4
Me engaged in politics	302	1-actively changing and growing 2-respecting self 3=responsibility; truthful  5-trustworthy 6-fair and respectful 7=kind, caring and loving; positive  9-aware of higher power	7-2, 6-3, 5-1, 3-1, 1-2 7-1, 6-2, 5-2, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1, 1-1 7-1, 6-2, 5-1, 4-1, 3-1, 2-1, 1-2; 7-1, 5-3, 4-2, 3-1, 2-3, 1-1 6-2, 5-2, 4-2, 2-1, 1-2 6-2, 5-2, 3-2, 2-1, 1-2 7-1, 5-1, 4-2, 3-1, 2-3, 1-1; 7-1, 4-4, 3-1, 2-1, 1-2 6-1, 5-1, 4-2, 2-1, 1-4



**Appendix 5**

**TEMPLETON PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Please complete all sections and items**

Name .....

Form .....

**Please circle**

Maths GCSE grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
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English GCSE grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
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Gender	M	F
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**Office use only**

Site	1	2	3	Date completed:
Identifier number:				

## Section 1

Please read the statements and circle the response which most applies to you

- 1 - very much like me
- 2 - like me
- 3 - somewhat like me
- 4 - not much like me
- 5 - not like me
- 6 - not like me at all

PLEASE CIRCLE

- |     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  | <i>I am usually kind, caring and loving</i>                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2.  | <i>I allow my feelings to influence how I behave</i>                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3.  | <i>I am ambitious to do well in life</i>                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4.  | <i>I think about and reflect on my values and behaviour</i>                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5.  | <i>I am usually truthful and honest</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6.  | <i>Religion plays an important role in my life</i>                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7.  | <i>I am usually trustworthy</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8.  | <i>Even though the truth may hurt, I think it is important</i>                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9.  | <i>I feel able to ask for what I need</i>                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. | <i>I have an inner sense of my moral values</i>                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. | <i>I am often aware of God</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. | <i>I am usually cheerful and optimistic</i>                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. | <i>My values are influenced by my faith</i>                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. | <i>I have a lot of respect for myself</i>                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. | <i>I spend time thinking and reflecting on issues that are important to me</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. | <i>I stand up for what I believe in</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17. | <i>I usually take responsibility</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18. | <i>I try to maintain my values in all aspects of my life</i>                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |



19.	<i>I sometimes pray</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	<i>I like it when people are honest with me</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	<i>I prefer to fit in with the views of others</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
22.	<i>I am usually fair and respectful to others</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	<i>When I struggle with something I persevere with it</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	<i>It is important that my friends approve of me</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	<i>The following people have an influence on my values</i>						
	<i>a. Mother</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>b. Father</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>c. Sisters or brothers</i>	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>d. Grandparents</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>e. Other family</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>f. Friends</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>g. People in the community</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>h. People in the media</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	<i>I am able to communicate my ideas to others</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	<i>Being able to work in a team is important to me</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	<i>I think and behave in the same way in different situations</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	<i>I know most of my neighbours</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	<i>I help out in my community</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	<i>I am a member of a club or a community organisation, outside of school/college</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	<i>I attend a place of worship</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	<i>I have a good understanding of our political system</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
34.	<i>The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
35.	<i>I participate in political activities</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
36.	<i>I plan to vote</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
37.	<i>I know I will have to give up some things to get where I want to go in my career</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6

38. *I talk with my parents about my life and my future* 1 2 3 4 5 6
39. *I am developing my spiritual life* 1 2 3 4 5 6
40. *I am continually changing and growing as a person* 1 2 3 4 5 6
41. *I have changed a lot as a person in the last five years* 1 2 3 4 5 6
42. *I have a strong sense of what I would like to be doing in ten years time* 1 2 3 4 5 6
43. *I have a strong sense of meaning and purpose in my life* 1 2 3 4 5 6
44. *I am developing my spiritual life through my faith* 1 2 3 4 5 6
45. *My religion is... please specify by ticking*
- a. Christianity
  - b. Judaism
  - c. Islam
  - d. Hinduism
  - e. Sikh
  - f. Buddhism
  - g. Humanism
  - h. None
  - i. Other
  - j. I don't know
- |  |
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|  |
- If 'Other' please specify .....*
46. *I can generally draw on my values to help me decide what is good in a situation* 1 2 3 4 5 6
47. *There is sometimes a gap between what I think and feel and my behaviour* 1 2 3 4 5 6
48. *I notice situations which I feel are offensive and socially unjust to someone or to a group of people* 1 2 3 4 5 6
49. *I behave in ways that conserve our environment* 1 2 3 4 5 6
50. *I feel angry when I see people being unjustly treated* 1 2 3 4 5 6
51. *Recent events in London have made me think more deeply about the meaning and purpose of life* 1 2 3 4 5 6
52. *I try to do something about it when I see injustice done to other people* 1 2 3 4 5 6
53. *I often come across situations which challenge my values* 1 2 3 4 5 6

54.	<i>I challenge other people's opinions</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
55.	<i>I am open to be challenged myself</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
56.	<i>I am able to take full responsibility for my own learning</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
57.	<i>I often change as a result of my learning</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
58.	<i>I am determined to follow a fulfilling career</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
59.	<i>I believe that each person is entitled to hold any opinion</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
60.	<i>I have overcome lots of difficulties in my own life which have helped to make me the person I am today</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
61.	<i>Earning a good income is my key objective in life</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
62.	<i>I know how to become a better person</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Section 2

Please read the statements and circle the response which most applies to you

1 - strongly agree

2 - agree

3 - slightly agree

4 - slightly disagree

5 - disagree

6 - strongly disagree

63.	<i>My tutor time helps me to develop my values</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
64.	<i>There are teachers/lecturers in my school/college who inspire me to become the best person I can be</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
65.	<i>My school/college does not help me to become a better citizen</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
66.	<i>My teachers/lecturers like me</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
67.	<i>School has made me a more competitive person</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
68.	<i>I frequently encounter values in my subject lessons</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
69.	<i>Assemblies do not help me to develop my spiritual life</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
70.	<i>My teachers/lecturers help me to think critically about my values</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6

- |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 71. | <i>My teachers/lecturers value me as an individual</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 72. | <i>My teachers/lecturers respect what I have to say</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 73. | <i>My school/college is a place where we can always engage in dialogue and learning about current affairs and how they affect our lives</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 74. | <i>School/college engages me in political debate</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 75. | <i>I am ambitious to do well in my exams</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 76. | <i>Subjects that we don't get a qualification in are not taken seriously by students</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 77. | <i>My school/college has helped me to become an effective learner</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 78. | <i>My teachers/lecturers have influenced the person I am today</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 79. | <i>My school/college has prepared me well to go on learning after I have left</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 80. | <i>Passing exams is the most important reason for school/college</i>  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 81. | <i>My school/college has helped me to know how to find my own solutions to problems</i>   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Please write any comments you may have in the box provided below

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

## Appendix 6

### Factor Loading of items and internal reliability

#### Cronbach's Alpha

The 23 factors were reduced to 15 that were theoretically coherent, through combining some. Cronbach's Alpha scale was used to rate the internal reliability of the scales derived from each factor. This measured the consistency of results, ensuring the items all measured the same underlying concept (Foster, 2002; Sirkin, 1995). Cronbach's Alpha scores range from 0 to 1 with 1 being the perfect reliability. According to Nunnally (1978) a score at .7 and above is an acceptable reliability, however, Kline (1999) suggests when dealing with psychological constructs as in this study, a value below .7 can realistically be expected because of the diversity of the constructs being measured. Below .5 would be deemed as poor reliability (Hinton et al, 2004). For this study .7 and above was considered an indication of good internal reliability, between .6 and .7 as moderate reliability and below .6 as an indication of poor consistency and therefore discarded; the final groups and their reliability scores are presented here.

Factors	Label	Questionnaire items	Item loading onto factor	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability
One	Spiritual and religious awareness	Q6 Religion plays an important role in my life	.932	0.96
		Q11 I am often aware of God	.930	
		Q13 My values are influenced by my faith	.903	
		Q19 I sometimes pray	.901	
		Q32 I attend a place of worship	.893	
		Q39 I am developing my spiritual life	.874	
		Q44 I am developing my spiritual life through my faith	.825	
Two	Critical values and learning	Q70 My teachers/lecturers help me to think critically about my values	.712	0.81
		Q68 I frequently encounter values in my subject lessons	.679	
		Q78 My teachers/lecturers have influenced the person I am today	.644	
		Q81 My school/college has helped me to know how to find my own solutions to problems	.628	
		Q64 There are teachers/lecturers in my school/college who inspire me to become the best person I can be	.517	
		Q63 My tutor time helps me to develop my values	.504	
		Q77 My school/college has helped me to become an effective learner	.434	
		Q79 My school/college has prepared me well to go on learning after I have left	.415	

		Q67. School has made me a more competitive person	.346	
		Q73. My school/college is a place where we can always engage in dialogue and learning about current affairs and how they affect our lives	.343	
Three	Living my virtues and values	Q5 I am usually truthful and honest	.749	0.82
		Q7 I am usually trustworthy	.724	
		Q15. I spend time thinking and reflecting on issues that are important to me	.666	
		Q4 I think about and reflect on my values and behaviour	.642	
		Q18 I try to maintain my values in all aspects of my life	.610	
		Q22 I am usually fair and respectful to others	.602	
		Q1 I am usually kind, caring and loving	.585	
		Q10 I have an inner sense of my moral values	.535	
		Q46. I can generally draw on my values to help me decide what is good in a situation	.415	
		Q16 I stand up for what I believe in	.339	
		Q59. I believe that each person is entitled to hold any opinion	.333	
		Q53. I often come across situations which challenge my values	.315	
Four	Political engagement	Q33 I have a good understanding of our political system	.805	0.78
		Q35 I participate in political activities	.731	
		Q34 The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development	.657	
		Q74 School/college engages me in political debate	.644	
		Q36 I plan to vote	.638	
Five	Identity in relationship	Q9 I feel able to ask for what I need	.550	0.72
		Q12 I am usually cheerful and optimistic	.543	
		Q28 I think and behave in the same way in different situations	.540	
		Q14 I have a lot of respect for myself	.511	
		Q26 I am able to communicate my ideas to others	.506	
		Q27 Being able to work in a team is important to me	.332	
Six	Ambition, meaning and purpose	Q42 I have a strong sense of what I would like to be doing in ten years time	.765	0.76
		Q80 Passing exams is the most important reason for school/college	.726	
		Q43 I have a strong sense of meaning and purpose in my life	.649	
		Q58 I am determined to follow a fulfilling career	.640	
		Q75 I am ambitious to do well in my exams	.590	
		Q61 Earning a good income is my key objective in life	.523	
		Q3 I am ambitious to do well in life	.421	

