All the pieces matter:

A framework for evaluating mission

in Anglican Schools in Australia

Submitted by

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**Certificate of Authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief, understand that it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged.

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Abstract

Anglican Schools in Australia have become a missional priority for the Church in the 21st century. With church participation declining and congregations aging, connecting with the substantial number of young people in Anglican Schools is seen as a key task. Developing an effective approach to this mission is a challenging endeavour due to the complex environment of schools. This research seeks to elucidate the intention and approach of the church’s mission in its schools. It focuses on beginning the important work of evaluating missional effectiveness in Anglican Schools in Australia in which faith development is an intended outcome.

This thesis begins by identifying four key Christian mission goals broadly shared by Anglican Schools. These goals are found using key governance documents as well as statements made by schools on their websites. One of the key mission goals is that students might become Christian. The key mission actions schools use to implement their mission goals are also found using a similar methodology.

It is hypothesised and argued that Anglican Schools in Australia intentionally seek to use the school as a plausibility structure for the fulfilment of their Christian mission and the development of faith in young people. A plausibility structure is a social structure in which a particular worldview is promulgated and taken for granted and in which individuals are socialised.

The effectiveness of a plausibility structure approach to faith development in schools is examined. It is concluded that it would be quite difficult for Anglican Schools in Australia to maintain an effective plausibility structure, in part because of contradictory core values. Extending this examination, the external environment of the school is examined. Aspects of Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory are introduced as a way of analysing the socialising influences on young people in terms of faith development. It is seen that the wider social context has the potential to further impinge on the effectiveness of the plausibility structure constructed by Anglican Schools in Australia.
In concluding the four key mission actions used by Anglican Schools in Australia for faith development are examined in light of Bronfenbrenner’s model and with special focus given to information that demonstrates the power and direction of faith formation processes. A framework based on Bronfenbrenner’s model for evaluating the mission actions of Anglican Schools in Australia is outlined. This framework uses the four elements of person, process, context and time. A tool for evaluating the mission actions of Anglican Schools in Australia based on the preceding research and discussion is proposed. This tool provides the initial impetus to aid mission decisions in the context of Anglican Schools in Australia.
Introduction

Anglican Schools in Australia.

Anglican Schools in Australia (ASIA) have become a missional priority for the Church in the 21st century (Cole, 2006, p. 352; Collier, 2012, p. 32; Kaye, 2003, p. 7; G. Smith, 2012, p. 27). With over 150 schools, educating more than 150 000 students from Preparatory to Year 12, this largely secular population is comparable in number to those attending an Anglican Church on an average Sunday across the country (Anglican Schools Australia, 2012; Powell, 2004). Anglican leaders and educators, however, continue to wrestle with the nature of mission in their schools (Aspinall, 2003; Cooling, 2008; Kaye, 2003). While much has been written about the Church’s vision for ASIA, relatively little has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of the current missional strategies used within them (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 15-16; Cole, 2004, pp. 8-12; P. Jensen, 2009, p. 2). This research is focused on beginning the important work of evaluating missional effectiveness in ASIA.

Issues of effectiveness and complexity.

Mission may be broadly described as the activities that Christians participate in as an “outworking of a life lived for God” (Anglican Consultative Council, 2016). There are many different ways of enacting this mission in ASIA. Westerhoff’s description of the processes of formation, education and instruction elucidate three modes that mission often takes in schools (1994, pp. 65-66). This thesis looks at one of the principal yet tacit approaches employed by Anglicans in Australia and abroad, that of the school acting as a place of alternative socialisation (Cole, 2004, pp. 2-3; 2006; Cooling, 2008, p. 15; Dearing, 2001, pp. 14-15, 19-20; Farran, 2002, p. 9; Sheehan, 2002, p. 9). As the number of those professing and practising the Christian faith has declined, the church in the Western world has recognised that the society in which it is embedded no longer shares its worldview or values (Bosch, 1991, p. 364; Mead, 1991, pp. 25-28; Paas, 2011, pp. 123-125). If Christian schools are to be places that educate and form young people in the Christian faith it is imperative they present a particular, different and distinct vision of humanity and way of life to that more commonly experienced, as an authentic expression of the church’s mission in the world (Dearing, 2001, pp. 2, 19-20; Farran,
Clear evidence that alternative socialisation is a strategic intention may be found in statements made about schools as faith communities; as being distinctly Christian; and as being the transmitters of Christian values (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008, pp. 1-2; Aspinall, 2003, p. 16; Cole, 2004; Colson, 2004, pp. 74-75; Dearing, 2001; Jelfs, 2010). Another way of articulating this intentional institutional socialisation is to say that the Anglican Church in Australia hopes that its schools will act as plausibility structures for the Christian faith (Uecker, 2009, p. 354).

The concept of the plausibility structure was developed by Berger and Luckmann in the 1960’s. Although sociology has progressed from the original theoretical model they outlined the discipline continues to wrestle with the role social structures play in religious identity formation (Guest, 2009, pp. 653-658). The concept of the plausibility structure is appropriated in this work because it accurately reflects the thinking and approach used by ASIA.

A school intentionally acts as plausibility structure by seeking to make the Christian worldview and way of life visible and palpable to their students in the hope they will adopt it for themselves (Uecker, 2009, p. 354). While some mention is made in the extant literature about plausibility structures and Christian mission, little work has been done on considering the effectiveness of this as an approach to mission in ASIA (Uecker, 2008, pp. 564, 567, 580; 2009, p. 354; Westerhoff, 1994, pp. 61-62).

Evaluating the effectiveness of a “plausibility structure approach” is important because a considerable investment is made by ASIA in time, money and opportunity in engaging students with the Christian faith. This is evidenced in the mission and vision statements developed by the Anglican Church for its schools, the employment of chaplains and religious education staff and the provision of time for chapel, religious education and the professional development of staff (Edwards, 2014, pp. 73-80; G. Smith, 2012, pp. 15-19). There is potential for a wide range of internal and external factors to impinge on this strategy. Internal factors include school governance structures and leadership, religious affiliation of staff, school culture and the nature of students (Aspinall, 2003, p. 16; 2012, p. viii; Farran, 2002, p. 12; Moody, 2009, p. 48; Stewart,
Externally, relationships with government, community, church and family will also place particular demands and expectations on any activity pertinent to the school’s mission (Aspinall, 2003, p. 4; Moody, 2009, 2010). When these organisational influences are considered alongside those touching the individual student, the need for a framework for understanding this complex system becomes apparent. Schools are complex social systems that need their own nuanced approach to mission. If mission strategies in Anglican Schools are to be effective they need to take into account the reality of their organisation and students, within the context of the wider culture and society (D'Orsa & D'Orsa, 2010, pp. 1-2).

Given the approach to mission in ASIA exists in a complex system, this research seeks to answer three cascading questions:

1. Is the approach taken to fulfil the church’s mission by ASIA primarily that of the creation of a plausibility structure in which faith development is an intended outcome?
2. What factors impinge upon the use of a plausibility structure approach within ASIA for the development of faith in students?
3. What is the nature and degree of impact these impinging factors have on schools’ capacity to fulfil the churches mission and facilitate faith development?

In answering the three questions this thesis develops a framework for assessing the capacity of schools to

1. fulfil the church’s mission, and
2. facilitate faith development.

The framework is subsequently developed into a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of strategies used by ASIA for developing faith in young people.

**Key Terms**

There are a number of terms used throughout this work that are key to understanding both the field under investigation and the theoretical basis for this research. The key terms defined are Anglican Schools in Australia (ASIA), governing and
affiliate bodies, mission, faith and faith development, plausibility structure, socialisation and effectiveness. All concepts will be given a fuller treatment in the body of the work but a brief definition of each is provided here.

The field of this investigation centres on ASIA and the way they perceive and carry out their Christian mission. The governing and affiliate bodies of Anglican Schools are an important element shaping a school’s conception of this mission. It is argued here that faith development is an important goal of the Christian mission of ASIA. Understanding from the outset how each of these elements is defined in this research, will provide a clearer picture of the field being investigated.

This research is grounded in sociology and a social model of human development. Specifically, socialisation and the way it is used to create plausibility structures for the development of a particular worldview is central. Each of these broad and complex terms require definition due to the specific nature of their use in this work.

**Anglican Schools in Australia.**

Schools developed and affiliated with the Anglican Church have existed since the early days of the Australian colony (Heath, 2009, p. 3). Today there are more than 150 Anglican Schools across the country. Together they form Anglican Schools Australia (ASA), a network of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia (Anglican Schools Australia, 2012, 2016a). In this research a school’s affiliation with the ASA will be used to identify it as part of the group of ASIA. It is acknowledged that this definition includes a wide range of schools from long established Anglican grammar schools to new low fee schools, independent separately incorporated schools to small systems of schools owned by dioceses (Cole, 2006, p. 335). The strength of this definition is that each of these schools self-identify as being connected to the Anglican Church and through the network allow themselves to be influenced by the Anglican Church even if only by the sharing of ideas.

**Governing and affiliate bodies.**

All ASIA finds themselves within a geographic region called a diocese. Each diocese is led by a bishop. Dioceses generally have some control or influence over Anglican
organisations within their boundaries (Frame, 2007, pp. 75, 147-148). In Australia there are a range of school governance structures and diocesan/school relationships. These differences may exist even within a single diocese. A diocese may have schools that are entirely owned and controlled by them through to those that despite bearing the Anglican name are legally and operationally separate entities (Nicholson, 2007, p. 6). Some dioceses may have the power to dictate to schools what their Christian mission should be while others may have no such authority (G. Smith, 2012, p. 14).

In some dioceses there is no separate governing body established by the Church, such as a schools commission, and the role may be fulfilled by an existing church council. In other dioceses affiliate bodies developed by the church and its schools exist for the purpose of sharing policy and resources. Schools may belong to these bodies by statute or voluntarily. This complexity highlights that the church plays a role in regard to the Christian mission of its schools more by influence than direct control (G. Smith, 2012, p. 15). A range of bodies around the country have been identified as governing or affiliate bodies by the diocesan authorities in each place. These will be identified in Chapter One.

Mission.

Mission is a word that has both general and specific meanings which overlap significantly is this work. In its general sense mission can mean “a pre-established and often self-imposed objective or purpose”("Mission," n.d.). An organisation’s mission statement will list the goals and objectives it wishes to achieve.

Mission also has specific meanings in the Christian context. It is a concept central to the Christian faith but one that is not easily defined. In current thinking the Christian church does not have its own mission but participates in the missio Dei, the mission of God (Bosch, 1991, pp. 389-390). For Christians the life and actions of Jesus presented in the Gospels reflect most clearly the enactment of this mission. Bosch describes mission as “the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus” (Bosch, 1991, p. 519). Reducing this further, mission may be broadly described as the activities that Christians participate in as an “outworking of a life lived for God” (Anglican Consultative Council, 2016). This would include actions that the church, institutions that
are part of the church such as schools, and individual Christians do to participate in Jesus’ mission, however they perceive it.

The five Marks of Mission developed by the Anglican Communion give a commonly accepted summary of how Anglicans perceive the church’s role in God’s mission (Anglican Consultative Council, 2015).

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
- To respond to human need by loving service.
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth (Anglican Consultative Council, 2015).

In investigating ASIA the general and specific definitions of mission overlap considerably. ASIA and their governing and affiliate bodies draw on their understanding of Christian mission, the *missio Dei*, and reinterpret it for their own context. Specific goals relating to their Christian mission are often incorporated into their school’s general mission statement. In this work these goals are called *Christian mission goals*.

The Christian mission goals as defined by ASIA and their governing and affiliate bodies are then expressed as concrete actions or what is termed in this work *Christian mission actions* or simply *mission actions*. Towards the end of this work mission actions will also be described as processes for faith development.

**Faith and faith development.**

Faith and faith development are complex concepts. For the purpose of this research the definition outlined by Strommen and Hardel will be used as a foundation for exploration (2000, p. 75). In their conception faith has three interrelated parts. It is a “commitment of the mind”, an “affair of the heart”, and it “results in good actions” (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 75). In this sense faith is much more than cognitive ascent to a set of beliefs but involves the feelings, passions and actions of a person (Bellous, 2006, pp. 171-172). Faith can therefore be measured by evaluating not only what people
think but also what they are committed to and how they live their commitments through their actions. This definition of faith provides a consistent conversation partner to current studies measuring spirituality and religiosity (Benson, Roehlkepartain Eugene C., & Rude Stacey P., 2003, pp. 208-209; Mason, Singleton, & Webber, 2007, pp. 39-41).

In Christian literature the word formation is often used to describe the coming to and growing of a person’s faith. This is particularly so if they are immersed in a Christian community such as a church or school (Matthaei, 2004, p. 57; Roberto, 2015, pp. 61,63; Westerhoff, 1994, p. 67). In this work the idea of formation functions as coterminous with the idea of development as they both capture the idea of processes that lead to a point self-identified as conversion and the growth that continues beyond it (Yang & Abel, 2014, pp. 2-3). Growth in faith may be represented by deeper or more complex levels of meaning attached to thoughts, feeling and actions. It could also be represented by increases in personal significance, intensity or time attached to activities. Of primary importance is a positive increase in aspects relating to faith life, thoughts, feelings and actions (Bellous, 2006). In this work the term faith development includes and is primarily interested in the process of a young person becoming a Christian as identified by their thoughts, passions and actions.

One of the assumptions of this thesis is that faith is developed largely through social relationships and interactions (Yang & Abel, 2014). Bronfenbrenner describes development as “a lasting change in the way in which a person perceives and deals with his environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). This understanding of development fits well with the idea that faith may have a conversion point that changes the thoughts, feelings and actions of a person but also involves processes of growth over time.

Socialisation.

Socialisation “is the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills and character traits that enable them to participate as effective members of groups and society” (Berns, 2013, p. 6). New generations learn how to live by the rules and institutions of the groups and society of which they are part (Berger, 1969). Socialisation occurs particularly through interactions between individuals and significant others such as parents, teachers and peers. Almost all aspects of human life involve socialisation to
some degree and most socialisation happens with little intention or purpose but through everyday experience and interaction (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012). Yet, while some socialisation occurs unintentionally, or even accidentally, institutions such as schools are expected to be intentional agents of socialisation (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 21).

**Plausibility structure.**

Sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann coined the term plausibility structure in “The Social Construction of Reality” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 354). Every society has a body of knowledge which has been created by its members. Part of its function is to keep society stable and unified. To some degree a society or group’s identity is dependent on their shared beliefs progressing into the future (Haralambos, Krieken, Smith, & Holborn, 1996, p. 591; Seidman, 2013, p. 81). These shared beliefs are passed on from one generation to the next through the process of socialisation (Berger, 1969).

Berger and Luckmann asserted that human beings are social creatures and ideas about the world, values, norms and behaviours are not developed in isolation but in and through relationships with other people (Haralambos et al., 1996, p. 591). This is critical in helping to maintain the plausibility of the shared meanings and understandings that have been constructed by members of a society (Berger, 1969; Furseth & Repstad, 2006, pp. 59-60).

Berger proposed that any worldview, including those of religion and science, is dependent on the existence of “social structures within which [...] reality is taken for granted and within which successive generations of individuals are socialised in such a way that this world will be real to them” (Berger, 1969, p. 47). These plausibility structures support individuals in the maintenance of their set of beliefs, views and assumptions about life, that which in broad terms may be called their worldview (Roof, 1976).

The term worldview carries with it a heavy emphasis on the cognitive aspects of a person (Hiebert, 2008, p. loc 278; J. K. A. Smith, 2009, p. 64). It is now however more widely used to refer to a broader conception of the human person and includes
elements such as values, desires and feelings (D’Orsa, 2014, pp. 57-58, 72; Haney, 2014, pp. 4-5). The terms plausibility structure and worldview are comparable to other terms such as social imaginary, paradigm and perspective in that they try to capture the way in which humans perceive and understand their world and act within it (Haney, 2014, p. 13; Hiebert, 2008, p. loc 259). In this work worldview refers to more than the rational aspects of a person and involves the “fundamental cognitive, affective and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives”(Hiebert, 2008, p. loc 278). This aligns with Bronfenbrenner’s work emphasising the importance of how a “person perceives and deals with his environment”(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). Most importantly it is used in this study in a subordinate way to help explain the purpose and functioning of plausibility structures (Berger, 1969, p. 47). That is, the worldview describes the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the plausibility structure.

Effectiveness.

Throughout this thesis the term effectiveness is used frequently. It refers to the degree to which a mission action is likely to result in the achievement of the intended mission goal (Productivity Commission, 2013, p. 6). Two elements may be helpful to consider in light of the theoretical basis of this research; direction, and power (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In terms of faith development direction would mean that the process used, the mission action, is moving the young person towards faith and not away from it. Power would refer to the strength with which the process is likely to influence or move the person in the direction of faith. The elements of direction and power may be difficult to evaluate for faith development, however insights gained from existing developmental research may provide useful insights. For example, Bronfenbrenner identified that the power of a process is increased significantly when it occurs within the context of a close and trusting relationship. This observation can be scrutinised using empirical research. Existing research in the field of spiritual developmental provides insights into how certain activities impact positively or negatively on individuals and the degree of their influence (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, pp. 118-119; Regnerus, Smith, & Smith, 2004). This study interrogates the direction and power of mission actions to draw conclusion about the effectiveness of mission in ASIA.
Research Methodology

The research methodology used is grounded in Whitehead and Whitehead’s theological process of *attending, asserting and deciding* (Whitehead & Whitehead, 1981).

In the first phase attention will be paid to the reported Christian mission of ASIA drawn from the documents of schools and the key diocesan bodies providing oversight and support to them. This is complemented by papers delivered at conferences supported by ASIA. This data will be analysed for themes in order to provide an overall picture of the missional approach to schooling that the Anglican Church in Australia is taking. The same sources will be used to provide an analysis of the actions employed by schools to fulfil this mission. The research will seek to discern the stated mission of the church in schools and actions taken to implement it. This will proceed through the analysis of the hypothesis that ASIA uses a plausibility structure approach for faith development in students.