Seven	Family influences	Q25a The following people have an influence on my values: Mother	.761	0.72
		Q25b The following people have an influence on my values: Father	.634	
		Q38 I talk with my parents about my life and my future	.617	
		Q25c The following people have an influence on my values: Sisters or brothers	.488	
Eight	Influence of peers	Q24 It is important that my friends approve of me	.746	0.65
		Q21 I prefer to fit in with the views of others	.694	
		Q25f The following people have an influence on my values: Friends	.488	
Nine	Critical social justice	Q52 I try to do something about it when I see injustice done to other people	.701	0.69
		Q50 I feel angry when I see people being unjustly treated	.694	
		Q48 I notice situations which I feel are offensive and socially unjust to someone or to a group of people	.445	
		Q49 I behave in ways that conserve our environment	.368	
Ten	Teacher respect for students	Q71 My teachers/lecturers value me as an individual	.765	0.74
		Q72 My teachers/lecturers respect what I have to say	.734	
		Q66 My teachers/lecturers like me	.704	
Eleven	Wider family influences	Q25e The following people have an influence on my values: Other family	.787	0.72
		Q25d The following people have an influence on my values: Grandparents	.758	
Twelve	Challenge and responsibility	Q54 I challenge other people's opinions	.669	0.62
		Q55 I am open to be challenged myself	.653	
		Q23 When I struggle with something I persevere with it	.474	
		Q56 I am able to take full responsibility for my own learning	.334	
Thirteen	Critical Learning and becoming	Q41 I have changed a lot as a person in the last five years	.730	0.74
		Q47 There is sometimes a gap between what I think and feel and my behaviour	.717	
		Q8 Even though the truth may hurt, I think it is important	.711	
		Q40 I am continually changing and growing as a person	.704	
		Q62 I know how to become a better person	.646	
		Q20 I like it when people are honest with me	.542	
		Q37 I know I will have to give up some things to get where I want to go in my career	.498	
		Q51. Recent events in London have made me think more deeply about the meaning and purpose of life	.417	
		Q60 I have overcome lots of difficulties in my own life which have helped to make me the person I am today	.397	

		Q57 I often change as a result of my learning	.372	
		Q17 I usually take responsibility	.316	
Fourteen	Community engagement	Q31 I am a member of a club or a community organisation, outside of school/college	.754	0.63
		Q30 I help out in the community	.708	
		Q29 I know most of my neighbours	.519	
Fifteen	Media influences	Q25h The following people have an influence on my values: People in the media	.632	0.66
		Q25g The following people have an influence on my values: People in the community	.570	

### Questionnaire items unused in factor analysis

The following items did not group onto any of the factors and are included here because they are of interest to comment upon. A majority of students said school helps them to become better citizens but it appears that assemblies does not help them to develop their spiritual lives and a large majority of students said that they did not take non-examinable subjects seriously. These latter two items are of concern along with the 60% of students who find tutor time does not develop their values as these are the ways that school staff indicated as ways to communicate virtues and values to students, however, students report these as not useful and not helpful. It is interesting that a large majority report they allow their feelings to influence their behaviour.

### Items not grouped in the factors

ITEM	Cumulative Yes %
I allow my feelings to influence how I behave	86%
Subjects that we don't get a qualification in are not taken seriously by students	85%
Assemblies do not help me to develop my spiritual life	75%
My school/college does not help me to become a better citizen	34%



## Appendix 7

### Statistics tables for ‘spiritual and religious engagement’ and ‘political engagement’ items

#### 1. ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’

##### Statistics

	Q6 Religion plays an important role in my life	Q11 I am often aware of God	Q13 My values are influenced by my faith	Q19 I sometimes pray	Q32 I attend a place of worship	Q39 I am developing my spiritual life	Q44 I am developing my spiritual life through my faith
N	515	514	514	515	515	515	515
Mean	4.23	4.02	4.18	4.30	4.55	4.12	4.57
Std. Error of Mean	.078	.080	.076	.081	.086	.078	.077
Median	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	5.00
Mode	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Std. Deviation	1.768	1.817	1.724	1.842	1.963	1.761	1.758
Variance	3.124	3.300	2.972	3.391	3.852	3.101	3.090
Skewness	-.580	-.463	-.539	-.623	-.923	-.426	-.906
Std. Error of Skewness	.108	.108	.108	.108	.108	.108	.108
Kurtosis	-1.025	-1.181	-1.007	-1.123	-.848	-1.216	-.622
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

#### 2. Political Engagement

##### Statistics

	Q33 I have a good understanding of our political system	Q34 The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development	Q35 I participate in political activities	Q36 I plan to vote	Q74 School/college engages me in political debate
N	515	515	515	515	515
Mean	3.39	4.85	4.84	2.31	3.72
Std. Error of Mean	.065	.056	.061	.070	.064
Median	3.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	4.00
Mode	3	6	6	1	3
Std. Deviation	1.468	1.266	1.392	1.588	1.443
Variance	2.154	1.603	1.937	2.522	2.081
Skewness	.257	-.844	-1.112	1.155	-.033
Std. Error of Skewness	.108	.108	.108	.108	.108
Kurtosis	-.817	-.148	.310	.250	-.860
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215

Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	6	6	6	6	6

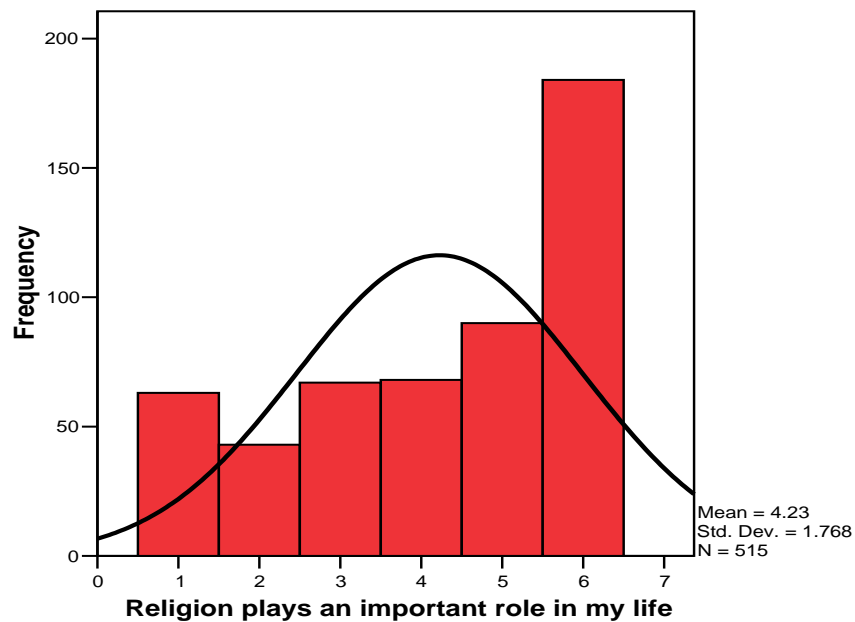
## Frequency tables and graphs for ‘spiritual and religious engagement’ and ‘political engagement’ items

### 1. Spiritual and religious engagement

**Table 7:1 Q6 Religion plays an important role in my life**

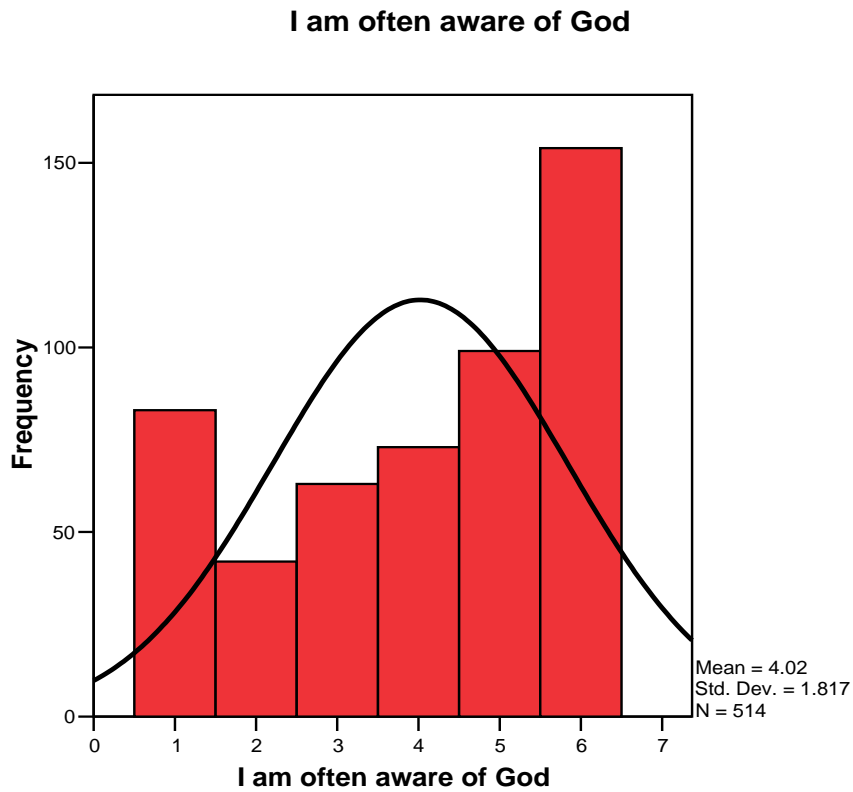
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	63	11.4	12.2	12.2
	Like me	43	7.8	8.3	20.6
	Somewhat like me	67	12.2	13.0	33.6
	Not much like me	68	12.3	13.2	46.8
	Not like me	90	16.3	17.5	64.3
	Not like me at all	184	33.4	35.7	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