The asserting phase will consider two different elements that impact on ASIA’s mission. A broad systems theory approach will be used to explore the influence of the factors impacting ASIA organisationally. This approach will allow a systematic exploration of issues from overarching societal agendas through to the critical issues shaping individuals. This information will be important in evaluating ASIA’s ability to implement an effective plausibility structure for faith development because it will reveal how competing agendas and worldviews at the organisational level have the potential to undermine the plausibility structure’s integrity. Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory will then be used to understand the individual student in the context of ASIA. Bronfenbrenner’s approach to understanding development in terms of person and context will be used to analyse the theoretical faith development of students.

In the final, deciding phase consideration will be given to how ASIA may shape mission actions in the light of their complex environments and as it can be understood through the lens of Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory. Existing mission actions will be examined. This section will propose a framework for evaluating a school’s ability to prosecute its mission through its mission actions. This framework will form the
basis of a tool to help ASIA evaluate the impact and effectiveness of its practices upon young people. This tool will be grounded in Bronfenbrenner’s theory and provide practitioners with a way of evaluating the effectiveness of existing and proposed missional strategies in the school thus, in Whitehead and Whitehead’s process, turning reflection into decision.
Figure 1. The theological process of Whitehead and Whitehead as applied to this thesis
Chapter Outlines

Chapter One.

Anglican School governing and affiliate bodies have articulated what they consider to be the Christian mission of ASIA. In Chapter One four key Christian mission goals are identified as being shared by these bodies. Qualitative research indicates that ASIA broadly support these four goals in their own articulation of Christian mission. In consideration of these goals it can be identified that faith development is a hoped for outcome of ASIA.

Anglican governing and affiliate bodies identify a number of actions used to achieve their Christian mission in ASIA. The research presented in Chapter One indicates that these activities are implemented to varying degrees within ASIA. The frequency of the mission actions across schools provides an indication that a general approach or strategy to Christian mission exists within the network of ASIA.

Chapter Two.

It is hypothesised that ASIA intentionally seek to use the school as a plausibility structure for the fulfilment of their Christian mission and the development of faith in young people. A plausibility structure is a social structure in which a particular worldview is promulgated and taken for granted and in which individuals are socialised. A plausibility structure supports individuals in the maintenance of their set of beliefs, views and assumptions about life. Schools by their institutional nature have the capacity to act as a plausibility structure. It is hypothesised that ASIA seeks to harness the school’s capacity to act as a plausibility structure in order that young people may develop the Christian faith. Four criteria that demonstrate the use of a plausibility structure approach are defined in Chapter Two. They are:

1. The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview.
2. The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated.
3. The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview.
4. The intention to act as a plausibility structure.

ASIA are evaluated for the use of a plausibility structure approach against the four criteria. The systematic use of methods of socialisation for the development of faith in
young people is evidence that schools intend to act as a plausibility structure. Evidence from the literature produced by ASIA and the research outlined in Chapter One leads to the conclusion that Anglican Schools do use a plausibility structure approach for their Christian mission.

**Chapter Three.**

A range of organisational factors impact on ASIA acting as an effective plausibility structure for faith development. The complexity of the Anglican School as an organisation and as an environment within which faith may be developed is outlined in Chapter Three. Systems theory is introduced as a way of dealing with this complexity systematically. This is the methodological core of this chapter. Initially the key structures for the delivery of Christian mission goals in ASIA are outlined and then structural factors that impinge on the effectiveness of a plausibility structure for faith development are identified. Other internal and external impinging factors are also explored. It is concluded that it would be quite difficult for ASIA to maintain an effective plausibility structure, in part because of contradictory core values.

**Chapter Four.**

Chapter Four focuses on the wider social context in which young people attending ASIA are immersed. The idea that young people are socialised in a wide context is outlined. Aspects of Bronfenbrenner’s theory are introduced as a way of analysing the socialising influences on young people in terms of faith development. Key elements of the different systems young people live in are examined. It is seen that the wider social context has the potential to further impinge on the effectiveness of the plausibility structure constructed by ASIA.

**Chapter Five.**

In Chapter Five the four key mission actions used by ASIA for faith development are examined in light of Bronfenbrenner’s model and with special focus given to information that demonstrates the power and direction of these as proximal processes. A framework based on Bronfenbrenner’s model for evaluating the mission actions of ASIA is outlined. This framework uses the four elements of person, process, context and time. A tool for evaluating the mission actions of ASIA based on the preceding research and discussion
is proposed. This tool provides the initial impetus to aid mission decisions in the context of ASIA.
Chapter One

The Christian mission of Anglican Schools in Australia

Attention

Anglican School Mission

Assertion

ASIA as a Plausibility Structure

Student Socialisation

Attention

Plausibility Structure Hypothesis

Decision

Model and Tool for Evaluating Future Mission
Introduction

On any given day around 150,000 students attend one of over 150 Anglican Schools in Australia (Anglican Schools Australia, 2012). While all schools share some common educational objectives, Anglican Schools also have religious or spiritual objectives as part of their reason for being (Australian Education Ministers, 2008, p. 4; G. Smith, 2012, p. 19). These spiritual objectives, when articulated by the school provide some insight into how the school defines its Christian mission (Edwards, 2014, pp. 103-105). This chapter will explore what ASIA declare their Christian mission to be through the statements the schools and their governing and affiliate bodies make. In doing so it will demonstrate that faith development is an intended outcome of ASIA’s Christian mission. In the final section of this chapter the actions ASIA take to implement their Christian mission will be detailed.

Defining Anglican Schools in Australia.

Before outlining the methodology used to uncover the Christian mission of ASIA some discussion must occur around who or what is meant by ASIA. It is also important to help clarify whose statements about mission are the concern of this investigation and how they inform the proceeding discussion about the mission of ASIA. It has already been stated that there are over 150 Anglican Schools in Australia. All of these schools identify with the Anglican Church to some degree even if only in their use of the word “Anglican”. This investigation is not concerned with evaluating the degree to which a school identifies with or enacts its Anglican or Christian heritage. Measuring this would itself require extensive research. For the purpose of this study if Anglican Schools Australia (ASA), a network of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia, lists a school as a member then it will be considered. At the time this research was conducted there were 151 schools in the data set and these are listed in Appendix One.

While a school will have chosen to affiliate with the ASA it will also usually mean one or more of the following: (a) the school is owned by a Diocese of the Anglican Church of Australia; (b) the school affiliates itself with an Anglican Diocese and its governance structures; or (c) the school has the name Anglican in its title. It is recognised that some schools may not outwardly use the word Anglican but be fully owned by a diocese or
alternatively use the name Anglican but have no formal or legal relationship with the church (Heath, 2009, p. 8; Nicholson, 2007, p. 6). By associating with the ASA the school has initiated a relationship with the Anglian Church even if it is not one of authority or control. This method of identifying schools will cover the range of relationships that schools have with the Anglican Church and enable interrogation of the variety of situations found in ASIA (G. Smith, 2012, p. 13).

Evaluating data from individual schools across Australia will provide a broad picture of the Christian mission as evidenced in schools. Yet a further aspect of mission articulation will be taken into account to enhance the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the research. Despite the complexity of relationships mentioned above, ASIA, as identified in this study, exist in relationship with the Dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia. The vision of the Anglican Church for its schools should also be heard if a complete picture is to be drawn. In recent times the church has taken a greater interest in the Christian mission of its schools and has sought to articulate what it thinks this mission should be (Heath, 2009, p. 10; G. Smith, 2012, p. 27). It has sought to influence the Christian mission of ASIA through their governing and affiliate bodies including the ASA (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008; Aspinall, 2003, p. 15; Heath, 2009; G. Smith, 2012, pp. 16, 19-20).

Evidence of this can be seen in the relatively recent proliferation of school mission statements from Diocesan bodies around Australia that contain faith elements (Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, 2005; Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008; G. Smith, 2012, pp. 15-16; South Australian Anglican Schools System, 2012). Because of the influence and control the church has with its schools, it is important that the process used in this research hears the voice of the church through its governing and affiliate bodies. By looking at two different levels of mission articulation a fuller picture of the Christian mission of ASIA will be developed.

This investigation is designed to interrogate the school within the whole of its system. It is not concerned with various governance arrangements or diocesan
boundaries. It places emphasis on ASIA as a whole, including those bodies which have control or influence over them. A key focus is on finding the goals where ASIA and their governing and affiliate bodies have consensus.

For the purpose of this investigation the mission statements of governing and affiliate bodies will be considered *en masse*. The statements made by these bodies will represent the Anglican Church’s preliminary view of the Christian mission of ASIA. This grouping does not introduce any sampling errors because the entire population is examined. Data from individual schools will be analysed as a whole and will not be grouped by diocese or any other affiliation. While much useful information may be yielded were this analysis to be undertaken, it would add another layer of complexity which would make overall analysis unwieldy. This study is pioneering research in this area and later research may consider the influence of diocesan factors on the Christian mission of ASIA.

**Methodology**

The process for identifying the Christian mission goals of ASIA involves two stages. Initially mission, vision and ethos statements made by governing and affiliate school bodies are discovered and explored. This analysis seeks to identify common goals for Christian mission in Anglican Schools as articulated by the overarching diocesan bodies. Following this, attention is paid to statements made about Christian mission by individual ASIA. This information is found by examining the websites of 151 ASIA for specific statements outlining their goals in relation to the Christian mission of the school. A list of the schools examined can be found in Appendix One.

The documents used were found in two ways. Initially each website was viewed with the intention of finding sections outlining the school’s vision, mission and ethos, as well as pages relating to its religious life. Then Google Advanced Search was used to search for keywords within the school’s website using their domain name as a limiter. These keywords were: Anglican, Christian, religion, religious, faith, spiritual, chaplain and service. These two processes yielded over 400 different pages or documents. A filtering process was employed in collecting documents. Key documents of importance to the school such as mission statements, strategic plans and prospectuses, or those presented
at the first or second layer of the website hierarchy were selected. These filters were employed to select documents that were of strategic importance to the school and which reflected their intentions for their school. Documents of lesser significance such as newsletters, year level curriculums or documents that only applied to small sections of the school were rejected. Every effort was made to find explicit statements about each school’s Christian mission.

The NVivo software package was used to code each of the documents found. NVivo is designed for the purpose of quantitative and qualitative research of written documents. Recurring words or phrases in documents can be selected and then coded with a name or category to provide data for analysis. This analysis aids in the identification of recurring themes and the frequency in which they occur. All documents from a single school were placed together in a set for the purpose of analysis.

In Stage One (see Figure 2) of the analysis a search was conducted on ASIA’s governing and affiliate body websites and documents for mission, vision and ethos documents. These documents were then explored and evaluated to find common mission goals relating to the Christian mission of the school. In Stage Two of the analysis the individual websites of ASIA were searched for mission and vision documents and statements. These documents were then evaluated for the presence of the mission goals found in Stage One and any further mission goals. This provided an indication of the frequency of common mission goals across the 151 ASIA and produced evidence to discern if the schools were in agreement with the missional intentions of the governing and affiliate bodies. A second evaluation of the ASIA websites was conducted to discover the frequency of other mission goals appearing in the websites and documents of ASIA.

It is acknowledged that the data collected from school websites may have limitations in terms of its validity. It is possible that the statements made on the web sites may not accurately reflect the actual missional intentions of schools. If the site was created without consultation with practitioners this could be the case. This limitation however is overcome by the inclusion of the statements made by governing bodies and the literature reviewed, which includes the insights of practitioners. Both of these sources support the validity of the statements found in school websites.
Figure 2. The process for identifying the Christian mission goals of ASIA
Christian Mission in Schools – A Diocesan Perspective

In Australia there are seven diocesan or provincial governing or affiliate bodies that have articulated a vision, mission or strategic plan for Anglican Schools in their area. The documents they produce outline both the principles that guide their schools as well as their schools’ purpose and function. Some of the documents also outline specific strategies that may be employed in fulfilling the Christian mission in the school.

Among the documents examined there is evidence that goals relating to the Christian mission of ASIA are shared across the various diocesan bodies. These goals may be observed despite the theological diversity of the Anglican Church in Australia (Heath, 2009, p. 9; Lawnton, 2002, pp. 177-178). While differences in language use may be discerned between documents, clear commonalities remain. In discussing the shared goals it should be noted that while the documents considered contain general statements about the mission of Anglican Schools, the focus of this work is to discover how the mission of Christianity is to be fulfilled within the local operation of the school. Therefore it is the aspects of the school relating specifically to its Christian mission that are being evaluated rather than those that may appear in any school vision statement, such as “excellence in education”.

The following nine documents produced by seven organisations across Australia were examined:

- Vision Statement for Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Brisbane – Anglican Diocese of Brisbane (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009)
- Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012 – Anglican Schools Commission – Anglican Diocese of Perth (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008)
- Ethos Statement for Anglican Schools in the Province of Queensland – Province of Queensland (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009)
- Anglican Schools Ethos Statement – Western Australian Anglican Schools Association (Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008)
In analysing these documents four common goals were identified.

The Christian mission of an Anglican School is, that students and others participating in the life of the school, may

1. explore and understand the Christian faith;
2. experience a community shaped by the Christian faith;
3. participate in Christian service; and
4. develop and grow in the Christian faith.

**Exploring and understanding the Christian faith.**

Each of the vision or mission statements expresses an expectation that Anglican Schools will help students and those in their community to explore and understand the Christian faith. Evaluating the statements found indicates that this objective is primarily concerned with helping students to gain knowledge of what Christianity is about. Sometimes this is stated explicitly and other times it is implicit in the goal. For instance if the goal is to “explore the Christian faith” or that “Christian beliefs are encouraged”, a cognitive understanding would be a necessary part of achieving this goal. In some instances the goal is expressed as an intended outcome for students and in others as an action the school performs. It is recognised that the terms ‘explore’ and ‘understand’
also contain elements beyond the cognitive such as experiences that evoke awe, mystery and wonder.

The Vision Statement for Anglican Schools in the Diocese of states that one of the tasks of their schools is “the provision of opportunities for exploration of the Christian faith Brisbane” (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009). Similar statements are made by the Schools Commission in Western Australia, who wish “to extend opportunities for students to explore a Christian religious experience”, and “to teach the faith and nurture the young” (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008). This second phrase is extended by the Western Australian Anglican Schools Association to affirm that “Anglican schools provide young people with opportunities to develop an understanding of the beliefs and practices of the Anglican Church” (Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). In the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, “a coordinated and integrated approach to education so that Christian spirituality, values and belief are encouraged throughout life” is desired (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998). This is one of the statements where both understanding and exploring are implied. The goal of lifelong encouragement cannot be achieved without an intellectual understanding. The Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation seeks “an imaginative and challenging worldview, shaped by the Bible” (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). This is amplified by a mission to “communicate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ to students, staff, parents and the wider community” (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). Finally, the South Australian Anglican Schools System (SASS) state their schools “provide opportunities for young people to understand the beliefs and liturgy of the Anglican Church of Australia” (South Australian Anglican Schools System, 2012).

**Experiencing a Christian community.**

The second mission goal identified in the documents is that those who associate with Anglican Schools may have an experience of a community shaped by the Christian faith. While the previous goal focused on knowledge and understanding, this goal is centred on what students may experience within the school. This is expressed in a variety of ways but primarily through the operation of particular Christian values and a particular
ethos within the school. There is a sense that this goal is about the school creating and or being a different kind of community or environment than that which may be experienced elsewhere. The function of this goal is not about providing an intellectual experience of Christianity to which students might give assent, but about creating a complete social experience that is felt through participation in the school.

The Western Australian Anglican Schools Association (WAASA) says that, “Anglican schools provide the whole school community of young people, staff and parents with an environment in which all members may grow in faith” (Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). The Anglican Schools Commission (ASCQ) in Brisbane speaks of an “experience of Christian community” (2009) while the Anglican Schools Commission Western Australian (ASCWA) refers to their schools as “distinctly Christian communities” and “vibrant faith communities” (2008). The ASCWA also encourages “opportunities for students to explore a Christian religious experience” (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008). Slightly different language is used in both the Sydney, and the Canberra and Goulburn Dioceses but each relates to creating a Christian atmosphere or ethos within the school (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998; Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 2010). The Canberra and Goulburn statement says, “the total School community will be encouraged to demonstrate Christian values in their own lives” (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998). The Sydney Anglican Schools Commission (SASC) statement refers to, “transforming society through Bible-based values” (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). While this last statement refers more explicitly to the wider society and not just the school community if the document is read more widely it can be seen that the SASC strongly desires to create a “Christ infused environment” in all they do (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). While the phrase, Christian community, is not used, the implied hope for students is that they will experience a place where they can witness people living out their life in Christ.

**Christian service.**

Within each of the documents there is a stated desire that students engage in Christian service. This goal is not simply about the action of service but also the
development of a Christian attitude and response to others in the world. Of all the objectives this one is most easily identified across the various statements.

The ASCQ wants schools to enable “students to develop skills and values to live in peace and harmony, seeking justice for all with a priority for the poor, powerless and persecuted and marginalised” (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009). It also lists service as one of its three main values. The ASCWA desires its schools to be places of excellence in service (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008). WAASA wants students “to engage in Christian ministry and service to others, especially those in need” (Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). The Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn desires its schools to “demonstrate Christian compassion in caring for others” (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998). The SASC does not use the words of service but speaks of “transforming society through Bible-based values” (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). This implies action to care and serve others and the world.

**Developing in the Christian faith.**

The final mission goal of Anglican Schools identified in the vision documents is for those connected with the schools, and particularly students, to have an opportunity to respond to the Christian message and community and to develop or grow in their faith. This goal expresses a desire for students to become Christians in response to their total experience of school life. While the phrase “develop the Christian faith” clearly implies becoming Christian a more nuanced understanding of faith development will be discussed later.