**Religion plays an important role in my life**



**Table 7:2 Q11 I am often aware of God**

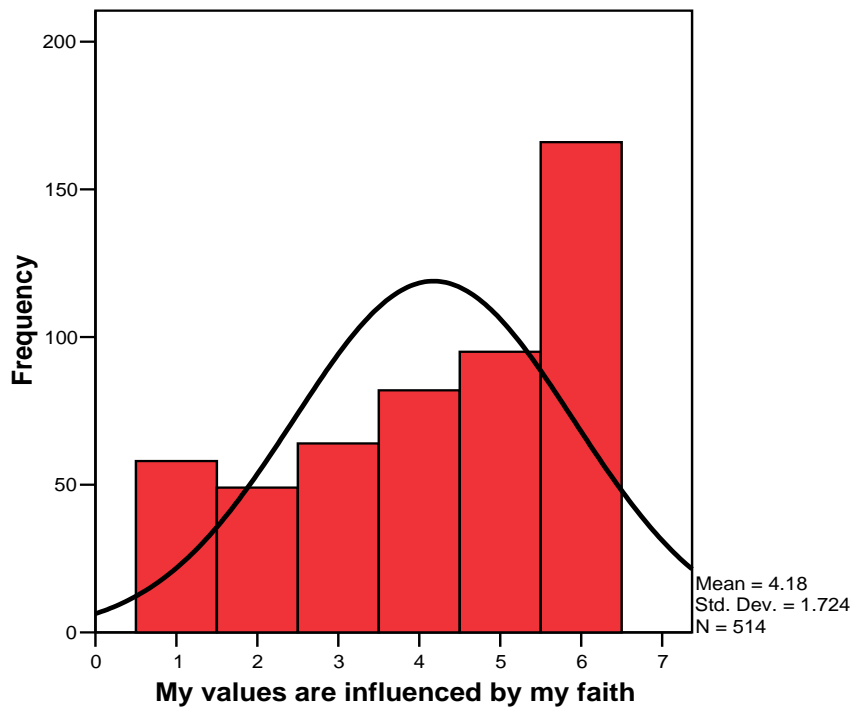
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	83	15.1	16.1	16.1
	Like me	42	7.6	8.2	24.3
	Somewhat like me	63	11.4	12.3	36.6
	Not much like me	73	13.2	14.2	50.8
	Not like me	99	18.0	19.3	70.0
	Not like me at all	154	27.9	30.0	100.0
	Total	514	93.3	100.0	
Missing	System	37	6.7		
Total		551	100.0		



**Table 7:4 Q13 My values are influenced by my faith**

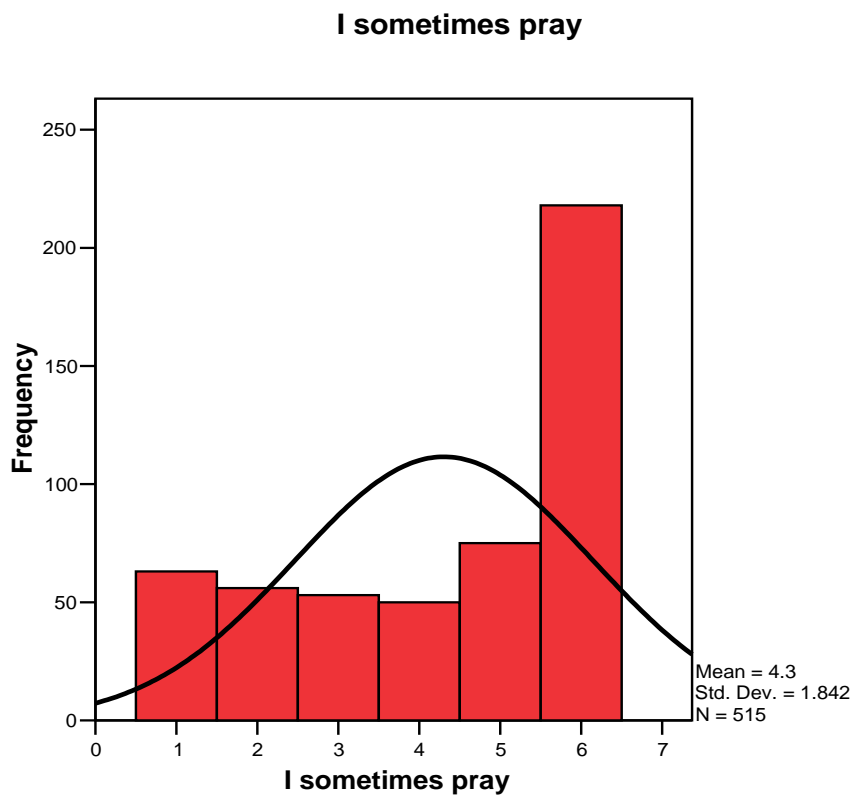
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	58	10.5	11.3	11.3
	Like me	49	8.9	9.5	20.8
	Somewhat like me	64	11.6	12.5	33.3
	Not much like me	82	14.9	16.0	49.2
	Not like me	95	17.2	18.5	67.7
	Not like me at all	166	30.1	32.3	100.0
	Total	514	93.3	100.0	
Missing	System	37	6.7		
Total		551	100.0		

**My values are influenced by my faith**



**Table 7:5 Q19 I sometimes pray**

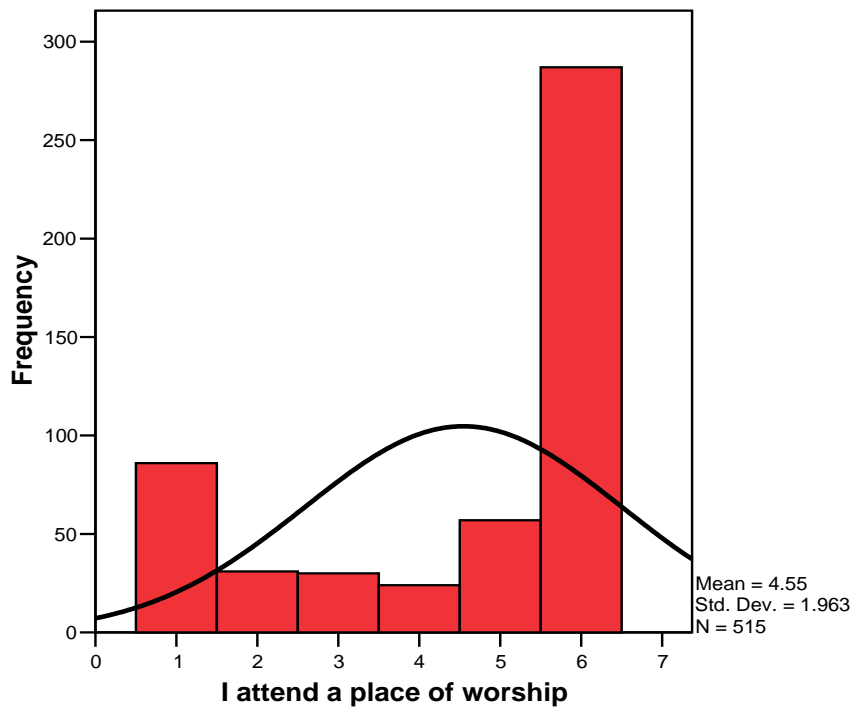
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	63	11.4	12.2	12.2
	Like me	56	10.2	10.9	23.1
	Somewhat like me	53	9.6	10.3	33.4
	Not much like me	50	9.1	9.7	43.1
	Not like me	75	13.6	14.6	57.7
	Not like me at all	218	39.6	42.3	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		



**Table 7:6 Q32 I attend a place of worship**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	86	15.6	16.7	16.7
	Like me	31	5.6	6.0	22.7
	Somewhat like me	30	5.4	5.8	28.5
	Not much like me	24	4.4	4.7	33.2
	Not like me	57	10.3	11.1	44.3
	Not like me at all	287	52.1	55.7	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