Both of the statements emanating from Sydney and Brisbane affirm the promotion and proclamation of the Gospel (Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 2010; Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009). In Brisbane the phrase “promoting faith in Jesus Christ among students, staff and families” is used (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009). It is reasonable to conclude from this statement that if something is promoted the hoped for outcome is its acceptance and adoption. The Sydney document speaks of “respectfully proclaiming the Gospel” and “pastoring students” by “giving students an opportunity to develop their Christian faith” (Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 2010). The
ASCWA uses similar words, speaking about “faith development” as one of their core activities (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008). The Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn says that it wants to “provide an opportunity for children and their families to relate to the Christian faith” and “that Christian spirituality, values and belief are encouraged throughout life” (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998). Although this statement does not overtly state the desire for students to become Christians it is strongly implied. To relate to something means to identify and connect with it. This occurs most positively when people become Christians. The WAASA and the SASC express a desire for young people to respond to the Christian faith most explicitly. Both statements speak about wanting young people “to consider a personal response to the Christian faith” (Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011; Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). Again it would be assumed that the hoped for personal response would be positive even if it may not be expected. In summary, all of the Diocesan documents express a desire for students to understand and experience the Christian faith and be provided with an opportunity to respond to it, ultimately by becoming Christians.

**The Christian Mission of Anglican Schools – A School Perspective**

The Christian mission of ASIA as a group is uncovered through examination of the specific statements outlining their goals in relation to the Christian mission of the school. This investigation seeks to discern if schools share the same missional goals of Anglican School governing and affiliate bodies. The websites of all 151 ASIA were explored looking for specific statements outlining their goals in relation to the Christian mission of the school. The first step identified when the four goals found in the governing and affiliate documents were used in statements made in the individual school documents.

The four goals identified in the governing and affiliate documents are

1. explore and understand the Christian faith;
2. experience a community shaped by the Christian faith;
3. participate in Christian service; and
4. develop and grow in the Christian faith.
Schools expressed their desire for students to explore and understand the Christian faith in a variety of ways. When coding for this goal phrases that expressly spoke about students gaining knowledge of such things as Christianity, the Bible, the Gospel, and Anglicanism were sought. Schools that stated that they had Religious or Christian Education, or intended to make students spiritually aware were not coded unless they had statements outlining their specific intent to teach the Christian faith in some way. Any of these less specifically Christian phrases may refer to the teaching of simple values or other religions. It is not assumed that their intention is to teach the Christian faith even if that might seem a reasonable conclusion to make. Seventy percent of Anglican Schools have statements that fit within the category of exploring or understanding the Christian faith.

When coding for experiencing a community shaped by the Christian faith a range of different statements were highlighted. These included phrases such as “Christian community”, “Christianity...expressed as an important and normal part of college life”, “a place where the Gospel is lived”, “within a Christian setting”, “values, centred on the Christian faith are encouraged in all facets of school life”, “experience of Christian care”, “Christian ethos...woven into the fabric of everyday school life”, “a Christian context” and “Christian environment”. While there is great variation between these statements they all seek to name the different experience of being in a Christian school. There were some instances in which words such as “Christian ethos” where not coded in this section. This depended on the context in which they were set. If Christian ethos was used in a way that did not indicate how it was purposefully and actively shaping the school community it was not highlighted. Seventy five percent of Anglican Schools in Australia made some statement about their desire to provide students with an experience of Christian community.

The third goal was participating in Christian service. The coding for this was relatively simple and focused on looking for pages and phrases speaking of students serving the world or wider community. This theme appeared to be the least likely to be connected specifically with a Christian praxis in the schools’ websites. It is not unusual for a school’s statements about service to have no statements connecting it to the Christian faith. The
context within which the statement was made, what page it was found on and the surrounding text determined if it was coded for Christian service. If it was made in a page discussing Christian aspects of the school or an explicit mention of the Christian faith was made it was highlighted. If service was mentioned with no obvious link to the Christian faith it was not highlighted. Examples of coded phrases include “service to others...reflects the importance of living out God’s word in our daily life”, “deepening the culture of service within the school as a Christian community by seeking increased opportunities to assist those within and beyond the school” and “as an Anglican school we demonstrate our love for God by a life of service to others”. Sixty five percent of schools made statements about encouraging their students to engage in community service arising from the Christian faith.

The final goal that the documents were coded for was that students might develop and grow in the Christian faith. This was found to be a missional goal of 62% of Anglican Schools surveyed in this project. It was insufficient for the purposes of coding for a school to simply speak of spiritual growth or, that students, might develop their own spirituality. Only schools that used specific phrases linking this development or growth with the Christian faith were highlighted. Coded phrases included words such as “the hope of an active Christian faith”, “grow into...maturity in Christ”, “promote an understanding of the Christian faith...so that students can make a personal judgement in matters of faith”, “to know Jesus as their personal saviour” and “developing a relationship with God”. Phrases that also implied faith through action such as “vocation to serve God” were also coded. It is assumed that if students wish to act from faith they must have faith.

Other themes were identified in the coding of the school documents. Some of these are similar to those expressed in the Diocesan documents. Many schools expressed a desire for the school to teach, express or develop Christian values in students (43%). Phrases speaking about the development of Christian values could have been connected with the goal to explore and understand the Christian faith. It was reasoned, however, that Christian values could be taught without needing any knowledge of the Christian faith. For example faithfulness is a Christian value but could be taught without
Christianity. It was discovered that 70% of schools who coded for Christian values also coded for explore and understand the Christian faith.

The desire for connection with the local or diocesan church was also identified in 19% of schools and 44% of schools identified the importance of religious tolerance as a value. Finally, 48% of schools were identified as desiring students to grow or become spiritually aware. This particular category was developed for those schools that did not clearly specify that it was a Christian spirituality they were hoping would emerge in young people. Of those that coded for spirituality, 63% also coded for the similar category of developing or growing in the Christian faith.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage of ASIA sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore and understand the Christian faith;</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a community shaped by the Christian faith</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in Christian service,</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and grow in the Christian faith.</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with the local or diocesan church</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of religious tolerance</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become spiritually aware</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evaluating the Christian Mission Goals of Anglican Schools in Australia

Amongst other things this data shows that the missional intentions of the schools broadly align with those of the governing and affiliate bodies. There is general agreement between ASIA and their governing bodies about the four core goals identified as the key elements of the Christian mission of ASIA. In reviewing the statements it can be seen that between 65% and 75% of schools acknowledge any one of the goals identified in the Diocesan and affiliate documents. While each statement has support amongst the majority of schools no statement is accepted by all schools.

Another way of looking at the data would be to consider how many schools code for multiple goals. Almost one third (32%) of the schools code for all four of the identified
statements. A similar proportion (32%) code for three of the identified goals. Twenty percent of the Anglican Schools code for only two of the goals. Therefore approximately 84% of Anglican Schools code for two or more of the identified goals. Nine percent code for a single goal and only 7% of the schools do not present any evidence of goals in line with the four identified in the Diocesan documents.

A high level of goal alignment is defined here as sharing three or more of the four goals identified. Based on this it can be seen that a majority of ASIA (64%) have a high level of alignment with the affiliate and governing bodies and with each other in terms of their Christian mission.

In summary the four goals identified in the documents of diocesan and affiliate bodies were also identified as key goals in individual schools across Australia. As foreshadowed earlier, unanimous agreement was not found but enough commonality was discovered to say that the four goals are an accurate representation of how both the governing and affiliate bodies, and individual schools perceive key features of the Christian mission of Anglican Schools in Australia.

In describing an ecology that effectively fosters faith development Matthaei (2004, pp. 61-65) identifies relationships, structures and practices as fundamental elements. Each of these elements is reflected in the first three mission goals identified as belonging to ASIA. Relationships are a central part of the experience of Christian community. They help to form and nurture Christian identity (Matthaei, 2004, p. 61). This element aligns with the goal of experiencing a community shaped by the Christian faith.

Structures involve the formal elements that systematise the way instruction and practice occurs in a Christian community. This is reflected in the goal of exploring and understanding the Christian faith. School structures include elements such as chapel and religious education. Practices refer to the actions carried out in living a Christian life. While practices may include prayer and worship, in a school this element most strongly connects with the goal of participating in Christian service (Matthaei, 2004, pp. 61-65).
One significant point must be made when considering the four identified goals for Christian mission in ASIA. When considering the four main goals it seems that three of them,

1. explore and understand the Christian faith;
2. experience a community shaped by the Christian faith; and
3. participate in Christian service;

while being valuable in and of themselves also act as processes for the achievement of the fourth goal; namely develop and grow in the Christian faith.

The first three goals contain the elements of relationships, structures and practices that contribute to the achievement of the fourth goal (Matthaei, 2004). The first by helping young people understand Christianity. The second by giving them an experience of Christian community. The third, by engaging them in practices central to the Christian faith. The fourth goal is then an outcome of the processes. Accordingly it does not name an action or experience. Rather it reflects the hope that once students know about, experience and participate in the Christian faith, the focus of the other three goals, they will become a Christian and grow as such. Other writers such a Westerhoff identify similar processes for faith development in their work (1994, pp. 65-69).

In summary it can be said that faith development is a hoped for outcome for the majority of ASIA for three reasons:

1. the Diocesan and governing bodies identify it as a core mission goal;
2. over 60% of individual schools state explicitly that it is an intended outcome; and
3. the majority of those schools that do not state it overtly carry out activities or processes which contribute to the development of Christian faith.

**Christian Mission Actions of Anglican Schools in Australia**

Having considered the way ASIA conceive their mission and finding that there is a degree of consensus surrounding its content and focus, it is now necessary to explore how this mission is implemented. A two-step process for identifying the way Anglican
schools implement their Christian mission in the school is employed. Diocesan or affiliate statements are examined as well as individual school statements.

Initially consideration is given to what the governing and affiliate organisation documents outline as actions contributing to their Christian mission. This focuses on concrete activities or programs that are conducted in the school. Some vision statements list actions that can only be expressed in the character of the individuals within the school community. For instance, to model the Christian life, would be one such statement (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009). Statements such as this will not be individually categorised as they are not easily definable as actions and are mostly unmeasurable. These kinds of actions may be grouped together under the heading of ethos or culture. Exploring the ethos and culture of a school is a complex task (Beare, Caldwell, & Millikan, 1989). The ethos of an entity may consist of many different elements and is too complex therefore to be considered in this investigation. Other elements are also to be omitted if they are likely to be integrated with other activities in the school.

The following concrete actions, activities or people can be found in the vision and ethos statements of governing and affiliate bodies of Anglican Schools:

1. Chaplaincy
2. Worship
3. Regular prayer and/or devotions
4. Sacramental ministry
5. Voluntary Christian groups
6. Links with the local church
7. Family faith formation and/or outreach
8. Religious Education/Christian Education
9. Christian school staff
10. Opportunities for Service Culture

Subsequently an analysis of the mission actions of individual schools is considered. As in the previous chapter this was done by examining the websites of all 151 Anglican Schools in Australia looking for specific statements outlining activities that relate to the
Christian mission of the school. A similar data gathering process was employed early in this chapter to discover these statements. Each website was viewed with the intention of finding sections discussing the activities aligned with the school’s Christian mission. Google Advanced Search was used to search for keywords within each school’s website domain name. These keywords were: Anglican, Christian, religion, religious, faith, spiritual, chaplain, service, chapel, church and pastoral. These two processes yielded over 800 different pages or documents. For this examination the requirement to only use pages high in the hierarchy of a school’s website or documents of some significance such as mission statements and prospectus documents was dropped. The analysis of school websites for mission goals required high order statements of intention. In this section evidence of the activities for carrying out the school’s Christian mission is sought and these could be found in many places.

The NVivo software package was used to code each of the returned documents. All documents from an individual school were placed in their own set for the purpose of analysis. This analysis uncovers the concrete actions schools perform in seeking to fulfil their Christian mission. These actions were identified on the first read through of the documents. A second evaluation was necessary so that any new actions discovered during the first viewing could be searched for in earlier documents. A third reading was performed in those instances where schools did not return a coded response for a particular topic. A fine filter was employed to ensure evidence of each school’s Christian mission actions was not missed.

It is acknowledged that the data about school mission actions, collected from school web sites, may not accurately reflect the practice of schools. This could be the case if the sites had been generated without reference to school practitioners. This issue of validity however is addressed by the inclusion of statements from governing bodies and the reviewed literature which includes the insights of practitioners. Both of these sources support the validity of the mission actions found in school websites even if it not confirming their frequency across ASIA. Further research surveying schools and practitioners would enable secondary confirmation of the collected data and enable the validity of the frequency of mission actions to be confirmed.
A wide range of concrete actions was identified in the school documents and the frequency in which the different activities appear can be observed. Table 2 below itemises the Christian mission actions discovered in Anglican School websites with the percentage of school sites they appear in. It is possible that these percentages are lower than the reality as some schools may carry out these activities but not report them on their websites. They are very similar to the actions outlined in the documents on the governing and affiliate bodies. They have been placed in order of the percentage of schools in for which they were found.

Table 2
The Percentage of ASIA Web Sites Claiming Specific Christian Mission Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christian Mission Actions</th>
<th>Percentage of ASIA sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel / Worship</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Education / Christian Education</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplain</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Opportunities</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Care - Chaplain</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Christian Groups</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Church Connection</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrimages / Mission Trips / Service Trips</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramental Ministry</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Outreach</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian staff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Congregation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff formation</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth minister</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This data has limitations. It can give an indication of the type of activities conducted by schools in implementing their Christian mission, however, it cannot give insight into how these activities are conducted nor their frequency of occurrence within the school. For example; that a certain number of schools hold regular worship services for students may be identified yet their frequency of occurrence remains unknown, as does the details such as length of time or style of service. Similarly; that a school employs a chaplain can be identified, but not what that person does, how many students they are responsible for or how many hours they are employed. There may also be significant differences in the way religious or Christian education is conducted amongst schools (Anglican Schools Commission, 2011).

This data is of value because it provides a broad picture of the practices employed to implement the Christian mission of Anglican Schools. While there may be a great many differences in how these activities are conducted there are also many similarities. Activities such as chaplaincy, worship and religious education are often conceived of and carried out in somewhat similar ways because of shared history and continuing interaction among ASIA (Cole, 2004, pp. 3-5).

The data collected provides an indication of those activities or actions carried out by the school which are considered of primary importance in Christian mission. This provides a snapshot of the Christian mission of ASIA. Of primary significance are chapel/worship, religious education, chaplaincy, and service opportunities. Each of these activities are supported by at least 75% of all schools. Pastoral care is also present in most schools (55%) but appears primarily as a function of the chaplain. Voluntary Christian groups, local church connections, mission trips and sacramental ministry follow being found in 18-25% of schools. Finally there are a range of activities that are named by less than 10% of schools. These include outreach to parents, spiritual retreats for students, the hiring of Christian staff, the creation of Christian culture in the classroom, a Christian congregation established in the school, Christian formation for staff and the employment of a youth minister. These findings may be significant in that they may indicate a specific strategy or approach employed by ASIA even if it is not a conscious one. This will be explored further in the next chapter.
Conclusion

In this chapter the goals relating to the Christian mission of ASIA have been identified along with the activities used to implement them. A high degree of consensus exists among the schools in regard to four key goals. It is also evident that certain activities are shared by ASIA as part of the implementation of their Christian mission. It can also be seen that faith development is a desired outcome from the Christian mission of ASIA. This data provides evidence that there is enough consensus between ASIA to investigate them as a group for the purpose of the next chapter.
Chapter One Summary

ASIA have a shared vision of their Christian mission and common ways of implementing it. ASIA hope young people will become Christians.

1. ASIA governing and affiliate bodies have articulated what they consider to be the Christian mission of ASIA. This is summarized in four statements. That students and others participating in the life of the school, may

   a. explore and understand the Christian faith;
   b. experience a community shaped by the Christian faith;
   c. participate in Christian service; and
   d. develop and grow in the Christian faith.

2. Individually ASIA broadly support these four identified goals in their own articulation of Christian mission.

3. Faith development is a desired outcome for ASIA. Anglican governing and affiliate bodies identify a range of implementation activities for their Christian mission.

4. Individual ASIA implement these activities to varying degrees.

5. Some activities are more frequently implemented than others.

6. The frequency of implementation of activities across schools provides an indication of a general approach or strategy to Christian mission across ASIA.
Chapter Two

Plausibility Structures as a Mission Strategy

Model and Tool for Evaluating Future Mission
Introduction

The Christian mission goals of primary importance to ASIA were identified in the previous chapter along with the key actions schools use to attain them. Having identified these goals and actions this chapter explores the hypothesis that ASIA intentionally seek to use the school as a plausibility structure for the fulfilment of their Christian mission and the development of faith in young people. The defining features of this plausibility structure approach are developed in this chapter and the evidence that ASIA employs it as a principal strategy is presented. In evaluating this hypothesis the evidence found in the previous chapter about the goals and actions schools use to implement their Christian mission will be employed, alongside academic and other sources.

Despite the theological, historical, governmental and socio-economic differences between them, ASIA share similar mission goals and mission actions. The degree of consensus found in the previous chapter leads to the hypothesis that there is an underlying strategy shared by the schools based on common beliefs and ideas about how faith is developed in young people within the school setting (Cole, 2004, p. 3; 2006, p. 351). This strategy is named here as a plausibility structure approach. This approach is largely unarticulated in a coherent form by ASIA but can be discerned within the preceding analysis and literature (Aspinall, 2003; Cole, 2004, 2006; Farran, 2002). Evidence can be found not only in the use of particular mission actions but in the language used by the schools and their governing and affiliate bodies in describing mission.

In speaking about the faith aspects of their schools, ASIA use language and terms that indicate a strategy focusing on social methods of faith development. For example there is a strong emphasis on the school being a faith community (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 2-3; Cole, 2004, p. 2; 2006, p. 351; Farran, 2002, pp. 3-4). There is also reference throughout the academic literature on religious schools that outlines strategies of enculturation and socialisation which in this work will be shown to be elements of a plausibility structure approach (Anthony, 2003; Anthony, Hermans, & Sterkens, 2007; Regnerus, 2000; Regnerus et al., 2004).
The role that schools play in intentionally socialising students for life in the wider world is something educators are well aware of (Australian Education Ministers, 2008, pp. 4-5; Berns, 2013, pp. 186-187; Widdowson, Dixon, Peterson, Rubie-Davies, & Irving, 2014, pp. 8-9). This role however can be relegated by teachers, school leaders and society to the academic and vocational aspects of the school (Clarke, 2012, pp. 176, 187; Osguthorpe & Sanger, 2013, p. 193; Widdowson et al., 2014, pp. 11-12). A plausibility structure approach is described here as that strategy whereby the school acting as a social institution, employs socialisation as a primary tool for faith development of young people.

The Plausibility Structure

Sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann coined the term, plausibility structure, in “The Social Construction of Reality” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 354). The concept was further developed by Berger in “The Sacred Canopy” as part of his theory of secularisation (Berger, 1969). While many of Berger’s social predictions relating to secularisation have not occurred and he revised much of his theory, the concept of the plausibility structure is still useful when describing the way religious groups seek to pass on their beliefs and way of life to members (Guest, 2009, pp. 653-658; Uecker, 2009, p. 354; Warner, 1993). The concept of the plausibility structure is broadly accepted and referred to in current academic literature even if the limitations of its theoretical underpinnings are recognised (Ahdar, 2013; Elias, Fullerton, & Simpson, 2015; Qvortrup Fibiger, 2009; Ringer, 2013; Uecker, 2009; Vermeer & Janssen, 2011). The function of a plausibility structure emerges from Berger and Luckmann’s conception of the nature of society and how meaning is developed and shared among people (Haralambos et al., 1996, p. 591).

Berger and Luckmann’s thinking began within the sociology of knowledge. This field of study is concerned with “the meanings and definitions of reality held by members of society” (Haralambos et al., 1996, p. 591). In their view, reality is socially constructed. This means that the way individuals understand the world is created from the beliefs, values and ideas of those around them. As people interact with others in their society they come to share particular ways of seeing and understanding the reality they live in.
This shared worldview is not only important for individuals but for societies as well (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 4).

Every society has a body of knowledge which has been created by its members. Part of its function is to keep society stable and unified. To some degree a society or group’s future is dependent on their shared beliefs progressing into the future. (Haralambos et al., 1996; Seidman, 2013, p. 81). This worldview is passed on from one generation to the next through the process of socialisation. This process sees new generations learning how to live by the rules and institutions of the group (Berger, 1969). This happens as, “the new generation is initiated into the meanings of the culture, learns to participate in its established tasks and to accept the roles as well as the identities that make up its social structure” (Berger, 1969, p. 15).

In order for socialisation to occur interaction must take place with significant others. These may be parents, teachers and peers (Berns, 2013, p. 41). Berger and Luckmann asserted that human beings are social creatures and ideas about the world, values, norms and behaviours are not developed in isolation but in and through relationships with other people (Haralambos et al., 1996, p. 591). These relationships are critical in helping to maintain the plausibility of the shared meanings and understandings that have been constructed by members of a society (Berger, 1969; Furseth & Repstad, 2006). The hope is that as new generations are socialised into a “taken for granted social order, the social world is experienced as natural” however, “the social world is always precarious and in danger of breaking down from generation to generation because of differing experiences and hopes” (Seidman, 2013, p. 83). The maintenance of a particular worldview passed on from generation to generation is of particular interest to religious groups that hold specific beliefs and values as important.

Berger proposed that any worldview, including those of religion and science, is dependent on the existence of “social structures within which[...]reality is taken for granted and within which successive generations of individuals are socialised in such a way that this world will be real to them” (Berger, 1969, p. 47). These plausibility structures support individuals in the maintenance of their set of beliefs, views and assumptions about life (Roof, 1976, pp. 197,206; Snow & Machalek, 1982, p. 23). Bouma
describes this dynamic relationship as “social arrangements which serve to inculcate, celebrate, perpetuate and apply a meaning system” (Francis, 2008, p. 109). It should not be assumed however that the structures only support and sustain purely cognitive reactions to the world. They support and sustain the deeper passions and desires of society as well. Plausibility structures direct and engage people in a holistic way shaping the whole of their life including what they should think and feel (J. K. A. Smith, 2009).

While the term worldview was originally used to describe only cognitive aspects of the person it is now widely used to refer to a broader human orientation including values and feelings (D’Orsa, 2014, p. 72; Hiebert, 2008; J. K. A. Smith, 2009). The terms plausibility structure, worldview and social imaginary are comparable in that they all try to capture the way in which humans perceive and understand their world and act within it (Haney, 2014, p. 13; J. K. A. Smith, 2009, pp. 3, 87).

In some places a dominant worldview may be supported by social institutions across the whole of society. Social institutions are “complex social forms that reproduce themselves such as governments, the family, human languages, universities, hospitals, business corporations, and legal systems” (Miller, 2012). These institutions act as plausibility structures for a particular worldview. For a long time in the West, society and its institutions supported the Christian worldview (Newbigin, 1989). Government, family, church and school all acted as plausibility structures, making Christianity’s version of reality the assumed foundation (Berger, 1969). These structures supported the worldview so strongly that it was almost impossible to disbelieve core elements of the Christian worldview such as the existence of a God. Significant shifts in the West however mean that this is no longer the case (Newbigin, 1989; Taylor, 2007, pp. 25-26).

In the contemporary environment belief in God is one choice among many. In terms of religious belief we now live in society that “is secular, insofar as religious belief or belief in God is understood to be one option among others and this is contestable (and contested)” (J. K. A. Smith, 2014, p. 164). Western society has moved from a worldview “where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace” (Taylor, 2007, p. 3).
There are a wide range of worldviews in contemporary Australian society with various values and beliefs supported by many different social institutions. Like most modern western nations with secular systems of government any individual may be required to live and work across competing plausibility structures (Berger, 1969; Elias et al., 2015, p. 131). Gorski describes that “most plausibility structures are partial and tenuous, they only organise part of the individuals world” (Gorski, 2012).

Consequently there are not only a multitude of worldviews but also a multitude of plausibility structures that are necessary to make those views credible. The multitude of offerings means “that the social conditions supporting any particular belief system are necessarily weaker” (Hunter, 2010, pp. 202-203).

People must deal with the multiple worldviews that surround them as they seek to make their own choices about belief and values. These choices must be made repeatedly because the individual’s worldview is constantly being challenged (Hunter, 2010, p. 203). One effect of this change is that religious belief has become more of a private choice than a public one. Religion has moved more from the public sphere to the private (Arthur, 2009, p. 230; Taylor, 2007, p. 1).

Despite the individualistic nature of belief in the modern world “individual religiosity is still passed on through social interaction” (Furseth & Repstad, 2006, p. 124). People do not create a worldview in isolation. While religion may have shifted from being shared overtly in the social sphere to something that is held more privately, “private religiosity and religious individualism are constructed on the basis of social experiences” (Furseth & Repstad, 2006, p. 124). People may make individual choices about religion but they still rely on social experience to make that choice. Therefore, plausibility structures, even if they are not coterminous with society at large, are important in helping shape people’s beliefs and in helping to maintain them. Being part of a group while not being absolutely necessary for holding certain beliefs helps significantly (Petersen & Donnenwerth, 1998, pp. 368-369). Further all religious traditions require some form of community for their continuing plausibility (Furseth & Repstad, 2006).
Societies are constructed and shaped by individuals who are in turn shaped by them. This is also true of plausibility structures. A plausibility structure is created by all members of the group including those whom it is primarily meant to impact; the young and the new (Berger, 1969). The process of socialisation that occurs within a plausibility structure occurs through the interacting beliefs, passions and actions of its members (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 11). While all members of any plausibility structure, including young people, are agents who make their own choices, some members have a greater degree of power in influencing the choices and actions of others (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 35). However this also means that the nature of the beliefs promulgated by a plausibility structure may be changed by its membership.

**Intentional harnessing of plausibility structures**

In this chapter the key hypothesis being investigated is that ASIA organise themselves intentionally as plausibility structures for the fulfilment of their Christian mission. In order to investigate this hypothesis it will be necessary to develop criteria for the identification of the intentional use of a plausibility structure.

Plausibility structures are any social institution where the socialisation of a particular worldview occurs. In effect every social institution acts as a plausibility structure because all social institutions involve people with particular worldviews which are expressed through the interactions that occur within them therefore socialising members in a particular way, even if unintentionally (Berns, 2013, pp. 11-12; Newbigin, 1986, p. 14; Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 21). It might be expected however that some plausibility structures have a more intentional and disciplined approach to expressing a particular worldview.

Berger believed that pluralism in the modern world led traditional plausibility structures to be dissolved (Newbigin, 1986, p. 14). In other words, in a society where multiple worldviews are held as being acceptable versions of the truth, no social institution can truly make one worldview plausible. Newbigen (1986, p. 11), insightfully argued that in this case society and its institutions act as plausibility structures for pluralism. This further confirms the idea that all social institutions act as plausibility structures, even if the plausibility structure is not overt or designed.
Families, schools, governments and churches all act as plausibility structures even if they do not intend to. However, some units of society seem to be more aware of and intentional about their capacity to function as plausibility structure than others (Uecker, 2008, p. 565; 2009, p. 354). They seek to express their worldview more overtly, and intentionally socialise their members. This is true of churches that see their role as providing a specific and often alternative worldview to the one held by the wider society (Elias et al., 2015, p. 131). Schools, particularly private religious ones, also appear to be quite intentional about the values and worldview they wish promote amongst their students (Uecker, 2008, 2009). This is evidenced in their unconcealed statements about ethos or values in webpages (Penrith Anglican College, 2016).

Social institutions may seek to use plausibility structures purposefully and intentionally for the development of a particular worldview amongst their members (Uecker, 2009, p. 354). In his original theory Berger acknowledged that as society became more secular and pluralistic, religious groups might use their institutions as overt plausibility structures (Berger, 1969). Some groups, whose values differ significantly from that of the wider society may seek to use strong methods of socialisation as a strategy for getting members to conform to their worldview. This may occur either because they see that their worldview is under threat or that it will not be promoted by any other social institution (Berger, 1969).

The idea that schools may organise themselves as plausibility structures for faith development has been identified by various academics. In exploring religiosity in schools Uecker states that,

> An overt focus on religious and spiritual development among members of the community may foster an environment that is conducive to high levels of religiosity; such an environment may serve as a plausibility structure that upholds religion’s sacred canopy and gives credence to an adolescent’s faith (Uecker, 2008, p. 567).

He cites research pointing towards the way immersion in a religious culture can powerfully influence adolescents. Further, Uecker discusses the way faith based schools act as plausibility structures that assist in reinforcing particular views and that they “make a religious life more reasonable to adolescents” (Uecker, 2009, p. 354). A key
point that Uecker makes is that “a school may only serve as a religious plausibility structure if it actually seeks to be one” (Uecker, 2009, p. 354).

Christian educationalists refer to the idea of socialisation or enculturation within a community when talking about the functioning of Christian education (Anthony, 2003; Anthony et al., 2007; Regnerus, 2000; Regnerus et al., 2004; Westerhoff, 1994). They outline the idea that the school acts as a plausibility structure for the Christian worldview. Westerhoff says “intentional religious socialisation or enculturation, [is] defined as a process consisting of lifelong, intentional and unintentional, formal and informal mechanism through which person and communities sustain and transmit their faith (worldview and value system) and lifestyles” (Westerhoff, 1994, p. 61).

**Criteria for Identifying a Plausibility Structure Approach to Mission in ASIA**

Key features of a plausibility structure approach must first be articulated in order to determine whether ASIA use such an approach to mission. Following the analysis of the literature above, a working definition for a plausibility structure approach is: a social institution seeking to use itself to make a particular worldview real and plausible in an intentional and strategic way.

Following this definition there are four conditions that may be applied in order to confirm that a plausibility structure approach is being implemented:

1. the ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview;
2. the ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated;
3. the intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview; and
4. the intention to act as a plausibility structure.

The interaction between each of the four conditions is described in Figure 3.
It is important to note when considering the following criteria and their evaluation that strength of intentionality is not measured. Schools may not have consciously thought through and named specific religious intentions as goals. It is possible they have adopted the goals of governing bodies. Nonetheless their statements and actions betray their strategy even if the strategy is not considered of primary importance.

**Criteria 1: The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview.**

While all social institutions have the capacity to function as plausibility structures, not all may have the freedom or capacity to fulfil this role for a single worldview. This criteria is important because the presence of competing worldviews within the social institution will undermine its capacity to maintain plausibility. For a school, control over membership may be the most significant issue preventing them from fulfilling this criteria (Collier, 2014, pp. 2, 9; Evans & Gaze, 2010, pp. 405-406; Evans & Ujvari, 2009). An inability to control membership, particularly of those in roles of leadership may have the effect of undermining the possibility of a single worldview being expressed in the school (Aspinall, 2003, p. 16; Evans & Gaze, 2010, p. 416). Evidence for the fulfilment of...
this criteria will primarily focus on the ability of a school to control membership of the institution. This would include both staff and students.

Criteria 2: The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated.

Even if a social institution has the capacity to act as plausibility structure for a single worldview it must also be able to determine what the worldview presented is. Even if a school may control membership they may not always be permitted to present a particular self-determined worldview because of legislative restrictions or social expectations. State schools for example would find themselves restricted by social expectations and to some degree legislation regarding the worldview they may choose to present (Evans & Gaze, 2010; Evans & Ujvari, 2009). Evidence for the fulfilment of this criteria will focus on the freedom or lack thereof that the institution has to present a worldview it chooses.

Criteria 3: The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview.

There are two aspects to this criteria. The first is that the school must desire its students to adopt a specific worldview and intend to act in a way that will make this happen. The second is the articulation of a worldview that has features different to those of the wider society. This condition is necessary in pluralistic societies such as Australia where there are a wide range of accepted and competing worldviews. If the school does not articulate a distinctive worldview then by default it will reflect the pluralistic plausibility structure of western society (Newbigin, 1986, pp. 13-14; 1989, pp. 9-11). When a clear set of beliefs is articulated however it further demonstrates a desire for these to be adopted by students. Evidence for the fulfilment of this condition will be found in statements around the school’s values and Christian mission statements.

Criteria 4: The intention to act as a plausibility structure.

Schools may have the ability to act as a plausibility structure for a particular worldview and they may also desire to pass on that worldview but it is critical that they have a strategic aim to do so, whether this is articulated clearly and overtly or more subtly through the actions they take in shaping the culture of the school (Uecker, 2009, p. 354). The school must strategically and intentionally use their ability to act as a plausibility structure to pass on their selected worldview.
Evidence of the intention to act as a plausibility structure is much more complex than the evidence needed of the previous three criteria. This fourth criteria is also the most critical to the hypothesis as it relates to the manner in which schools seek to implement their mission. It has been argued that ASIA wish to pass on the Christian worldview, so it now remains to prove that this strategy is employed.

**Evidence of the intention to act as a plausibility structure.**

An important piece of evidence that supports the hypothesis that a plausibility structure approach for faith development is being used is the awareness that a school can use its status as a social institution in a strategic and intentional way to act as a plausibility structure. Speaking of the school in a way that would indicate that it is aware of its nature as an organisation that has 1) boundaries, and 2) that it has the power or ability to define the culture or ethos within that boundaried structure would constitute evidence of intention to act (Beare et al., 1989, p. 174).

Awareness of the ability to act strategically and intentionally is needed above and beyond any actions. Additionally, this awareness would need to be attached to the Christian mission of the school somehow. This is important because it is widely recognised that schools are also places of socialisation for civic and secular purposes (Berns, 2013, p. 187).

Evidence that the school applies deliberate methods of socialisation for the passing on of the Christian worldview would be further evidence that it intends to act as a plausibility structure. Unlike wider society where socialisation simply occurs because of the pervasiveness of the dominant culture and beliefs, a plausibility structure approach to socialisation uses intentional and purposeful activity in order to implement a worldview. Of the four criteria listed above this is the most important because it demonstrates evidence of a deliberate strategy even if those implementing it are not conscious of its theoretical grounding.

Further evidence for the use of a plausibility structure approach may be found in the nature and defining characteristics of intentional socialisation. Socialisation “is the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills and character traits that
enable them to participate as effective members of groups and society” (Berns, 2013, p. 7). Keys aspects of socialisation include:

- its occurrence over a period of time;
- the necessity of interacting with people who are important;
- its occurrence in settings with are emotionally significant; and
- that the outcomes are influenced by society and social groups (Berns, 2013, p. 7).

Almost every aspect of human life involves socialisation to some degree or another and the largest portion of it happens with little intention or purpose. For example expressing emotion or reading other’s emotions is learnt through socialisation but people are not generally taught overtly when to smile or cry or the meaning of these actions (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 5). People learn through interaction with others what is acceptable and expected in society.

While some socialisation occurs unintentionally, or even accidentally, institutions such as schools are expected to be intentional agents of socialisation (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 21). The major emphasis of socialisation in schools is on being a good citizen and member of society, and focuses on behaviours and mindsets that support this (Berns, 2013, pp. 186-187). This intentional socialisation often occurs “when adults have certain values that they consistency convey explicitly to the child and when they back these up with approval for compliance and negative consequence for noncompliance” (Berns, 2013, p. 11). However it also must be realised that young people are also actively participating in their own socialisation through their responses and interactions.