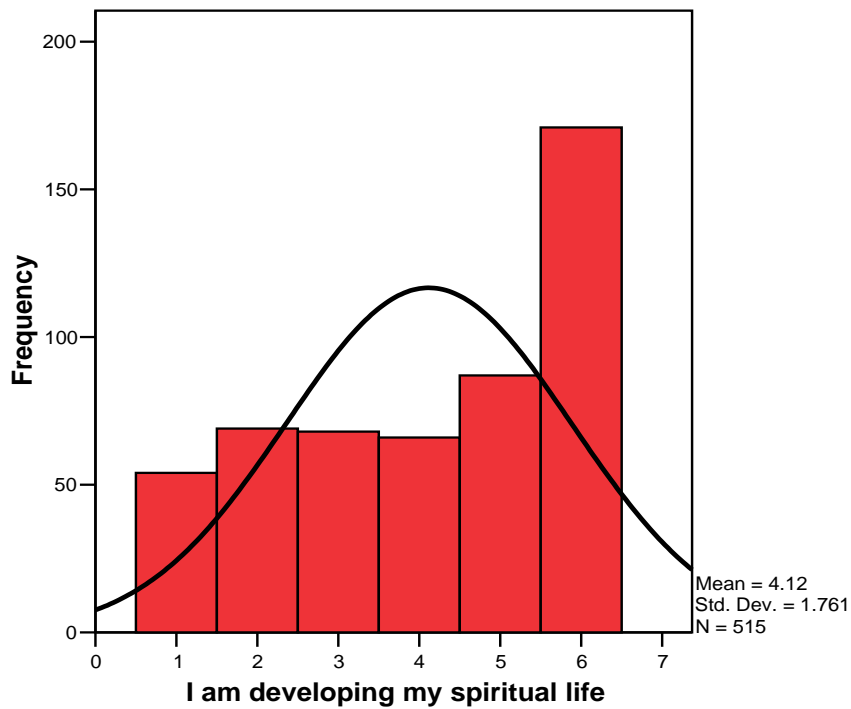
**I attend a place of worship**



**Table 7:7 Q39 I am developing my spiritual life**

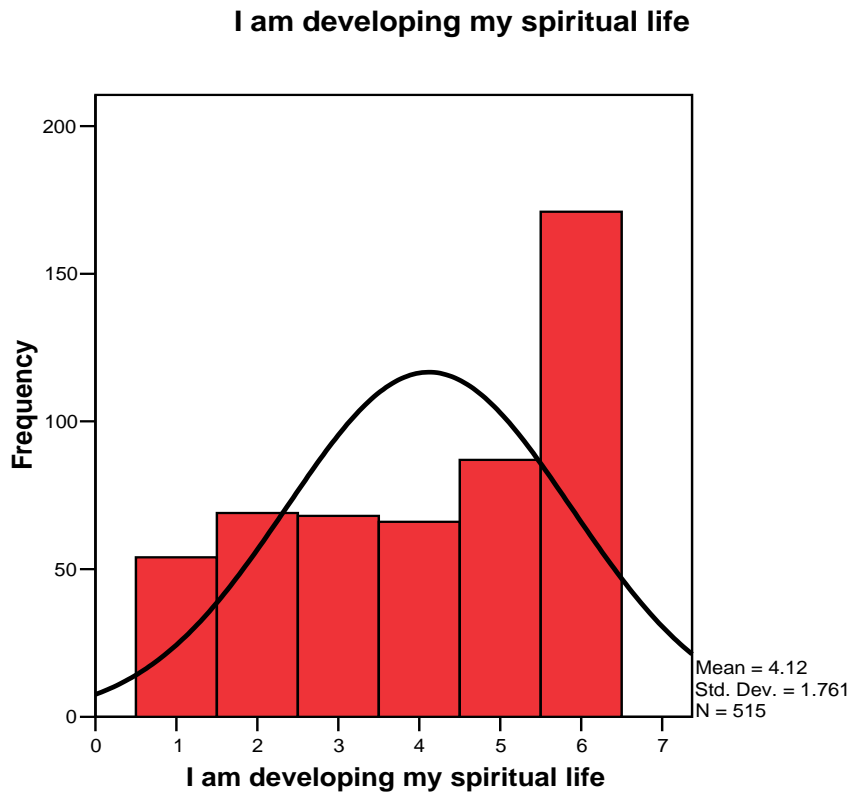
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	54	9.8	10.5	10.5
	Like me	69	12.5	13.4	23.9
	Somewhat like me	68	12.3	13.2	37.1
	Not much like me	66	12.0	12.8	49.9
	Not like me	87	15.8	16.9	66.8
	Not like me at all	171	31.0	33.2	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

**I am developing my spiritual life**



**Table 7:8 Q44 I am developing my spiritual life through my faith**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very much like me	53	9.6	10.3	10.3
	Like me	37	6.7	7.2	17.5
	Somewhat like me	51	9.3	9.9	27.4
	Not much like me	46	8.3	8.9	36.3
	Not like me	77	14.0	15.0	51.3
	Not like me at all	251	45.6	48.7	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		



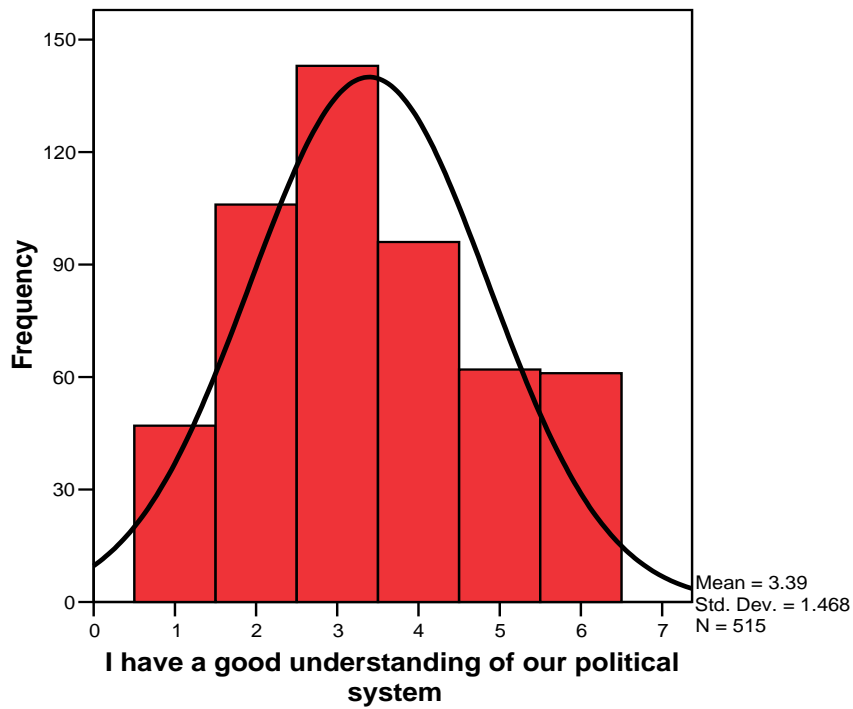


## 2. 'Political engagement'

**Table 7:9 Q33 I have a good understanding of our political system**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Very much like me	47	8.5	9.1	9.1
	2 Like me	106	19.2	20.6	29.7
	3 Somewhat like me	143	26.0	27.8	57.5
	4 Not much like me	96	17.4	18.6	76.1
	5 Not like me	62	11.3	12.0	88.2
	6 Not like me at all	61	11.1	11.8	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

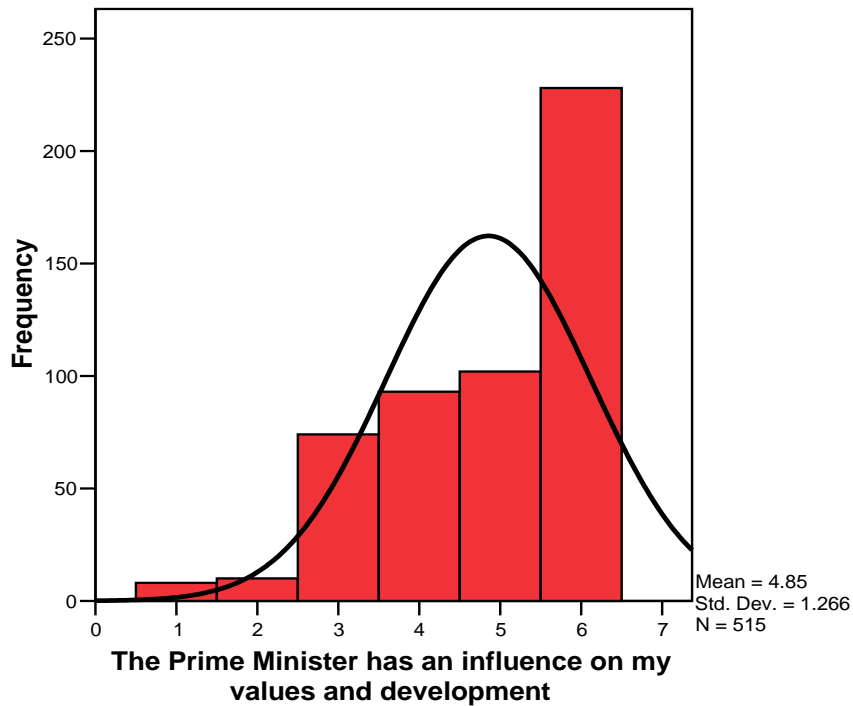
### I have a good understanding of our political system



**Table 7:10 Q34 The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Very much like me	8	1.5	1.6	1.6
	2 Like me	10	1.8	1.9	3.5
	3 Somewhat like me	74	13.4	14.4	17.9
	4 Not much like me	93	16.9	18.1	35.9
	5 Not like me	102	18.5	19.8	55.7
	6 Not like me at all	228	41.4	44.3	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

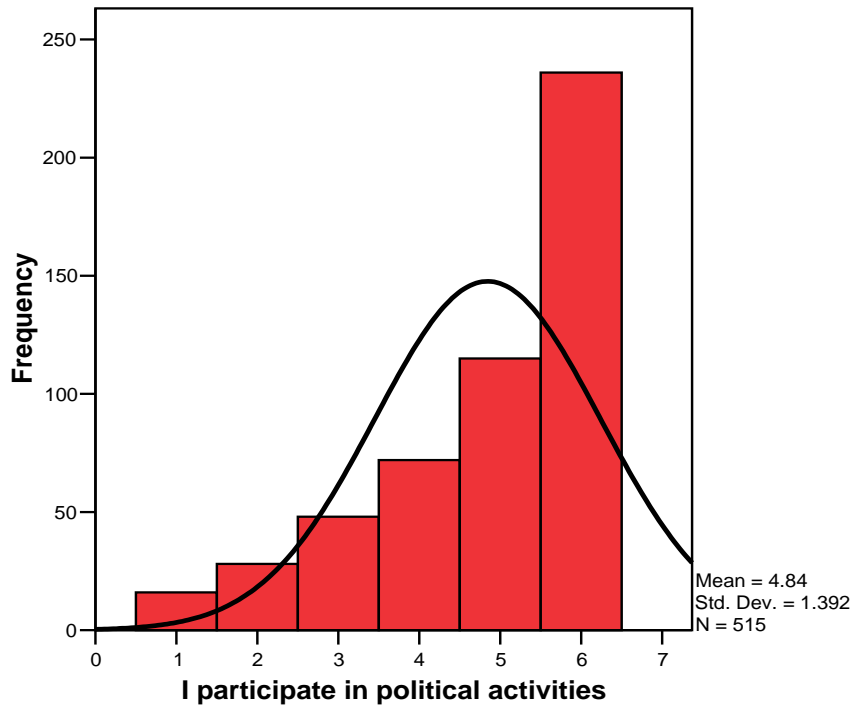
**The Prime Minister has an influence on my values and development**



**Table 7:11 Q35 I participate in political activities**

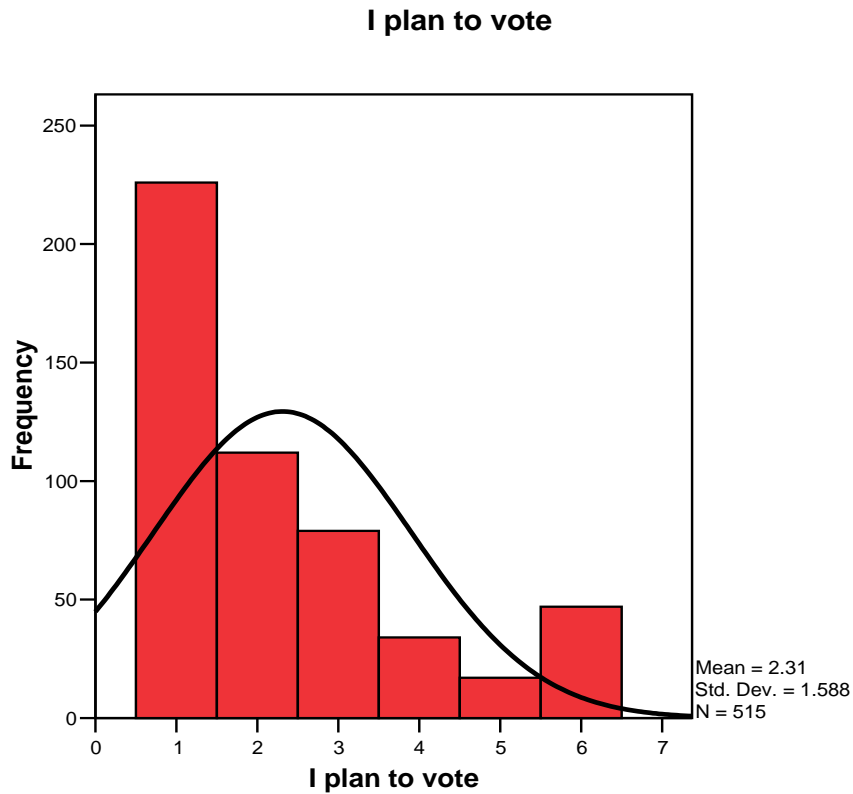
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Very much like me	16	2.9	3.1	3.1
	2 Like me	28	5.1	5.4	8.5
	3 Somewhat like me	48	8.7	9.3	17.9
	4 Not much like me	72	13.1	14.0	31.8
	5 Not like me	115	20.9	22.3	54.2
	6 Not like me at all	236	42.8	45.8	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