A range of methods of socialisation occur within schools. Affective methods of socialisation rely on the attachment that a person feels for another significant person such as a parent, teacher, friend or coach. This relationship ideally endures over space and time. Attachment is a key element of socialisation and also impacts other methods (Berns, 2013, p. 53).
When the child is attached to a caregiver, socialisation takes place in many ways. Some of these result from the child's action (an operant method); some of them result from the child's imitating (an observational method); some of them result from the child's information processing (a cognitive method); some of them result from the child's cultural traditions (a sociocultural method); and some of them result from guided participation (an apprenticeship method) (Berns, 2013, p. 53).

Operant methods of socialisation occur when a person’s behaviour is followed by a positive outcome. This increases the likelihood that the behaviour will be done again. This includes reinforcement, punishment, feedback and learning by doing (Berns, 2013, pp. 53-57). Observational methods of socialisation exist where students watch and copy another person. An example of this is role modelling (Berns, 2013, pp. 58-59). Cognitive methods of socialisation include participation in activities such as instruction, setting standards and reasoning (Berns, 2013, pp. 60-61). Sociocultural methods of socialisation include pressure to conform to a group, observation of traditions, ritual and routines and symbolic activity (Berns, 2013, pp. 62-65).

All schools use methods of socialisation intentionally. A school is implicitly a place of socialisation because teachers are given the right to control and shape students behaviours (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 21). Socialisation occurs throughout society and it happens consistently without being consciously appreciated. Therefore, in considering ASIA some evidence of religious socialisation will not necessarily be adequate evidence of a plausibility structure approach. The religious socialisation must be intentional in that it hopes to be pervasive by the fact that 1) it is found in elements across the life of the school, and 2) seeks to shape the ethos of the school.

Having outlined the criteria required for ASIA to be found to be employing a plausibility structure approach, the next section will demonstrate that ASIA do meet these criteria. Data will be drawn from Chapter One as evidence to support this assertion. Information from wider sources such as Anglican Schools’ conferences and documents from the governing and affiliate bodies of Anglican Schools will also be used. These extra sources are used to confirm that ASIA are represented by both the individual
schools and their governing and affiliate bodies including the Anglican Church in each diocese.

Criteria 1: The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview.

Evidence: Control of membership

Criteria 2: The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated.

Evidence: Freedom to disseminate worldview

Criteria 3: The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview.

Evidence: Statement of mission

Criteria 4: The intention to act as a plausibility structure.

Evidence:

a) Self-identification as a plausibility structure including understanding of boundaries and ability to shape ethos.

b) The use of methods of socialisation to pass on a worldview.

c) Intentional religious socialisation that is

1. across life of school, and

2. ethos shaping.

Figure 4. Summary of Criteria and Evidence for Plausibility Structure Approach
Evidence ASIA use a Plausibility Structure Approach

The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview.

The first criteria an ASIA must meet to be said to be using a plausibility structure approach is their ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview. The key element to this relates to the control of membership.

ASIA have the freedom to choose who they will employ as leaders and teachers in the school, providing they have the qualifications and checks required by their State Government, for example that of the Victorian State Government (2016). This enables them to select those who will support the religious ethos and vision of the school. ASIA can and do employ chaplains who have a religious role within the school. Unlike State Schools, ASIA have the freedom to turn away parents or students who are opposed to the religious nature of the school (Evans & Ujvari, 2009). If they have strong anti-religious feelings parents have the choice not to enrol their children in the school. Being private schools ASIA have a high degree of control over their membership which would enable them to be selective about staff employed and students enrolled.

The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated.

The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated refers to the school’s ability to intentionally instil a specific worldview amongst students. ASIA fulfil this criterion in a range of ways. They have a high degree of control over how they organise their schools, including an ability to shape ethos and culture (Edwards, 2014, p. 64). Indeed one of the principal reasons religious schools exist is that they have the freedom to inculcate a particular set of beliefs amongst their students (Evans & Gaze, 2010, p. 31; Evans & Ujvari, 2009). The expectation of State education in Australia is that it be broadly secular or at least pluralistic in its approach to religious ideas (Evans & Gaze, 2010; Evans & Ujvari, 2009). Conversely ASIA openly promote a preference for the Christian faith. This is evidenced by the vision and mission statements considered in Chapter One. The nature of ASIA means that providing they meet any legislated requirement they can choose the way time is allocated and used. This includes the way time is given to different elements of the curriculum and to developing the school ethos. ASIA have the freedom to teach religious education, have compulsory worship services and include the
Christian faith in all aspects of their life. These freedoms mean that ASIA have a great ability to act as a plausibility structure for the Christian worldview.

The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview.

It was demonstrated in Chapter One that faith development is one of the common goals of ASIA. Sixty two percent of schools make statements indicating that they hope students develop or grow in the Christian faith. Many more schools use actions such as chapel, religious education, chaplaincy and service with the underlying intention of assisting a young person to develop faith. This intention to pass on the Christian worldview is established both in the articulation of spiritual goals which represent the Christian mission of the school and the actions that they use in implementing their intentions.

The intention to pass on a worldview is further supported by the ethos or vision documents developed by governing or affiliate bodies that emphasise the place that schools have in the mission of the church or mission of God. The schools are described as “integral to”, “participants in”, “a significant element of”, “within”, “integrated into”, the mission of the church (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998; Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, 2005; Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008; Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). This is significant because it adds weight to the idea that ASIA not only have educational goals but spiritual or religious goals as well. For Anglicans the Five Marks of Mission developed by the Anglican Communion provide a common summary of the mission of the church (Anglican Consultative Council, 2015). The Communion website states:

The first mark of mission, identified at ACC-6 (the sixth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in 1984) with personal evangelism, is really a summary of what all mission is about, because it is based on Jesus’ own summary of his mission (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4:18, Luke 7:22; cf. John 3:14-17). Instead of being just one (albeit the first) of five distinct activities, this should be the key statement about everything we do in mission (Anglican Consultative Council, 2015).

Accordingly whether proclamation of the Gospel is in words or deeds mission is expected to be transformative of the individual including their worldview (Church of
England, n.d.). This is a key part of the church’s mission and it follows that it is part of the mission of ASIA. Following the documents from the governing and affiliate bodies and ASIA’s own statements it is clear that ASIA do have the intention of passing on the Christian worldview.

Evidence that ASIA are sharing a worldview that is distinctive to that of wider society comes from a variety of sources. Despite not originating from Australia, “The Way Ahead” is probably one of the most influential. This investigation into Church of England Schools focused on the statement made by the General Synod of the Church of England that schools stand at “the centre of the church’s mission to that nation” (Dearing, 2001, p. xi). In the opening statements the report declares that “no Church school can be considered as part of the Church’s mission unless it is distinctively Christian” (Dearing, 2001, p. 3). Dearing also said that “all Church schools must be distinctively and recognizably Christian institutions” (Dearing, 2001, p. 2). These statements demonstrate the understanding that the Christian worldview is different to that of the surrounding society and therefore has to be clearly expressed and articulated by a school.

Those writing about the missional role of Anglican Schools recognise that Christian culture is often at odds with the surrounding secular and pluralistic society (Aspinall, 2012, pp. 4-5; Collier, 2012, pp. 29-31). The surrounding environment can be either indifferent or hostile to the Christian message and it is recognised that secular norms seem to prevail amongst students and wider society (Aspinall, 2012, p. 6; Collier, 2012, pp. 31-32). It is acknowledged that while schools may try to balance the requirements of different stakeholders they should not lose the distinctiveness of their message or way of being under the pressure of social expectations (Aspinall, 2003, p. 6). Further it is expected that the Christian worldview in schools should be counter-cultural (Farran, 2002, p. 9).

In this context it has been suggested that as the culture of Australian society becomes more secular and its engagement with the church decreases, an Anglican School may be the one place that young people engage with the Christian message (Collier, 2012, pp. 29-33). This suggestion indicates the belief that the Christian message will not be articulated in any other social institution. Some even speculate, that as
society moves further away from its Christian heritage that along with churches, it will be Christian schools, which will preserve the goodness, truth and beauty, that once would have been found in other institutions that subscribed to a Christian worldview (Farran, 2002, p. 1; M. Jensen, 2014). One commentator proposes that the students and graduates of ASIA should be those who change the culture of society to be more like “the kingdom of God”(Cooling, 2008, p. 6).

In functioning as part of the mission of the church ASIA see that the Christian worldview is distinct and different to that which is found broadly in Australian society. Part of the role of the school is therefore to pass on this worldview and this is articulated most clearly in their goals and the actions they take to implement them.

**The intention to act as a plausibility structure.**

As mentioned earlier Uecker proposes that “a school may only serve as a religious plausibility structure if it actually seeks to be one” (Uecker, 2009, p. 354). The final criterion to be assessed is that ASIA seeks to act intentionally as a plausibility structure. There are two sources of evidence being sought to find indication of intentionality:

1. that ASIA identifies themselves as a plausibility structure, and

2. that a range of socialisation techniques are applied in seeking to influence young people to adopt the Christian faith.

It is expected that religious socialisation is found across the life of the school and seeks to shape the ethos of the school.

**Self-Identification as a plausibility structure**

ASIA conceive themselves as Christian or religious communities (Cole, 2004, p. 1; Farran, 2002, p. 1). The second mission goal identified in Chapter One describes how schools desire students to have an “experience of community shaped by the Christian faith”. It has been established that 75% of ASIA support this goal. The literature focussing on the nature of ASIA uses the term community regularly. Some documents talk of the importance of experiencing Christian community (Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 2010; Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Cole, 2004), others of the importance of the school as a distinctive Christian community (Anglican Schools Commission
Western Australia, 2008; Aspinall, 2003, p. 5). The evidence gathered in Chapter One shows that there is a clear sense that the creation of a visible Christian community within which the students will be immersed is part of the identity of ASIA (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008; Aspinall, 2003, pp. 2-3; Cole, 2004; Jelfs, 2010, pp. 29-30). Cole (2004), Shepherd (2002), Wallace (2005) and Farran (2002) also make mention of the importance of ASIA being faith communities. This provides evidence that ASIA recognise themselves as social institutions with boundaries that can shape culture and that the culture they wish to create is connected with the Christian faith.

Several sources discuss the role of theology and faith in the school and how they are to shape the way the school exists. The idea that faith and theology will shape the school is found across a wide range of ASIA ethos statements. Some sources speak of the importance of faith impacting on every aspect of the school’s life, including the strategic, policy and decision-making processes of the organisation (Edwards, 2014, p. 127). Aspinall (2003, p. 13), Cole (2004, p. 7) and Wallace (2005, p. 5) suggest that faith and theology should infuse all aspects of the school and its curriculum. This is summed up succinctly by the SASC “Philosophy of Education Statement” (2011, p. 2) when it states that “[t]he Bible is used as the permeating influence on the teaching and learning of the school.” This evidence reinforces the idea that a particular worldview is to shape the school institution.

When looking at school ethos statements and other key documents another recurring theme emerges. ASIA are to be intentionally Christian and based on the values and ethos of the Gospel (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 1996, 2009; Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011; Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008). Accordingly, ASIA are encouraged to be unapologetic about their corporate value and their beliefs. ASIA are envisaged as places where the Christian faith is taught, lived, modelled and experienced (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2009; Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2008; Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011; Western Australian Anglican Schools Association, 2008).
The use of methods of socialisation to pass on a worldview.

The next element of this criteria to be explored is the use of socialisation methods by ASIA to pass on their Christian worldview. The list of actions to implement mission used by schools as identified in Table 2 in Chapter One indicate the range of socialisation methods employed by ASIA.

(Repeated from Chapter One) Table 2

The Percentage of ASIA Web Sites Claiming Specific Christian Mission Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christian Mission Goals</th>
<th>Percentage of ASIA sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel / Worship</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Education / Christian Education</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplain</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Opportunities</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Care - Chaplain</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Christian Groups</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Church Connection</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrimages / Mission Trips / Service Trips</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramental Ministry</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Outreach</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian staff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Congregation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff formation</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth minister</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapel worship appears at the top of the list of commonly occurring strategies. The nature of worship varies across schools (Edwards, 2014, p. 73). Some schools will have an emphasis on traditional rituals while others will have a more contemporary
approach (Edwards, 2014, p. 73; Heath, 2009, p. 8). Regardless of the approach, this time put aside in the school life is meant to provide an experience of a key aspect of Christianity (Edwards, 2014, pp. 73-75). Apart from lessons in religious education, chapel worship may be the one time in a school’s regular routine where students are focussed solely on the Christian faith. Chapel worship represents a form of sociocultural socialisation through the presentation of tradition, rituals and symbols. Additionally it is common for a formal presentation about the Christian faith (e.g. sermon) to be presented at such an occasion and this represents a form of cognitive socialisation (Edwards, 2014; Stewart, 2012).

It is not surprising that teaching is a significant strategy in an educational institution. Religious education is almost as commonly deployed as chapel worship as a Christian mission action. This is an example of cognitive socialisation (Berns, 2013, pp. 60-61). Indications can be found in the literature that schools believe that if students are exposed to the Christian faith in an intellectual manner or in a way that may add value to their life that they may respond to it or at least reflect on their own beliefs (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2013; Anglican Schools Religious Education Development Committee, 2015, pp. 4-7). While indoctrination is discouraged, open exploration of religious ideas promotes the idea that they are of value to the student (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2013). While teaching about the Christian faith by itself would not be definitive evidence of a strategy focused on socialisation, when considered alongside other elements it forms one part of a strategic approach that promotes the development of faith utilising socialisation.

Service opportunities figure as a significant aspect of the life of ASIA (Anglican Schools Australia, 2016b). The Anglican Schools Commission in Southern Queensland estimates that students and staff through their twenty schools provide 91 000 service hours a year to community organisations and give over $500 000 dollars to charitable organisations (Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 2016).

While a range of motivations may exist for ASIA to run service activities for students they act as operant forms of socialisation that reward student activity via the positive thoughts and feelings that are attached to the action (Berns, 2013, pp. 53-54). A review
of articles in the “ASA News” written about service experiences at different schools reinforces this through the use of phrases such as “making a difference” which implies the students feel like they are doing something meaningful. Describing experiences as transformational and reporting of students’ positive and life changing experiences further highlights the meaningfulness of the endeavour ("ASA News December 2014," 2014, pp. 9, 17, 20; "ASA News June 2014," 2014, pp. 19, 25; "ASA News September 2015," 2015, pp. 34, 38, 57, 60, 63; Simpson, 2016, p. 73).

While only 4% of schools speak of the importance of Christian staff a review of key literature does indicate that teachers are recognised as an important influence on students (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 16-17; Collier, 2014, pp. 6-7, 9). Many of the ASIA ethos statements explicitly state that teachers should support or model the Christian ethos of the school (Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Schools Council, 1998; Anglican Schools Commission Queensland, 1996, 2009; Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, 2011). Farran (2002, p. 13) and Aspinall (2003, pp. 16-17) speak of the important role that teachers play in the school in terms of the development of the ethos and spiritual formation of children and young people. Through this the desire for affective and observational models of socialisation is seen in which the student - teacher bond will be used in a way that models the Christian life (Collier, 2012, pp. 6-7).

These four key activities of ASIA’s implementation of Christian mission demonstrate the use of a number of socialisation methodologies to help students develop Christian faith. The remaining items on the list reinforce these methods. Pilgrimages (operant), sacramental ministry (sociocultural), retreats (sociocultural and affective) and classroom culture (observational) use a variety socialisation methodologies. Therefore when taking the mission actions into consideration a clear pattern emerges of the approach ASIA takes in respect to the development of faith in students. This pattern supports the hypothesis that the schools intentionally seek to use their status as a plausibility structure. They have a particular worldview, that of Christianity, and they wish to pass it on. They are aware of the role that community plays in the passing on of this worldview and they use a range of socialisation methods to help in this transition. It is clear that ASIA wish to create a pervasive atmosphere of Christianity in the school.
Conclusion

It appears that the Anglican Church in Australia hopes that ASIA will act as plausibility structures for the Christian faith. In this context the school acting as plausibility structure, makes the Christian worldview and way of life visible and acceptable to students. While some link is made in the literature between plausibility structures and schools very little work has been done on considering the effectiveness of this approach in relation to the mission of the church in ASIA (Barrett, Pearson, Muller, & Frank, 2007, p. 1024; Dijkstra & Veenstra, 2001, p. 182; Uecker, 2008, 2009). In the next chapter the factors that have the potential to impinge on the effectiveness of this approach will be explored.
Chapter Two Summary

There is an overarching strategy to the Christian mission of ASIA involving the use of the school as a plausibility structure for faith development.

1. A plausibility structure approach is hypothesised and described.
2. Four criteria for identifying a plausibility structure approach are defined.
   - The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview.
   - The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated.
   - The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview.
   - The intention to act as a plausibility structure
3. The use of deliberate socialisation methods is identified as a key factor in affirming ASIA use a plausibility structure approach.
4. ASIA are evaluated for use of a plausibility structure approach against the four criteria.
5. ASIA use a plausibility structure approach for their Christian mission.
Chapter Three

Factors impinging on an Anglican School’s plausibility structure

- **Assertion**: ASIA as a Plausibility Structure
- **Attention**: Anglican School Mission
- **Decision**: Model and Tool for Evaluating Future Mission
- **Attention**: Plausibility Structure Hypothesis
- **Student Socialisation**
Introduction

The evidence of the previous chapters indicates that a plausibility structure approach describes the broad strategic approach taken by ASIA. The next two chapters consider the effectiveness of this approach from organisational and student perspectives. In this chapter the critical elements that impinge on the effectiveness of ASIA to act as plausibility structures for the Christian worldview are identified and discussed. In order to account for the complexity of this task a systems theory approach will be employed.

Schools: complex organisations in a complex environment.