**I participate in political activities**



**Table 7:12 Q36 I plan to vote**

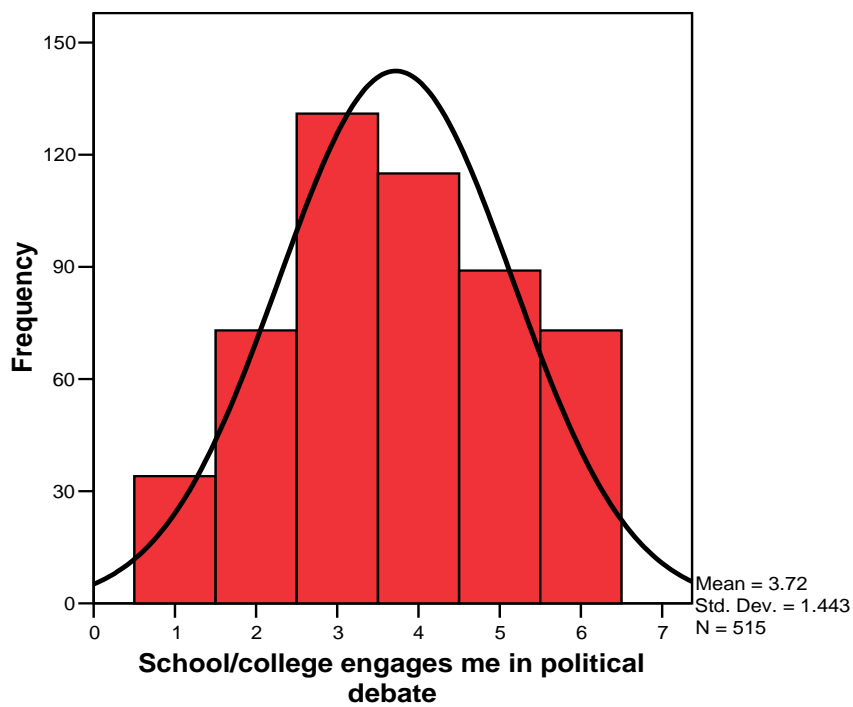
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Very much like me	226	41.0	43.9	43.9
	2 Like me	112	20.3	21.7	65.6
	3 Somewhat like me	79	14.3	15.3	81.0
	4 Not much like me	34	6.2	6.6	87.6
	5 Not like me	17	3.1	3.3	90.9
	6 Not like me at all	47	8.5	9.1	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		



**Table 7:13 Q74 School/college engages me in political debate**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly agree	34	6.2	6.6	6.6
	2 Agree	73	13.2	14.2	20.8
	3 Slightly agree	131	23.8	25.4	46.2
	4 Slightly disagree	115	20.9	22.3	68.5
	5 Disagree	89	16.2	17.3	85.8
	6 Strongly disagree	73	13.2	14.2	100.0
	Total	515	93.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	6.5		
Total		551	100.0		

**School/college engages me in political debate**



## Appendix 8

### Correlations between character factors, GCSE average score and learning power

	Spiritual and religious engagement	Critical values and school	Living my virtues and values	Political engagement	Identity in relationship	Ambition, meaning and purpose	Family influence	Influence of peers	Critical social justice	Teachers respect for students	Wider family influences	Challenge and responsibility	Critical learning and becoming	Community engagement	Media and community influences	GSCE achievement
Critical values and school	0.132															
	0.003															
Living my virtues and values	0.210	0.214														
	0.000	0.000														
Political engagement	0.195	0.289	0.223													
	0.000	0.000	0.000													
Identity in relationship	0.098	0.296	0.421	0.161												
	0.027	0.000	0.000	0.000												
Ambition, meaning and purpose	0.141	0.384	0.406	0.114	0.496											
	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.010	0.000											
Family influence	0.184	0.273	0.249	0.080	0.356	0.328										
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.000	0.000										
Influence of peers	0.077	0.333	0.052	0.041	0.136	0.188	0.376									
	0.081	0.000	0.243	0.349	0.002	0.000	0.000									
Critical social justice	0.098	0.137	0.523	0.238	0.207	0.179	0.072	0.007								
	0.026	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.101	0.879								
Teachers respect for students	0.095	0.378	0.221	0.183	0.295	0.243	0.212	0.082	0.156							
	0.032	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.062	0.000							
Wider family influences	0.187	0.272	0.134	0.062	0.208	0.216	0.423	0.236	-0.032	0.157						
	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.157	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.467	0.000						
Challenge and responsibility	0.001	0.207	0.509	0.229	0.425	0.379	0.138	-0.069	0.394	0.232	0.063					
	0.981	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.152					
Critical learning and becoming	0.194	0.414	0.611	0.154	0.432	0.550	0.295	0.188	0.424	0.243	0.171	0.453				
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000				

Community engagement	0.261	0.280	0.152	0.217	0.254	0.210	0.133	0.160	0.172	0.138	0.148	0.120	0.214				
	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.007	0.000				
Media and community influences	0.190	0.311	0.069	0.156	0.129	0.127	0.283	0.357	0.014	0.072	0.366	-0.027	0.107	0.230			
	0.000	0.000	0.116	0.000	0.003	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.746	0.105	0.000	0.540	0.015	0.000			
GSCE achievement	0.074	-0.023	0.143	0.246	-0.042	-0.030	0.029	-0.031	0.151	0.030	-0.038	0.096	-0.052	0.167	0.023		
	0.102	0.605	0.001	0.000	0.348	0.505	0.524	0.499	0.001	0.510	0.396	0.033	0.248	0.000	0.614		
Learning power	0.075	0.181	0.281	0.268	0.174	0.205	0.080	-0.077	0.186	0.106	0.027	0.378	0.243	0.085	0.075	0.148	
	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.097	0.000	0.023	0.563	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.109	0.001	





## Appendix 9 Learning power dimensions, post hoc tests and means plots

### Learning power dimensions

The Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI) 72 item online questionnaire (Deakin Crick et al, 2004) provided the study with information of students learning dispositions and effectiveness of learning power of students in the cohort. By completing the questionnaire, we were provided with data of students learning power and students were provided with an individual profile of their learning power divided between and rated along seven dimensions, which are major features of effective learners and the idea is that effective learning is a complex mix of dispositions, values and attitudes. The seven dimensions of learning power emerged from substantial empirical studies and these are: -

- Changing and learning
- Meaning making
- Critical curiosity
- Creativity
- Strategic awareness
- Learning relationships
- Resilience

Effective learners: -

- Know that learning itself is learnable. They believe that, through effort, their minds can get bigger and stronger, just as their bodies can and they have energy to learn (Changing and learning).
- Are on the look out for links between what they are learning and what they already know. They like to learn about what matters to them (Meaning making).
- Have the energy and a desire to find things out. They like to get below the surface of things and try to find out what is going on (Critical curiosity).
- Are able to look at things in different ways and to imagine new possibilities. They are more receptive to hunches and inklings that bubble up into their minds, and make more use of imagination, visual imagery and pictures and diagrams in their learning (Creativity).
- Know more about their own learning. They are interested in becoming more knowledgeable and more aware of themselves as learners. They like trying out different approaches to learning to see what happens. They are more reflective and better at self-evaluation (Strategic awareness).
- Are good at managing the balance between being sociable and being private in their learning. They are not completely independent, nor are they dependent; rather they work inter dependently (Learning relationships).
- Do not easily go to pieces when they get stuck or make mistakes. They are not averse to risks. They are able to persevere and are likely to seek and prefer situations that are challenging (Resilience) (Deakin-Crick et al, in press).

**Post hoc Tukey HSD test for significant character dimensions and Learning power**

Dependent Variable	Learning Power	Learning Power	Sig.
Critical values and school	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.051
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.051
		2 medium	
		3 high	.109
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.109
		3 high	
Living my virtues and values	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.006
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.006
		2 medium	
		3 high	.000
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.000
		3 high	
Political engagement	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.004
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.004
		2 medium	
		3 high	.003
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.003
		3 high	
Identity in relationship	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.089
		3 high	.001
	2 medium	1 low	.089
		2 medium	
		3 high	.097
	3 high	1 low	.001
		2 medium	.097
		3 high	
Ambition, meaning and purpose	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.108
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.108
		2 medium	
		3 high	.011

	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.011
		3 high	
Critical social justice	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.003
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.003
		2 medium	
		3 high	.442
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.442
		3 high	
Challenge and responsibility	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.000
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.000
		2 medium	
		3 high	.000
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.000
		3 high	
Critical learning and becoming	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.153
		3 high	.000
	2 medium	1 low	.153
		2 medium	
		3 high	.000
	3 high	1 low	.000
		2 medium	.000
		3 high	
Community engagement	1 low	1 low	
		2 medium	.002
		3 high	.086
	2 medium	1 low	.002
		2 medium	
		3 high	.380
	3 high	1 low	.086
		2 medium	.380
		3 high	

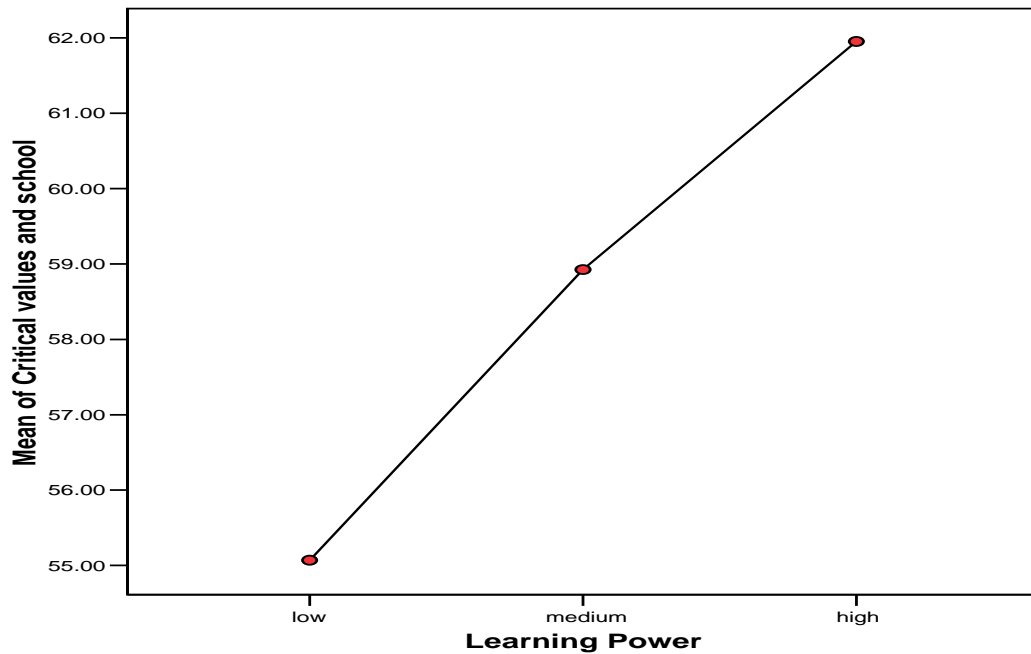
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\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

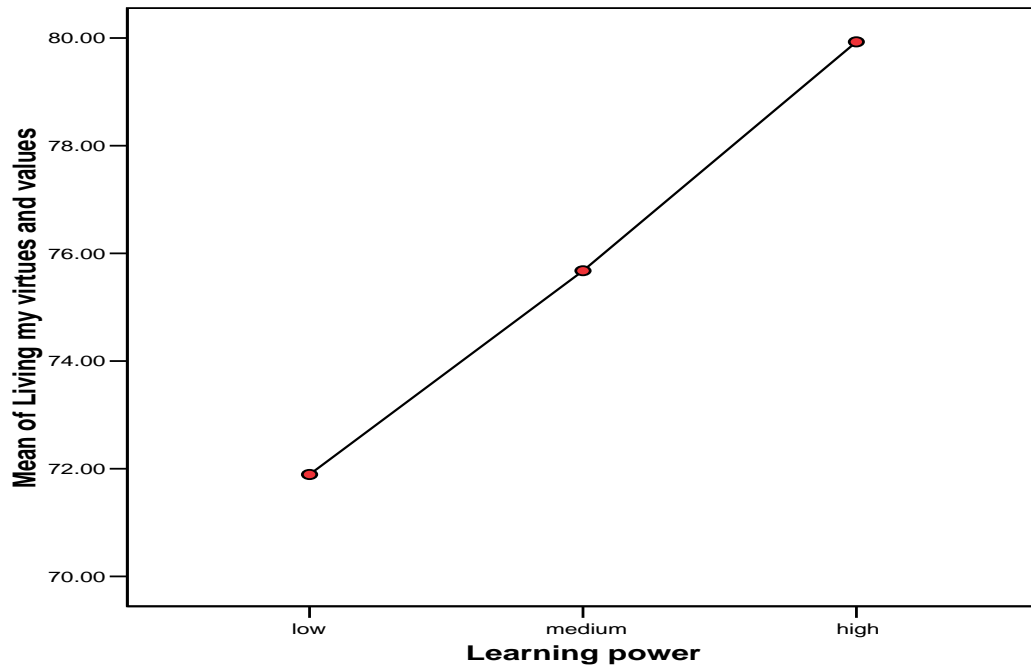
### Significant relationships between character dimensions and Learning power

These means plots show the statistically significant relationships between higher levels of some of the character dimensions and higher levels of Learning power. There is a significant relationship between a low level of 'community engagement' and a low level of Learning power

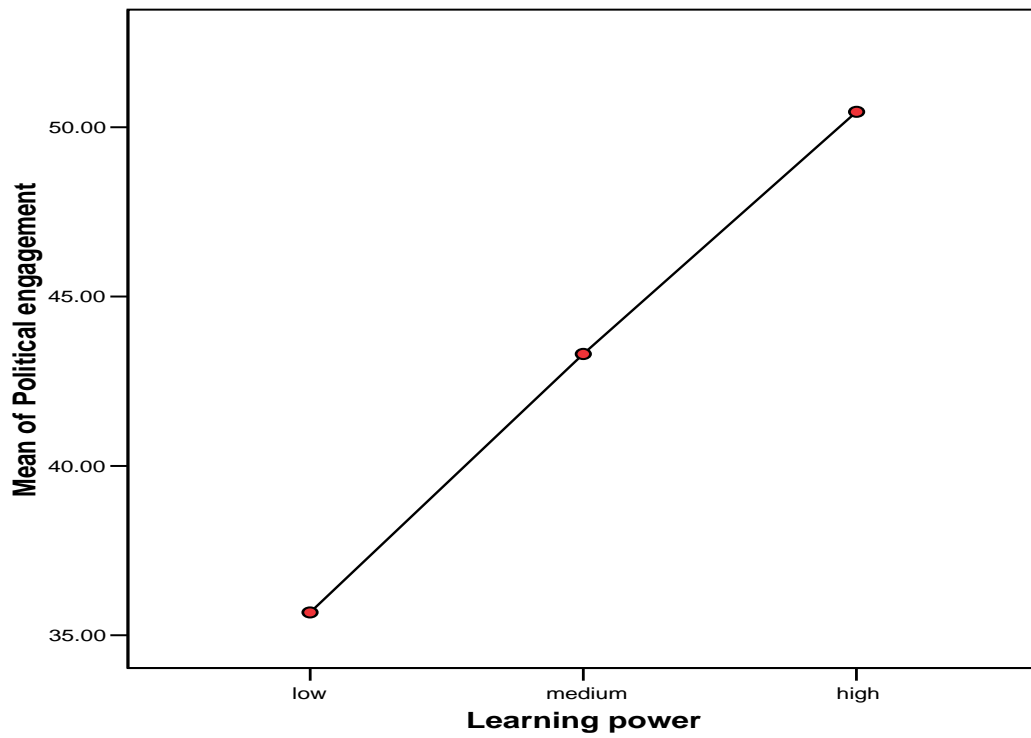
### 'Critical values and school' and Learning power



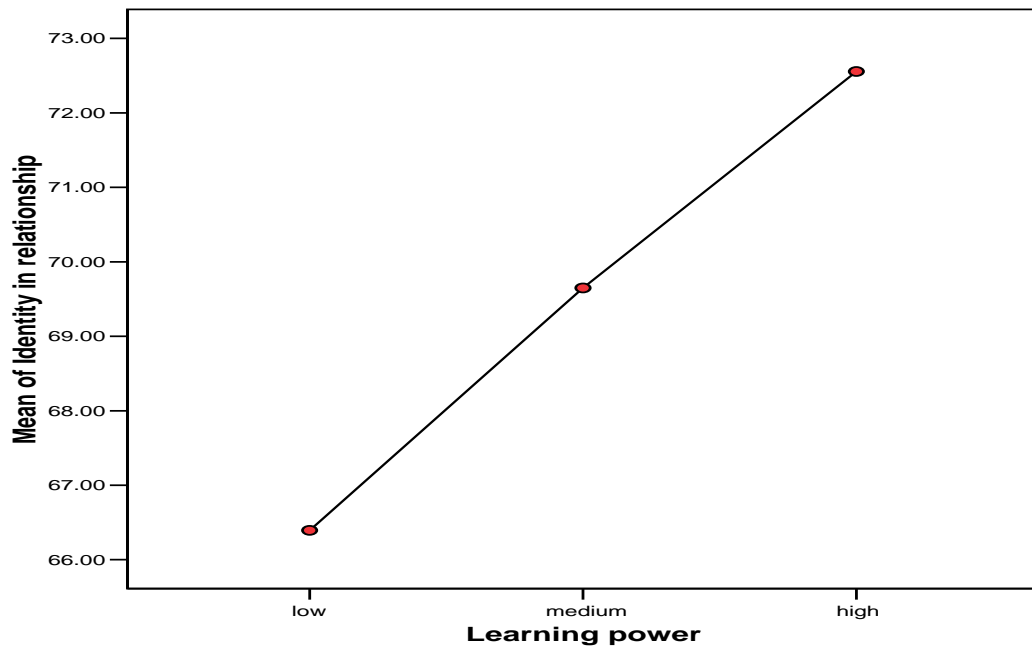
### 'Living my virtues and values' and Learning power



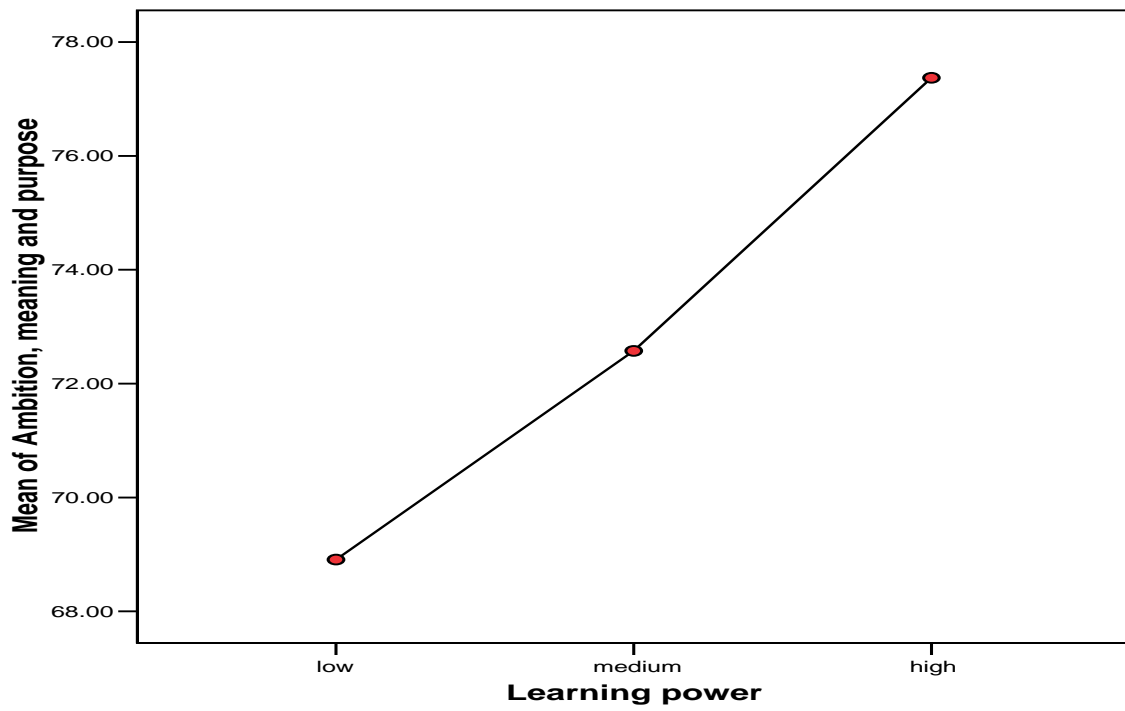
### 'Political engagement' and Learning power