Australian schools exist in a complex environment. There are many elements ASIA must interact with. These include their educational task, organisational requirements and the politico-economic environment in which they find themselves (Aspinall, 2003, p. 7). The educative endeavour is highly contested in Australia. Neither the goals of education nor the processes for effectively achieving them are agreed upon by academics, educators or other interest groups (Clarke, 2012, pp. 187-188). Education is a social task in that its outcomes are of value not only to those being educated but to society as a whole (Campbell, 2007, p. 1). In Australia the education of young people in both public and private schools is regulated and partially funded by state and federal governments. Parents have a particular interest in education because of the potential economic and social benefits it may confer on their children (Campbell, 2007, p. 4). The interest that governments, parents and the wider society have in education exerts pressure on the goals of education and how they are achieved. The nature of students, their psychology, social setting and worldview, also impact significantly on the educational task (Berns, 2013, pp. 8-10, 207).

Australian schools are complex organisations because of their size, structure and the significance of their task (Aspinall, 2003, p. 7). They are required to respond to the external political and social pressures mentioned above while organising themselves in ways that fulfil their educational mandate. As well as managing the external agendas they must also respond to those of teachers, parents, students, and for Christian Schools, their governing religious body (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 4, 13; G. Smith, 2012, pp.
Accordingly ASIA also has spiritual and religious goals along with their educational ones.

**Systems Theory**

*General systems theory.*

General Systems Theory was developed in response to the failure of mechanistic thinking to deal with complex social and biological phenomena (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 8; Skyttner, 2005). In order to more fully understand complex phenomena a holistic systems perspective is required. Systems are defined as “a set of interrelated parts that we experience as a whole” (Espejo & Reyes A, 2011, p. 3). Systems theory recognises that systems cannot be understood simply by analysing the parts in isolation. This is because the interactions between individual parts give rise to specific properties of the system which are not observable outside of the whole (Skyttner, 2005). Another way of thinking about this is to say that the parts of systems are “interconnected in such a way that they produce their own pattern of behaviour over time” (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 2).

General Systems Theory analyses the general properties of systems from an abstract perspective (Skyttner, 2005, p. 40). The strength of this approach is that it enables both a way to simplify analysis and at the same time deal with multidimensionality (Skyttner, 2005, p. 40). General Systems Theory is not a discipline on its own but works across multiple disciplines. One of its key goals is to create a methodology to describe how the parts of a system behave (Skyttner, 2005, p. 40).

Systems may be described as consisting of three key factors:

1. elements or components,
2. interconnections, and
3. a function or purpose. (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 11).

Elements are the different parts of the system. While often easy to recognise, elements are not always physical, for example a school’s ethos or culture are elements, as are the teachers and students (Meadows & Wright, 2008, pp. 12-13).
Interconnections are the signals that go between one element and another allowing each to know what is happening in the other. They are the relationships between the elements. In a school interconnections could include state educational requirements, parent – child communication and leadership communication networks (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 13). A system’s purpose or function is not easily seen but may be identified through the behaviour of the system. This does not always match the stated aims or goals (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 14). Significantly, smaller parts of the system may bring their own purpose to the system and have the potential to undermine the intended goals of the overall system (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 15).

This research draws on systems theory as it is applied to organisations. It is helpful for the range of perspectives it brings to description and analysis of schools as organisational systems. This thesis draws particularly on the schema developed by Scott and Davis (2014, pp. 27-33) of rational, natural or open systems as it enables a more complete picture of the critical elements that impinge on the use of a plausibility structure approach for faith development in ASIA.

**Rational systems perspective.**

Goal specificity and formalisation are important to a rational systems perspective (Scott & Davis, 2014, pp. 36-37). Goal specificity refers to the degree to which set goals provide criteria for choosing between alternate actions and guidance on how the organisation might structure itself to achieve these goals. The more vague or diffuse a goal is the less likely it is that an effective structural design will be successfully implemented. Formalisation refers to how the organisational structure is designed to fulfil the set goals. Considered from a rational systems perspective, a school is an organisation that enables the achievement of specific goals (Scott & Davis, 2014, pp. 36-37). Of particular interest is how the school is structured in ways that either help or hinder these achievements. This perspective is solely concerned with the formal aspects of the school such as rules, roles and organisational structures. By applying this perspective, the ways in which the school’s formal organisation hinders the fulfilment of the goals relating to Christian mission can be identified (Scott & Davis, 2014, pp. 35-36).
Natural systems perspective.

The natural systems perspective encourages the analysis of the school through its informal structures and the way that people behave within them. Specifically, it considers the ways in which the privately held goals of individuals working within the organisation may conflict with the formal organisational ones (Scott & Davis, 2014, pp. 62-63). People bring to organisations their own ideas and passions and the organisation’s goals are affected by these agendas, ideas and expectations. This perspective focusses primarily on what is actually done within the organisation rather than on what is planned or hoped for. It recognises that official goals are not always those that are pursued and that goals can be ambiguous and create inadvertent individual behaviour (Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 62). It is acknowledged that those with governance responsibilities often have an overarching goal to ensure the organisation survives. In evaluating schools through this lens ways that individual actions can impinge on the Christian mission goals of ASIA will be considered.

Open systems perspective.

The open systems perspective elucidates the way factors in the external environment have an effect on factors in the internal environment (Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 106). This perspective is most closely aligned with and emerged from the development of General Systems Theory. It recognises that there is a flow of resources, people and ideas into the system of the school. The surrounding environment, including elements such as culture, can significantly impact the achievement of organisational goals (Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 106). Each of these three perspectives is useful in providing a more complete picture of how organisations function in reality.
Figure 5. Process of Analysis using General Systems Theory Perspectives

**Methodology**

In this chapter a systems theory approach is used as the methodological basis for the analysis of factors impinging on the intended mission of ASIA. In the first instance it provides a useful framework for the orderly and logical examination of the complex nature of schools. Schools are systems with multiple parts existing next to and nested within one another, and operating through a range of relationships. Furthermore, schools are also embedded in a wider context or environment that influences the way they function. This broader environment has a considerable impact on a school as a social institution (Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 95). A systems theory approach allows order to be brought to this complexity by enabling a map to be created of the school system. This map encompasses the school’s component parts and the environment within which it functions. It will also take into account the three key factors listed above, namely elements or components, interconnections and the function or purpose. (Meadows & Wright, 2008, p. 11).
A systems theory approach subsequently provides an analytical perspective which aids in the identification of impinging factors. The rational, natural and open systems perspectives will be used as analytical lenses. The rational systems perspective is most useful in considering some of the broad elements the schools use to create a plausibility structure for faith development. Apart from the strategies identified in the previous chapter this section considers the structural elements that contribute to making the school a place for the socialisation of religious belief. It assists in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the formal structures. Natural and open systems theory is helpful in critiquing how some of the formal elements work but also in identifying other aspects of school organisation that may undermine the plausibility structure approach.

Criteria for evaluating what might impinge on a school’s capacity to use a plausibility structure approach must be set. In Chapter Two four criteria were created to identify a plausibility structure approach:

1. the ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview;
2. the ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated;
3. the intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview; and
4. and the intention to act as a plausibility structure.

When considering impinging factors, those elements in the system of the school that risk interfering with its ability to fulfil these criteria in an effective way are identified.

1. The ability to function as a plausibility structure for a single worldview may be impinged by anything in the school’s system or environment that would limit or reduce its ability or freedom to act as a plausibility structure. This could include such things as legislative requirements or even internal factors such as the characteristics of the school population. Also aspects that may present the possibility of competing worldviews being expressed with equal value to that of the school’s would impinge on this ability.

2. The ability to self-determine the worldview to be disseminated may be impinged by elements in the school that would prevent a single worldview from being selected and presented. This could include social expectations, legislative requirements or lack of mandate.
3. The intention to disseminate a specific and definable worldview could be impinged upon by a range of factors most specifically those shaping leadership and their will to disseminate a particular worldview.

4. The intention to act as a plausibility structure could be impinged by elements that might counter or erode the school’s desire to act as a plausibility structure. This could include aspects of its approach to schooling or even aspects of its belief system.

Information for this section is drawn primarily from the literature about Anglican schools, other religious schools and other schools in Australia and overseas.

The school as a system

Organisations tend to have similar features, and organisations of the same type, such as schools, have many features in common (Scott & Davis, 2014, pp. 1,11, 33). In Chapters One and Two the elements relating to faith development in ASIA were detailed. A general picture of the common elements of ASIA and the wider systems they interact with may now be drawn. This enables a map for the exploration of the elements relating to faith development to be created. Critically the boundaries and key internal and external elements will then be described.

The boundaries of a school are naturally porous in that parents and other members of the community frequently contribute to the life of the school in significant ways. It is beyond the scope of this study to include all who cross these porous boundaries, however the definition of a school boundary used in this study is that those within the school’s boundary are only those who fall under the responsibility or control of the organisation itself (Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 95). Teachers, staff and students would fit within this definition, but not most parents. Parents who have a formal role in the school such as the President of a Parents’ Association would be included within the school boundary. In this schema parents are placed on the boundary of the school, this is not to suggest they have a small degree of influence but that it is primarily an external influence.

Within the school the most significant components are the students, teachers and the leadership of the school. This leadership group includes those who make key
organisational decisions such as the school board as well as those who make and implement school policy on a daily basis. This group would include the principal, other teachers in the leadership structure and the business manager.

The relationship between an Anglican School and the Anglican Church exists in various permutations depending on a range of factors such as history, diocese and form of governance. While this research does not go into detail about the nature of the relationship between school and church, it is clear that there is some overlap. While work has been done in trying to help schools see themselves as part of the church or as faith communities, it is more accurate to say that generally schools see themselves as existing externally to the church (Nicholson, 2007, p. 18). In this description of the model the Anglican Church is placed straddling the boundary of the school because it exerts both internal and external influences.

The wider social context has a significant impact on the school. Elements of this wider context include the political, economic, cultural, legislative and social climate. The whole school and all of its members are embedded in this wider context and are influenced by it. Each school has its own culture. Some of this is shaped by those who lead it but it is also significantly influenced by other members as well. Part of the wider environment also includes elements such as competitor schools. The nature of the school as a business, operating in an open market means that the school needs to compete for enrolments against other schools, possibly even other ASIA.

**Rational Systems Perspective**

**Key Structures for delivery of Christian mission goals.**

There are a range of formal structures that are established within ASIA for the execution of Christian mission goals. Some of these were identified in Chapters One and Two, others relating to the organisation of the school as a system are outlined here.

The school leadership is a critical element in shaping its culture and ethos. While this leadership may include the Chair and members of the board the most significant leadership role in the school is that of Head or Principal. In recent years there has been an increasing emphasis in ASIA on identifying the Head as a spiritual leader of the school.
(Cole, 2004, p. 5; Dearing, 2001, p. 60; Moody, 2009, p. 43; 2010; G. Smith, 2012, p. 26). Part of the reason for this shift is the recognition that the Principal is the key decision maker for the daily functioning of the school, including decisions relating to employment and budgeting. For this reason they are significant in shaping the culture and general functioning of the school as an organisation. While they may not have a “hands on” role in faith development they act as gate keepers or promoters of the spiritual life of the school. They have a role in promoting the importance of the Christian faith in the school (Collier, 2012, p. 33; Edwards, 2012b, pp. 238-239).

Chaplains often play a significant role in the progression of ASIA’s spiritual values and purposes (Wallace, 1999, pp. 2-4). Generally it is that chaplain who “represents and symbolises the Church’s commitment to its mission...in a school community” (Wallace, 1999, p. 5). Part of their role is to remind “the school community of its Christian purposes and [encourage] its members to give expression to their Christian commitment in ways which are helpful in an educational context” (Wallace, 1999, p. 5). Chaplains are expected to recognise the “specialised social and educational institution” (Wallace, 1999, p. 3) they work in and act in a way appropriate to that institution. Their role may be many and varied but might include teaching, liturgical activities, pastoral care, and leadership functions (Wallace, 1999, pp. 3-5).

Religious Education is another core element in the school’s execution of its Christian mission (Collier, 2012, p. 36). There are great variations in the approaches taken to religious education in different schools. In some schools an academic phenomenological approach is taken whereas in others the emphasis is on faith development and contains considerable affective elements (Anglican Schools Commission, 2011). All of the ethos or vision statements reviewed in this investigation from the governing and affiliate bodies indicate the importance of religious education in life of the school. Several sources insist that religious education in ASIA should be about spiritual exploration rather than proselytism (Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia, 2013; Anglican Schools Religious Education Development Committee, 2015, p. 4). Other sources highlight the importance of committed Christian teachers teaching religious
education and the role that they play in role modelling the Christian faith amongst students (Anglican Schools Commission, 2015; Collier, 2014, pp. 6-7).

Chapel or worship is also a key element in ASIA’s Christian mission. Although varying in frequency across ASIA, for many schools chapel is the element where the Christian message may be most overtly delivered. It may also contain larger gatherings of students than in normal classes. In some schools worship services may be significant occasions for the life of the school that may happen once a term or they could be a regular time of prayer, singing, reading from scripture and a sermon or message from the chaplain (Edwards, 2014; Stewart, 2012).

Impinging Structural Factors

Purpose and identity.

According to rational systems perspective, goal specificity is critical to the formalisation of effective structures for the achievement of desired goals. Clear and specific goals provide organisational participants with criteria to judge success and guidance as to how they may work to achieve them (Scott & Davis, 2014). This is a significant issue for ASIA that have multiple functions to perform including those of an educational, religious and business institution. The various priorities and values of each of these roles have the potential to be in tension and conflict with one another (Aspinall, 2003, p. 9). For ASIA, the role of the school as a business is an important but somewhat concealed factor. The more significant and overt tension is between the dual roles of a religious and educational institution.

Research reveals that tension can exist between the dual goals a religious school has as a religious and educational institution. The nature of this tension relates to the degree one or the other is given priority. The terms, one dimensional and multidimensional are employed to help understand the balance between educational and religious goals in the school (de Wolff, Miedema, & de Ruyter, 2002, p. 240).

One dimensional schools see their life solely through the lens of the Christian faith (de Wolff et al., 2002). They give priority to the religious goals of the school. The purpose of these schools is to propagate Christianity and anything else they do is secondary to
this task. Students are taught about the Christian faith and all decisions made for the school are filtered through the lens of a Christian worldview. The meaning and purpose of other goals including educational ones, are deduced from the Christian perspective held by the school leadership and if they are contradictory to this view may be rejected. Schools that consider their role as an educational institution as important as their role as a religious institution are called multidimensional by De Wolf et al (2002, p. 240). These schools often seek to balance the competing demands even if one may be given greater priority than the other.

ASIA tend to consider themselves as being multidimensional. Evidence for this is found in the way ASIA hold excellence in education as a core value. While being Christian and being excellent may not be opposed, this tension of dual values indicates that ASIA hold the quality of education in high esteem alongside their Christian ethos. This may result in the school deciding to employ a more qualified or experienced secular teacher over a less qualified or experienced Christian one. A one dimensional Christian school would tend not to take this course of action. This issue is identified in the literature as of concern in ASIA (Edwards, 2014, pp. 96-97). Multidimensionality introduces the potential for the religious goals of the school to be placed in a position secondary to the educational ones.

When considered through the lens of their Diocesan ethos and vision statements ASIA generally have a multidimensional approach to schooling. They seek to be more than just a faith shaping organisation. One indication of this, is that all the governing and affiliate bodies affirm the importance of excellence in education. The Anglican Schools Commission Western Australia (2008) outlines five areas it wishes to focus on including quality education, faith development and social inclusion. The Sydney Anglican School’s Corporation (SASC) Philosophy of Education Statement (2011) has a clear and strong emphasises on the necessity for the life of the school to be organised by the Christian faith but also expresses a broad desire to achieve a range of Critical educational outcomes including quality education and service to the wider community.

Aspinall (2003, p. 17) and Cole (2004, p. 8) also reveal the multidimensional nature of schools when they discuss the tension found in ASIA between desiring excellence in
education and living the life of faith. Another strong indicator of the multidimensionality of ASIA is the constantly recurring refrain in the ethos and vision documents that Anglican education is concerned with “the whole person”. This is not only read in these documents but also in the addresses Cole (2004), Farran (2002, p. 1), and Wallace (2005, p. 2) have given to the ASSN. While multidimensionality does not negate a plausibility structure approach it does introduce factors with the potential to undermine its significance.

ASIA may place themselves in a variety of positions along a multidimensional spectrum while seeking to maintain balance between their goals. It is inevitable however that some of the sets of goals will be given priority over the others. Cole says of ASIA that “it is important to acknowledge that the perception of ‘Anglican identity’ usually falls a very clear second to the perception of the school as an ‘educational institution”’ (2004, p. 8). Anecdotal evidence suggests that it is not uncommon for the educational aspects of the school to be given priority over the religious ones (Edwards, 2014, p. 96). Some of the reasons for this priority are outlined above but they include the imperative to compete with other schools for students in an educational marketplace which highly values academic success and the reliance on government funding and therefore regulation.

That the Christian mission goals of ASIA seem to be given a lesser priority in the life of the organisation is identified in the Australian literature as having the potential to cause schools to lose their sense of distinctive mission (Aspinall, 2003, p. 9; Cole, 2004, p. 8). The degree of priority given to the Christian mission goals of the school impacts on how well the school may act as a plausibility structure for faith development. It also impacts on the capacity ASIA have to work on specific Christian mission goals. This reduction in importance weakens a school’s ability, intention and strategy to pass on a particular worldview. It follows that a lack of clarity or specificity around the Christian goals may lead to unreflective and ineffective methods of implementation (Cole, 2004, pp. 7-8; Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 37).
School as a business.

The nature of the school as a business inevitably shapes its culture (Edwards, 2012a, p. 49). As independent schools, Anglican education has its foundation “built on its paying clientele” (Edwards, 2012a, p. 48). These clients, the parents, want value for money. In an increasingly competitive environment they may judge schools on the quality of their facilities and presentation (Edwards, 2012a, p. 50). In order to survive and remain competitive schools may find it necessary to take on the practices of the corporate world (Aspinall, 2003, p. 8). This poses a potential threat to the fundamental character of the school as a Christian institution. One such impact on the Christian foundation of the school is the way pastoral care is transformed from something emerging from the Christian faith to being a marketable and therefore secular value within the school (Edwards, 2012a, p. 51). Additionally Christianity can be exchanged for generic values which tend to be derived but removed from the life of Christ and focused mainly on what makes a productive citizen (Edwards, 2014, p. 54).

The Anglican approach to education.

In exploring the structure and function of ASIA in Chapters One and Two the nature of the Anglican approach to education was raised. This Anglican approach contains features and values that have the potential to undermine a plausibility structure approach. Three particular aspects are of note: their openness, their tendency to be dialogic and their multidimensionality.

In their AASN addresses Aspinall (2003, p. 16), Cole (2004, pp. 4, 9) and Farran (2002, p. 11) all make mention of the openness of ASIA. The openness they speak of is in reference to people of other faiths and no faith at all. This openness in ASIA is often applied not only to the student body, but also with regards to the staff (Edwards, 2012a, p. 60).

Openness creates a tension in the life of the school (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 16-17; Cole, 2004, p. 5; Farran, 2002). Aspinall (2003, p. 16) echoes English writers in suggesting that even though Anglican schools are open, a critical mass of Christian students and staff are needed to create the right school culture. This recognises that the openness of ASIA
provides the possibility that the plausibility structure is undermined by inviting in those with opposing or asynchronous views.

The evidence indicates that ASIA intend to be dialogic in nature. The idea of being dialogic has to do with the way other religions are addressed within the school and wider community (Anthony, 2003; Engebretson, 2009; Gomers & Hermans, 2003). Dialogic schools seek to be engaged in conversation with other faiths while supporting their own, rather than either ignoring other faiths or giving them equal status.

Many of the Diocesan vision statements express a dialogic view. Most express the desire to be sensitive to the diversity that exists within their community. The ASCWA Strategic Plan states its desire for students to “develop an appreciation of other religious traditions” (2008, p. 3). The SASC Philosophy of Education document says: “[s]taff and students are encouraged to interact respectfully with alternative worldviews, expecting to learn from the experiences of others different from themselves” (2011, p. 2). Another dominant view is that ASIA seek to be in dialogue with those of other faiths or who exhibit a non-faith stance and encourage the exploration of the Christian faith in an open yet non-coercive environment. This open and dialogic approach to engagement with the other has had a considerable impact on schools with the rise of secularism and pluralism in Australia. When the majority of the population considered themselves Christian and there was a larger percentage of Anglicans this openness posed no problem. However, when the view espoused by ASIA finds itself with less adherence than the other views that are entertained within wider society the potential to exert a role as a plausibility structure is undermined (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 16-17; Kaye, 2003, pp. 2, 4).

**Natural Systems Perspective**

**Internal impinging factors.**

**Ethos and culture.**

The notion of ethos has become central to the language of schools and education but it is not uncommon for it to be ill-defined (McLaughlin, 2005, p. 306; Solvason, 2005, p. 86). Ethos is often used synonymously with words such as atmosphere, climate, culture and identity (McLaughlin, 2005, pp. 308-309; Solvason, 2005, p. 85). For the
purpose of this study ethos relates to the norms, values, rules rituals, expectations, interactions in a school and how these work and interrelate (Court, 2006, p. 235).

As discussed previously school ethos and culture is influenced by leadership. However a Natural Systems Perspective establishes that all other members of the organisation also participate in shaping it. If the school has a long history it may also have a deeply ingrained culture and ethos making it difficult for the Head and other leaders to instigate change without the investment of significant time and effort. Teachers, students, parents, past students and parents of past students can all act as reinforcers of existing culture. Even if official policy statements about culture are changed a persisting counter-culture can continue to exist in the community (Beare et al., 1989, pp. 199-200). While cultural change can occur the degree to which culture can be controlled is contentious. However it does seem that individual aspects that influence ethos, such as attitudes and practices, can be shaped with intervention (Beare et al., 1989). Ethos and culture are important because they express the important values of the school. In this, Christianity may be mixed with a range of worldviews and values that water down the clarity of the Christian worldview being presented. Hughes (2012) points out that in some ASIA students reported feeling greater encouragement to believe in God than in others.

**Conflicted leadership.**

Leadership is a critical factor shaping the life and ethos of any organisation, including ASIA. The Head Teacher or Principal oversees all operational aspects of school life and can have a significant impact on its culture and ethos both directly and indirectly (Cole, 2004, pp. 5-6). In some Dioceses the Principal is recognised as the spiritual leader of the school as a way of seeking to formalise the importance of their role is this area (G. Smith, 2012, p. 26). However, according to natural systems perspective if the Head and their leadership team do not see the mission of the church as important, or the goals they have set are not clear and specific, the Christian mission of the school may not achieve the level of recognition or success it needs to be effective (Collier, 2012, p. 33; Scott & Davis, 2014, p. 37). The Principal and other leaders are of particular importance with
regard to the priority that the church’s mission is accorded in the school yet it cannot be assumed that all Heads are committed to this mission (Farran, 2002, p. 12).

At formal operational levels school leaders may facilitate some aspects of Christian mission but not others. Chaplaincy, religious education and chapel may be provided with adequate time and resources but the hiring of Christian staff may not be considered a priority. If the school does not have specific goals then the personal commitment or ethos of the Head will become a significant factor.

**Staff.**

Many ASIA have an open approach to the employment of teachers from non-Christian backgrounds with the expectation they respect the ethos of the school (Cole, 2004, pp. 4-5; Edwards, 2012a, p. 60). This openness is in tension with the recognition that a critical mass of Christian teachers is important in creating a Christian school environment (Aspinall, 2003, p. 16). While it is the responsibility of the Head to make decisions about who to employ, one of the difficulties they may face is finding Anglican teachers. In schools following a multidimensional approach to balancing goals this may be complicated by the desire to employ teachers who have the best academic credentials and experience. Faith, credentials and experience may not always come together in the one person. Because they compete in a challenging environment ASIA may hire a candidate who has better educational credentials over a lesser candidate who is a Christian (Aspinall, 2003, p. 17). Colier even suggests that “adherence to the Christian faith is seen as either a cultural aberration or an educational interloper” (Collier, 2012, p. 36) in many Anglican Schools.

This situation could result in unusual situations where non-Christians teach Christian studies or religious education. The specialist knowledge and attitudes required to teach these subjects well, make this far from an ideal situation (Farran, 2002, p. 13; T. Wright, 2012, p. 7). Having inadequate numbers of Christian staff is also problematic when trying to develop the Christian and Anglican ethos of the school. This is particularly the case if staff are unfamiliar with the ideas and practices of the Anglican Church. In terms of creating role models for socialisation the lack of Anglican and Christian teachers has a
significant impact on the school’s ability to act as a plausibility structure for the Christian faith.

Some staff may choose to keep the Christian faith out of their area of influence within the school (Cole, 2004, p. 7). For instance science teachers may perceive that religion has nothing to do with their subject. Business managers may also think that the Christian faith is irrelevant to their policy and administration areas. Cole writes that,

such a perception of the compartmentalization of the spiritual dimension to a place apart from curriculum, or even from policy, administration, and indeed any aspect of the school’s life, severely restricts the school’s capacity to continue to address the issues surrounding the nature of its faith community and its Anglican identity (Cole, 2004, p. 7).

**Students and peers.**

The student population can itself be a factor impinging on the creation of a plausibility structure for faith development in ASIA. Many ASIA are made up of diverse ethnic and religious communities. Membership of the Anglican Church or the presence of Christian belief are not requirements to study in an ASIA, and many schools are populated by significant numbers of students with neither Christian faith or Anglican affiliation (Cole, 2004, p. 4; S. Norris, 2012, p. 5). Schools seem to try to be sensitive to this diversity while still seeking to maintain their ethos. While many secular families may be happy to participate in the school, students and their parents may have little interest in the spiritual foundations of the school and this can be reflected in apathy or active resistance to religious aspects (Farran, 2002, p. 11). There is evidence to indicate that the presence of secular students, families and teachers does impact the school and its capacity to create a culture that is centred on the Christian faith (Donlevy, 2008; A. Wright, 2008). Further the presence of non-Christian students changes the way the school functions as a Christian community. This includes a change in the way worship and religious education is done (Cole, 2004, p. 5). In order to communicate with those who have no belief worship and teaching become evangelistic and apologetic instead of being focused on teaching and nurturing the believer (Stewart, 2012, p. 223).
**Parental expectations.**

Parents have many expectations about what the school should do and be. It cannot be assumed that parents choose faith based schools for their Christian values, education or ethos (Collier, 2012, p. 32; Edwards, 2012a, pp. 48-49). This is particularly the case for ASIA who have a reputation for excellence in education (Aspinall, 2003, p. 17; Cairney, Cowling, & Jensen, 2011). Many ASIA developed in the mode of traditional grammar schools, whose main features were a strong academic approach to education, a broad range of co-curricular activities and finally an implicit religious aspect (Cowling, 2011, p. 31). In the contemporary environment it seems that most parents choose ASIA for their educative qualities and not for their spiritual life (Collier, 2012, p. 32; Edwards, 2012a, pp. 48-49). Parents may be sceptical about the faith aspects of the school (Collier, 2012, p. 32). This can create a tension between the school and parents (Kaye, 2003, p. 6; T. Wright, 2012, pp. 4-5,7). In fact Edwards (2012a, p. 49) suggests that it is the secular parents who have the greatest impact on the school because of their conflicting values with the school. This is summed up by Wright,

Parents who do not share the faith basis of the School struggle because they desire to see “religion in general”, humanism, charitable works as the emphasis and are also somewhat suspicious of evangelism and commitment to specific doctrines. The pluralist nature of society means that the Christian School must argue for the uniqueness of Christ in an environment where any such claim is treated with suspicion (T. Wright, 2012, pp. 4-5).

**Open Systems Perspective**

**External impinging factors.**

All schools are embedded within contexts that impinge upon their functioning and ethos. Political, economic, religious and social elements may directly shape the choices schools make and place significant constraints on their freedom and liberty. Indirectly, society influences the school by the way it influences the thinking and action of those who are members of the school community and those who are responsible for leadership.

**Social Environment.**

Secularism has at least three different facets. The first relates to the influence and involvement of religion in the work of government (Taylor, 2007, p. 1). In this sense,
secularism involves a decrease in role of religion in the affairs of the state. Potentially it also sees the state interfering in the role religious groups might play in activities the state has an interest in, such as education.

Secularism can also refer to the decline of religious belief and practice in a particular society (Taylor, 2007, pp. 2-3). This form of secularism is witnessed in the dwindling numbers who claim the Christian faith as their own and the decreasing attendance and membership of many churches (Collier, 2012, pp. 30-31).

A third understanding of secularism can also be identified, in which faith in God is just one option among many (Collier, 2012, p. 31; Taylor, 2007, p. 3). In Australia evidence can be found for the increase of all three of these forms of secularism and each has an impact on the school’s ability to fulfil its Christian mission (Collier, 2012, p. 31).

Aspinall (2003, pp. 3-4) discusses the secularisation of Australian society and the impact it has had on issues such as school management, ethos, staffing and students. Kaye (2003, pp. 2-6) explores the expanding role of the Federal Government not just in terms of funding but also in the regulatory realm of policy and curriculum. This, he suggests increasingly makes it difficult for ASIA to establish or maintain a distinctive Christian identity.

Arthur (2009) discusses the perceived tension that has emerged in Europe between religion and an increasingly secular society and its laws and customs. He believes the pervasiveness of this secularism has “penetrated the thinking and practices of Catholics and Catholic schooling” (Arthur, 2009, p. 237). Pike (2004, p. 150) also suggests that the influence of secularism so pervades current thinking that it is difficult for Christians to even articulate what Christian education is. Arthur (2009, p. 238) believes that Catholic schools are meant to be distinctive and offer an alternative education to secular state education. King (2010) writes, from a British perspective, when he discusses the difficulties schools face in reconciling religious and secular ideologies, as they work with secular Governments who fund them and the pluralist communities they exist in, while still maintaining their own distinctive religious character.
Schools exist within a particular society. The norms and values of that society contribute to shaping the institution. These shaping forces may be found in the expectations of parents and students. They can also be found in the values and understandings of education of school leaders. In Australia the norms and values of pluralism and multiculturalism shape the life of the school (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 5-6).

Aspinall says:

On the one hand, the church strives to be inclusive and tolerant as it takes its place among the other social institutions in a pluralistic, multicultural, democratic society. But on the other it desires and has a responsibility to be an exclusive, distinctive community with characteristic values and identity (Aspinall, 2003, p. 5).

The consequence is some ASIA are likely to reflect the pragmatic and market driven values of the world with only a veneer of the Christian faith (Collier, 2012, p. 32).

In Australia pluralism also has a profound effect on the identity and nature of Christian schools. However its impact, when compared to secularism, seems to be primarily internal. Cooling (2005, 2007), Donlevy (2007, 2008), Engebretson (2008), Johnson (1999), King (2010) and Mifsud (2010) identify that changing student populations have an impact on school ethos, how teachers engage students on a religious level and the way they teach religious education. The presence of secular students in Christian schools influences the way schools carry out their Christian mission partly because these students do not attend for religious reasons. Hofman and Hofman (2001) examine from the Dutch perspective why in an increasingly secular society parents still send their children to faith based schools. It seems that in the Dutch context parents see the school as effective in terms of educational outcomes and mild in terms of its religious influence. Anecdotally this issue is mirrored in both British and Australian contexts (Edwards, 2014, pp. 58-60).

**Political and legislative environment.**

The political climate of many countries in the West in regard to education has shifted over the last thirty years (Clarke, 2012, pp. 174-176; Kaye, 2003, p. 3). This shift has been marked by a number of policy themes that have significant implications for schools of all sorts. These implications include an emphasis on accountability, managerialism,
competition, exposure to market forces, privatization, and performativity (Clarke, 2012, p. 175). For schools there are accountability measures such as the My School website which makes information about school resources and performance public. State and national testing regimes have been introduced, along with a National Curriculum and discussion about pay linked to performance for teachers (Clarke, 2012, pp. 175, 180). Clarke summarises the active approach Governments have taken in the contemporary context,

the central purposes and potential contributions of education are economic and that the organization and practices of the education sector should be more closely aligned with market principles – underpin most if not all of the Australian government’s education rhetoric, policy, and practice (Clarke, 2012, p. 176).

The Commonwealth and State Governments play significant roles in the shaping the priorities of ASIA through their legislative and regulatory frameworks. National and state involvement in education has increased significantly in recent times even in the area of curriculum (Kaye, 2003, p. 6). This influence is intensified by the way that funding is given to private education providers by the state. A school’s dependence on this funding impacts and creates tension in the way a school carries out its mission (Aspinall, 2003, p. 2). Increased school funding from Governments has meant an increase in the school’s responsibility to Governmental requirements (Aspinall, 2003, p. 2; Caldwell, 2010, pp. 378-379). There are many things a school must do in order to receive various types of funding. Schools must demonstrate efficiency and accountability to the Government. In recent years the Federal Government has implemented a National Curriculum which dictates what and for how long schools must teach in certain subject areas (Caldwell, 2010, pp. 392-393; Clarke, 2012, p. 175).

In addition to education legislation there are also extensive industrial, business and professional regulations that impinge upon school life. This has led to the introduction of professional standards, strategic management and compliance regimens into school life (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 7-8).

ASIA’s varied political and legislative environment impinge upon the capacity they have to fulfil their mission on their own terms. This is so as the level of priority given to aspects of school life not required by the state or the market is by necessity reduced. It
has even been suggested that private schools may lose any real independence as accountability to Government requirements become more demanding (Caldwell, 2010, pp. 378-379).

**Competitive economic environment.**

ASIA exist in a competitive environment within which they compete for students, not only with each other but also with public schools and other independent schools. (Aspinall, 2003, pp. 8-9; Edwards, 2012a, pp. 48-52). There has, however, been an increased drift of students away from public education towards the private sector (Caldwell, 2010, p. 378). Schools therefore must compete in a market place which involves a variety of factors. The competitive environment necessitates work to discern what it is that customers, the parents, want. This is balanced with what people in the area can afford in comparison with other schools. Financial constraints are a potential obstacle to schools implementing the mission of the church in as complete a way as it might wish. This is exemplified when religious education is not given equal funding to other subjects or insufficient resources are allocated to chaplaincy.

While State and Federal government may dictate curriculum, market forces create external pressure for schools. One of the seeming advantages of a private school is its ability to provide a wider range of subjects because of the availability of additional resources. The growth of the private education sector seems to be related with parental ambition for their children and the role education can play in that (Kaye, 2003, p. 6). While the church may see the dual role for the school as being that of an educational and faith institution, parents primarily see the school as a provider of education (T. Wright, 2012, p. 1). Parents make decisions about schools based on what they see as the comparative merit of the alternatives. Caldwell sums this up in saying that “in exercising that choice in favour of private schools in increasing numbers, parents are making judgments about a range of matters including values, curriculum, teaching, facilities, safety, care, and expected effect on post school success” (2010, p. 379).

As an educational institution and a business that must remain viable the school must respond to these forces without losing its sense of mission.
Conclusion

There are many organisational factors that impinge upon an Anglican School’s ability to effectively use a plausibility structure approach for the fulfilment of their Christian mission and the development of faith in students. Their ability to act as a plausibility structure is impinged upon by competing internal and external factors. These include their need to function as a school, business and church organisation. External pressures such as legislative requirements and a competitive schools environment also decrease their freedom to act. Their intention to pass on a clear worldview is compromised internally by the presence of staff, students and teachers who do not hold that worldview themselves. Even their strategy for plausibility is impinged upon by the open nature of an Anglican approach to education.