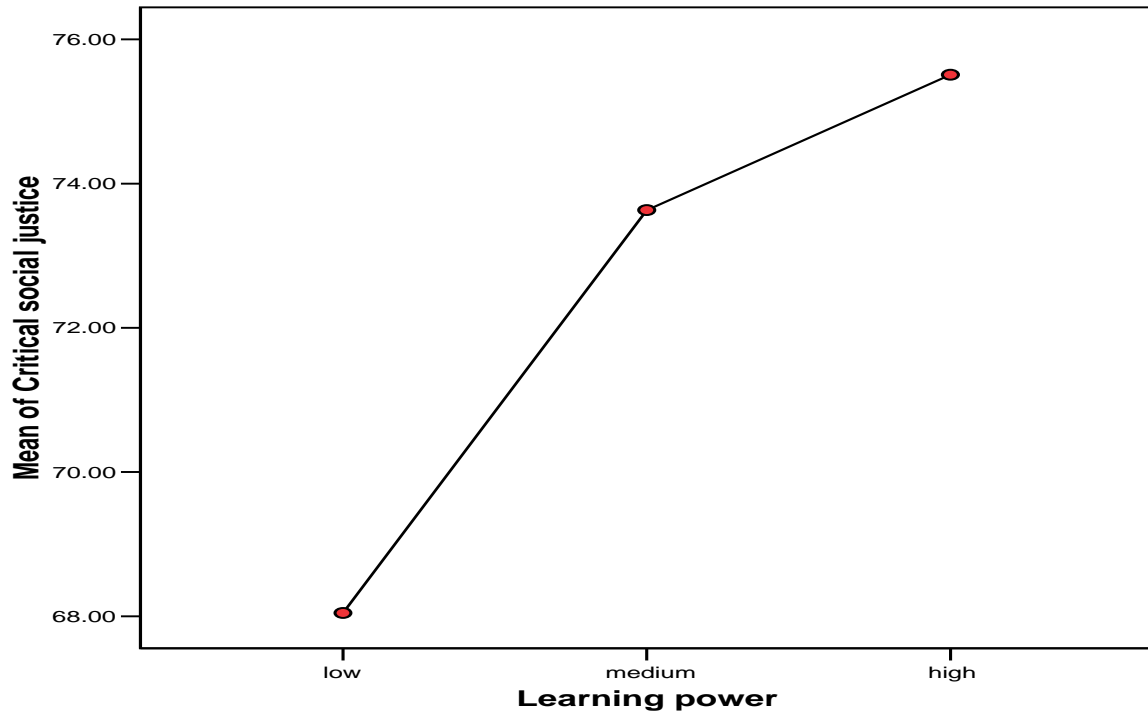
**‘Identity in relationship’ and Learning power**



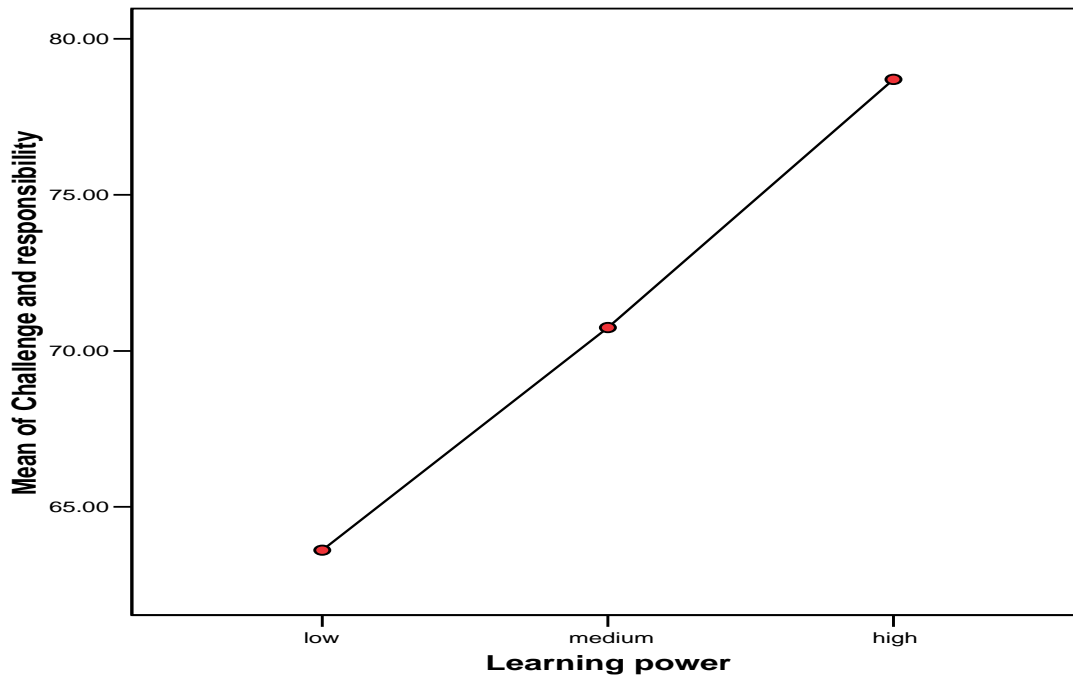
**‘Ambition, meaning and purpose’ and Learning power**



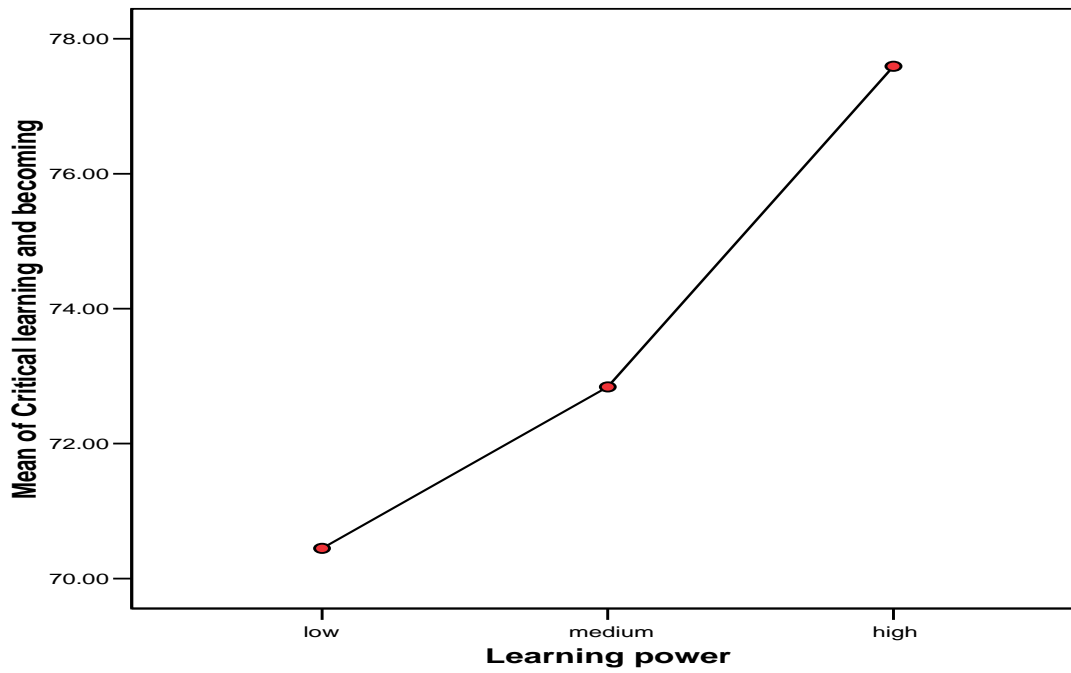
### 'Critical social justice' and Learning power



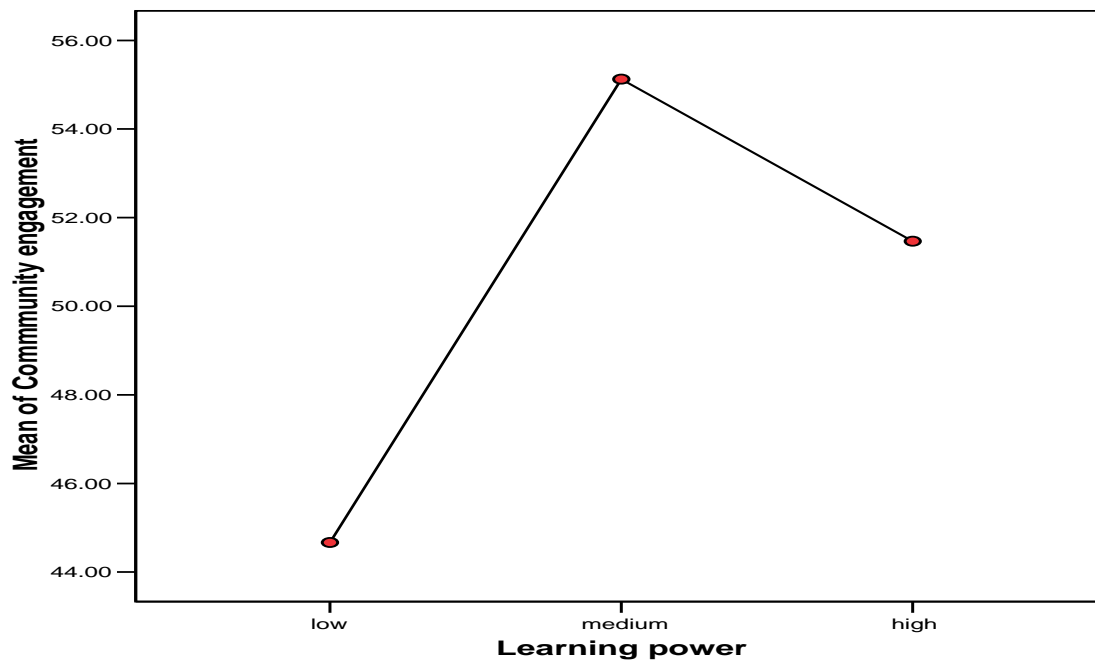
### 'Challenge and responsibility' and Learning power



### 'Critical learning and becoming' and Learning power



### 'Community engagement' and Learning power

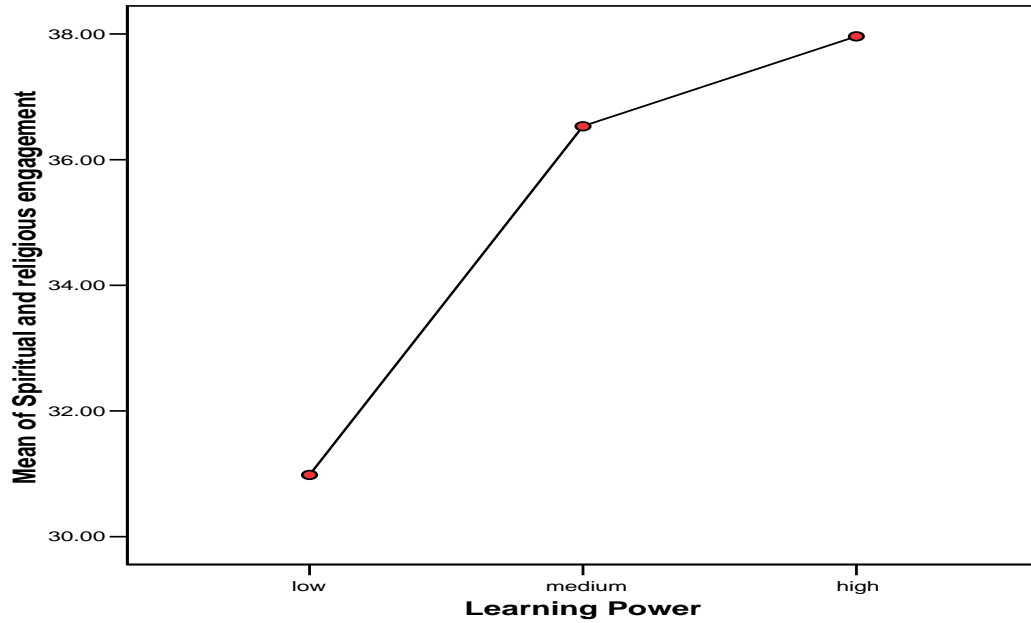




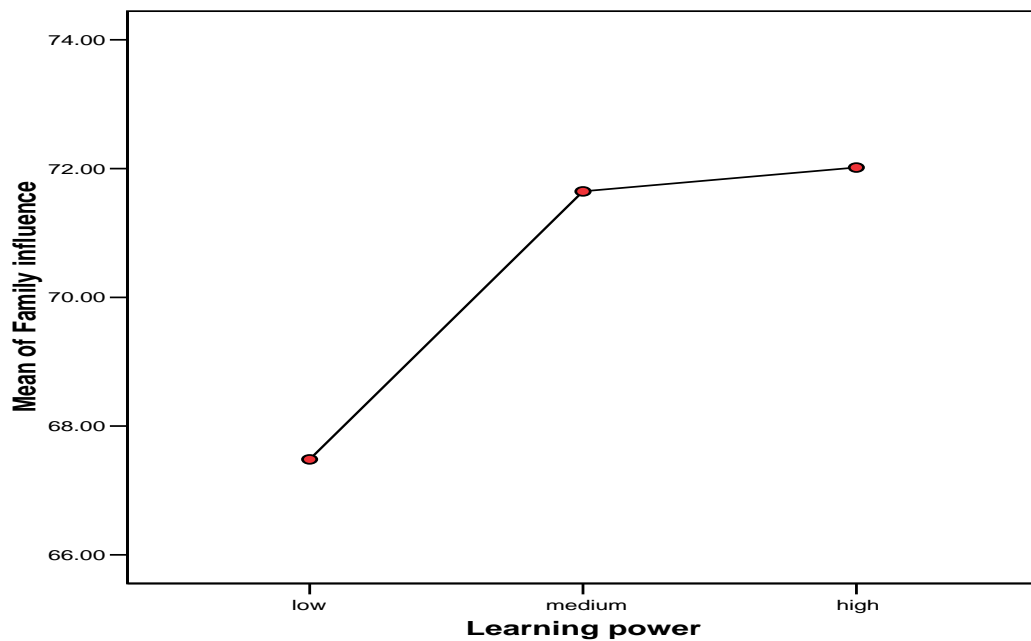
### Trends between character dimensions and Learning power

These means plots show trends between higher levels of some of the character dimensions and higher levels of Learning power. In contrast, there is a trend towards a relationship between reported higher levels of influence by peers with lower levels of Learning power.

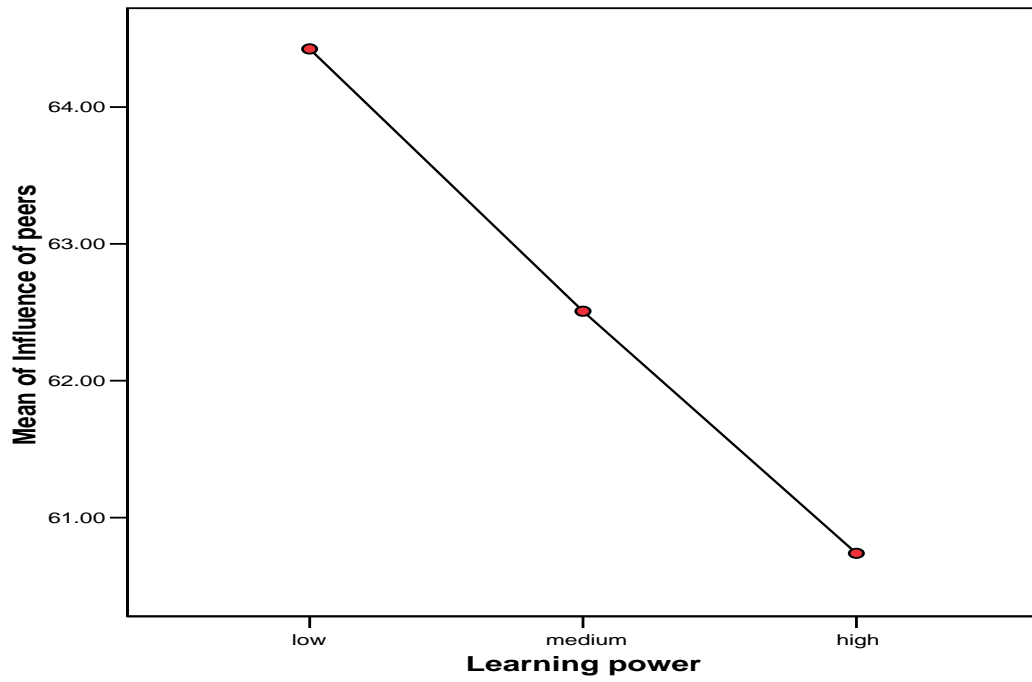
#### ‘Spiritual and religious engagement’ and Learning power



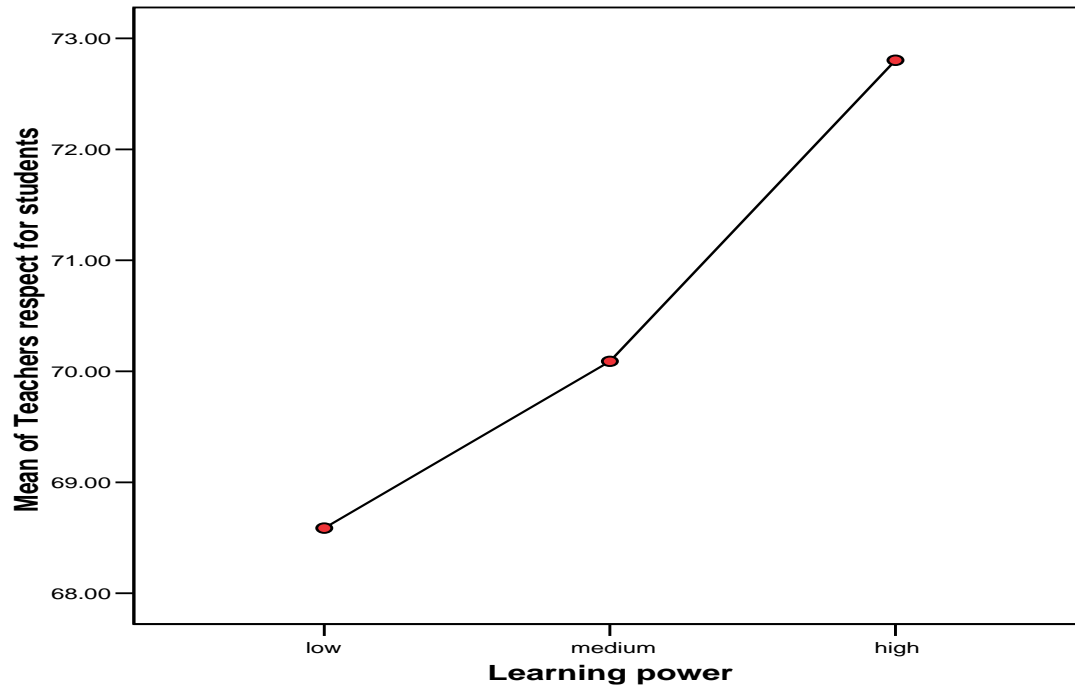
#### ‘Family Influence’ and Learning power



### 'Influence of peers' and Learning power



### 'Teachers respect for students' and Learning power



**'Media and community influence' and Learning power**