A Systems Theory perspective on the operation of a plausibility structure approach to faith development in ASIA would indicate that there are significant factors which would mitigate against its success.
Chapter Three Summary

The organisation of ASIA means that creating an effective plausibility structure is difficult to create and maintain.

1. ASIA are complex organisations operating in a complex environment.
2. Systems theory allows this complexity to be explained in a systematic way.
3. There are key structures for the delivery of Christian mission goals in ASIA.
4. There are structural factors that impinge on the effectiveness of an ASIA plausibility structure for faith development.
5. There are internal impinging factors for ASIA using a plausibility structure for faith development.
6. There are external impinging factors for ASIA using a plausibility structure for faith development.
Chapter Four

Factors impinging on student socialisation

Assertion

Attention
- Anglican School Mission

Attention
- Plausibility Structure
- Student Socialisation

Decision
- Model and Tool for Evaluating Future Mission
Introduction

The organisational factors that impinge on ASIA’s ability to implement a plausibility structure for the Christian faith were explored in Chapter Three. It was concluded that ASIA face substantial internal and external challenges in constructing an effective plausibility structure for the Christian faith. In this chapter attention shifts to the students who are the focus of the school’s mission goals and actions. Particularly, the social factors that influence student worldview and development beyond that of the school context will be examined. This will provide the lens through which to assess if a functioning plausibility structure for the Christian faith is an effective strategy for the fulfilment of the school’s mission goals.

The school is not the only agent seeking to shape a student’s beliefs, values and worldview. An exploration of the other agents and influences shaping faith, along with a consideration of how forces within a school influence the faith of the individual student will enable a judgement to be made regarding the possible efficacy of a plausibility structure approach. Accordingly the school’s efforts will be placed in the context of the wider experience of the student.

Aspects of Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory will be used as the framework to analyse how an individual’s faith development is shaped by many factors within the Australian context. The faith development of school age children will be considered. While acknowledging that there may be significant differences between students at different age levels, focusing on a particular age group is not essential for this investigation as the contextual issues are the focus for this study rather than the personal characteristics.

Ecological Systems Theory.

An organisation’s ability to effectively implement a plausibility structure approach was the central consideration in the previous chapter. Systems theory was used in considering the broad range of factors impinging on the school’s ability to operate a plausibility structure approach effectively. An organisational focus however reveals only one set of impinging factors: those relating to how the school functions. Another set of impinging factors emerge by focusing on the students who are the subjects of the
socialisation that a plausibility structure approach attempts. Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory will be used in order to examine the wider context of the students who attend ASIA. This theory brings the concept of socialisation to the analysis which is a critical undergirding element of ASIA’s plausibility structure approach as outlined in Chapter Two.

Socialisation “is the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills and character traits that enable them to participate as effective members of groups and society” (Berns, 2013, p. 6). For young people, this process occurs in a complex environment with many different agents competing with or reinforcing each other’s particular worldview. These agents include family members, teachers, mentors, religious leaders and role models in the media and other wider spheres (Berns, 2013, p. 12). Many different techniques and processes are employed to influence young people to “behave, think and feel” (Berns, 2013, p. 12) in ways that conform with the worldview of the socialising agents. In order to put ASIA’s attempts at socialisation into perspective it is necessary to consider the wide array of agents that play a part in the development of young people. It is particularly important to account for both the intention and power of the socialisation being attempted by different agents.

There are many socialising factors that differentiate individuals from each other. Some of these factors will relate to the specific family, community and school a young person belongs to. Aspects of the person’s own psychology and physiology will also alter how socialisation occurs. However there are also significant similarities across populations that can be attributed to the culture of a particular country and society. Bronfenbrenner recognised this in stating that “within any culture or subculture, settings of a given kind – such as homes, streets or offices – tend to be very much alike, whereas between cultures they are distinctly different” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 4). These settings contribute significantly to the socialisation of young people in similar ways and will allow a picture of the students in ASIA to be developed by considering broad trends and patterns in the Australian population.

Bronfenbrenner’s work provides a suitable theoretical model to use for this type of analysis because it takes into account the individual and the wider context the individual
is situated within. This will enable an understanding of the school’s impact on the student’s development in relation to other influencing factors such as family, peers and the wider society. Furthermore Bronfenbrenner’s concept of *proximal processes* is particularly useful in evaluating the specific activities that ASIA use for the purpose of mission. This is the focus of Chapter Five.

**Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model of Human Development**

**Overview.**

Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory explores the role that the environment plays in shaping human development over the course of life (Bronfenbrenner, 1999, 2004). Prior to Bronfenbrenner’s work the development of children tended to be studied in narrow fields such as psychology, sociology and anthropology. Bronfenbrenner drew together the many aspects of a child’s world into a new field – the ecology of human development (Brendtro, 2006, pp. 163-163). The totality of the environment is so important in his understanding of development that he says, “if we want to change behaviour we have to change environments” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. x). Bronfenbrenner did not simply mean the immediate environment but recognised that people are impacted in profound ways by the things that occur in settings in which they are not even present (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3).

Bioecological systems theory has developed in significant ways since it was first articulated by Bronfenbrenner in 1979 (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 129). His early model focused on the explanation of nested social systems while modern developments have reemphasised the place of the individual. The most recent developments focus heavily on what Bronfenbrenner called proximal processes as the mechanisms of development (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 129). Proximal processes are actions or interactions that occur over time, often interacting with a significant other, and become more complex as they progress. Examples might include reading or playing with a child. Bronfenbrenner notes that his model has not undergone a paradigm shift but that the “centre of gravity” of the model moved away from the contextual structures towards the individual and the processes that shape formation (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 794). This shift reflects that as Bronfenbrenner’s model was accepted, research
became more focused on the context of the person rather than the characteristics of
the individual (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 794).

“The form, power, content and direction of proximal processes” which bring about
development in a person are mediated and vary according to the nature of the person,
the environment or context around them, the nature of the developmental outcomes
and elements of time (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130). Bronfenbrenner called a research
design allowing for the simultaneous analysis of all four elements a Process-Person-
Context-Time (PPCT) model (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130). In this chapter, the
influence of personal characteristics, context and one aspect of time, on faith
development will be considered. In Chapter Five process and time will be examined
more closely. This research utilises Bronfenbrenner’s PPCT loosely as a framework for
analysis and is not implementing a PPCT research design (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, &
Karnik, 2009).

The systems approach outlined by Bronfenbrenner is used here to examine the
different ecological settings or contexts in which a child engages over time
(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, pp. 22-27). These settings, which include family, school and
community, can explain developmental differences between young people (Berns,
2013, p. 15). The environment is conceived by Bronfenbrenner as a “set of nested
structures each inside the next” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). The inner most level is the
microsystem and contains the developing person. It may include contexts such as the
home and school. Mesosystems are the connections and relationships between two or
more of a developing person’s microsystems, such as between family and school (Berns,
2013, p. 20; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Exosystems are settings in which young people are
not present or active but that affect them through one of their microsystems. Examples
might include a parent’s work, a school board or government bodies (Berns, 2013, p.
21). Macrosystems represent the society and smaller subcultural groups to which a
person belongs. They shape belief systems, lifestyles and social interaction across
society (Berns, 2013, p. 22). Examples of macrosystems include a person’s country, class,
ancestry, religion and culture. Finally Bronfenbrenner describes the interaction of
ecological systems over time as the chronosystem. The chronosystem recognises that
major life and historical events influence people’s development (Berns, 2013, p. 25; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). All of these systems impact the individual in some way. Bronfenbrenner affirmed that it is those structures where people spend the majority of their time that have the greatest impact.

Figure 6. Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model – Nested Spheres

**Defining and measuring faith development.**

There are numerous ways that faith might be defined but a definition that fits with Bronfenbrenner’s model and allows for measurement of growth and development would be ideal (Bronfenbrenner, 2004). For the purpose of this research a very basic definition outlined by Strommen and Hardel is used (2000, p. 75). In their conception faith has three interrelated parts. It is a “commitment of the mind”, an “affair of the heart”, and it “results in good actions” (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 75).

Two points need to be considered under this definition of faith. First, each of the parts of this definition could be measured by evaluating the held beliefs of individuals,
their degree of commitment or enthusiasm for these beliefs and their lived actions that emerge from both. Because these can be measured growth and change in these factors can also be measured. There is a significant body of research that has measured different elements of each of these, primarily through the concepts of religiosity and spirituality (Good & Willoughby, 2006; Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Debate around what can and should be measured in these domains has occurred particularly focussing on the differences between religiosity and spirituality and how they relate to one another (Fetzer Institute & National Institute on Aging Working Group, 1999; Good & Willoughby, 2006; Paloutzian & Park, 2005). There is however no standard way of measuring religiosity or spirituality. This is because the terms are difficult to define and they cover a very broad range of human elements such as thoughts, values and actions. In this work the social influences leading to what is perceived by the researcher as a positive change is the key consideration. Examples of a positive change may include a change in ideas and values towards a Christian worldview or actions, or increases in frequency of actions, such as attending church or prayer. Much of the research done across this field therefore can be used to determine what social influences might have an impact on religiosity and spirituality. This is particularly the case for longitudinal studies that measure change over time (Fetzer Institute & National Institute on Aging Working Group, 1999; Paloutzian & Park, 2005).

The definition of faith development being used here encompasses elements of both spirituality and religiosity. Research that shows how social contexts and factors influence faith development will be of most significance. Measures of spirituality and religiosity therefore will be subsumed under the concept of faith development (Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Doing so will mean using studies that measure such things as beliefs and values, church attendance, religious practices and commitment (Fetzer Institute & National Institute on Aging Working Group, 1999; Paloutzian & Park, 2005).

Second, the definition of faith being used, here, namely a “commitment of the mind”, an “affair of the heart”, and “results in good actions” implies that faith cannot simply be taught (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, pp. 75-76). It is more than an intellectual exercise and does require a commitment of passions and actions (Bellous, 2006, pp. 171-
While there are those who may be socialised into faith from a young age, for a large minority a conversion or leap of faith must be made (Bellamy, Mou, & Castle, 2004, p. 10; Newbigin, 1986). This is not to deny that significant events and socialising processes do not contribute to a person’s conversion, even over a very long period of time. In ASIA where there is a large secular population the idea of conversion may be significant because few students may feel that they have been Christian for as long as they remember (Bellamy et al., 2004, pp. 10, 48). For students, their experiences in the school may contribute to their intellectual and emotional development in ways that lead to their conversion. This conversion does not need to be something dramatic. It may be gradual process culminating with the realisation that one now self identifies with the Christian faith and worldview (Bellamy et al., 2004, p. 10).

**Bronfenbrenner and faith development.**

Bronfenbrenner describes development as “a lasting change in the way in which a person perceives and deals with his environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). In this sense the environment as it is perceived is more important than the environment as it is. This conception of development is compatible with the definition of faith being employed in this work. Faith in its broadest sense is a way people perceive and deal with the world they live in. The intellectual element of faith, the “commitment of the mind” consists of a particular worldview. This worldview shapes what a person values and loves, being the “affair of the heart”, and also how they respond so that their actions “result(s) in good actions” (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 75).

According to Bronfenbrenner environmental factors are key shapers of the human person. This is so to the extent that he sees human development as a “product of interaction between the growing human organism and its environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 16). Thus the reality of the influence of social and cultural factors in conversion and faith is supported (Yang & Abel, 2014, pp. 5-6). Benson affirms the idea that people have an intrinsic desire to seek meaning and transcendence, linking transcendence with spirituality. He states that “this propensity [to seek meaning and transcendence] can be enriched or thwarted within an ecological context of family, peers, community, and, in many cases, a religious tradition and community” (Benson et
al., 2003, p. 208). In this way spirituality is not different from other aspects of the human person such as their physical or intellectual selves, the development of which can be measured using Bronfenbrenner’s model.

**Methodology**

Bronfenbrenner’s nested social spheres will be used as a model to systematically describe factors influencing the faith development of young people in ASIA. The direction these influences take and indications of their power will be outlined. The chronosystem will be explored first in order to consider the all-encompassing societal changes in religiosity that have taken place in Australia in recent history. Next the key aspects of the macrosystem in relation to religion will be considered followed by the microsystems of family, peers and friends, media and school. Finally meso- and exosystems will be explored.

**Faith development**

**Faith development and the chronosystem.**

The chronosystem “involves temporal changes in ecological systems, or within individuals producing new conditions that affect development” (Berns, 2013, p. 25). Development occurs differently for every individual and it is beyond the scope of this research to consider the many important factors that may change over time for individuals, even in regard to the less influential microsystems. It is possible for this research to explore the significant changes in the macrosystems of Australia that relate to faith development of students in ASIA, specifically the changing place of religion in the Australian context. These changes were touched on briefly in Chapter Three but will be considered in more depth here.

Over the last fifty years there have been clear indications that Australia is becoming a more secular society in a number of ways. These have included a decrease in the role religion plays in relation to the state, a general decline in religious belief and practice in society and a move towards pluralism, in which faith in God is one option among many (Collier, 2012, pp. 30-32; P. Norris & Inglehart, 2011, p. 5; Taylor, 2007, pp. 2-3). Voas and Chaves’ research characterises this in indicating that “each successive generation is
slightly less religious than the one before” (2016, p. 1540). Australians are not necessarily hostile to religion but tend to be simply disinterested in it (Frame, 2009, pp. 103, 189). This is amplified that while many people have positive feelings towards Christianity few act on this by participating in church life or practice (McCrindle Research, 2011, pp. 1-3).

Frame argues that “while religious belief in Australia was never strong it was pervasive” (Frame, 2009, p. 37). Unlike other English colonies that were established with religious motivations Australia was founded for very pragmatic purposes. Even though Christianity came to Australia as a central part of the establishment of government, there was no legal compulsion for people to follow any particular religious practices (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). There are indications that very early in European settlement many Australians had abandoned personal religious commitment even while maintaining its ritual and practice (Clark & Cathcart, 1993, p. 506). For a significant part of Australia’s colonial history, “anyone who refused to profess religious belief was consciously standing apart from society and popular culture” (Frame, 2009, p. 59). So while religious faith may not have been forced on people religious observance was part of the social fabric and was supported by a range of social institutions.

The position that Christianity once held within Australia has changed over the last one hundred years. It continues to change today. Between 1911 and 2011 the number of people reporting no religion on the census increased from 0.4% to 22% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, pp. 2-3; Frame, 2009). A significant increase in this percentage occurred in 1971 when specific instructions for reporting “no religion” were given for the first time. In 1971 the percentage of those reporting “no religion” rose from 0.8% in the 1966 census to 6.75%. Since this time the percentage of those purporting to have “no religion” has been increasing by an average of 3.9% per census, but between 2001 and 2011 the highest increase occurred of 6.8% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, pp. 3-4; Frame, 2009, p. 89).

Church attendance has also declined over the last sixty years. Between 1950 and 1980 those claiming to attend church at least monthly declined from 44% of Australians to less than 25% (Kaldor, 1999). Between the 1996 and 2001 the National Church Life
Survey showed that strong growth was recorded in Pentecostal and some Evangelical denominations. Anglican and Protestant denominational attendance grew by 1% while Catholic attendance declined by 13%. Yet in this period overall weekly church attendance in Australia declined by 7% (National Church Life Survey, 2004). Another significant change that has taken place in the last fifty years has been the decrease in younger generations in the church. In 1966 the age profile of church attenders matched that of the wider community (Mol, 1971). A gap between the generations began to open during the 1960s with younger attenders leaving the church and not returning (Powell & Jacka, 2008, p. 5).

Divergent reasons have been given for this decline in religious identification and church attendance in Australia but the most significant is that it is part of a dramatic paradigm change that has taken place in Western society (Arthur, 2009, pp. 230-231; Bosch, 1991; Fillebrown, 2007, pp. 82-83; Mannion & Mudge, 2008; Mason et al., 2007, pp. 51, 56; Mead, 1991; P. Norris & Inglehart, 2011, p. 5). This shift at the macrosystem level of Western culture is significant because it provides the ideological instructions by which the lower systems order themselves. While the roots of this paradigm shift may be located in the Enlightenment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the intellectual context in which Christianity seeks to be influential continues to change, becoming more suspicious and hostile with each decade (Arthur, 2009, pp. 229-230; Cooling, 2007, pp. 23-24; Mead, 1991; Williams, 2006). Some have characterised this changing paradigm as the passing of the period of Christendom in which whole societies in the western world, their governments and people, were Christian by default (Mead, 1991). In many places the church no longer finds itself surrounded by a community that accepts or supports it values, teaching or central place in society (Williams, 2006; Worsley, 2008, pp. 75-76, 82). This movement is witnessed as Governments tend to minimise the influence of religious organisations, from being a partner with Government to being simply another interest or lobby group (Arthur, 2009, p. 238). The rise of “New Atheism” as a popular intellectual movement also indicates a change in the social view of the relevance and place of Christianity in the West (Peterson, 2007). While many Australians still claim belief in God this too has dropped from 95% in 1947 to 75% in 2001 (P. Norris & Inglehart, 2011, p. 90).
These chronological changes in the cultural and religious macrosystems in Australia are significant because they mean that young people are growing up in a society where religious observance has gone from being a social norm to something that is an optional and an artefact of personal choice. While Australian society may still hold some residual connection with the Christian faith as evidenced in the high rates of affiliation with particular Christian denominations on the Census, rates of church attendance bear out lower levels of participation (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). So young people in Australia are growing up in a society where significant public discourse is occurring over the place of religion in society and less people participate in its organised forms than in previous eras.

**Faith development and the macrosystem.**

The macrosystem refers to the “society and subculture to which the developing person belongs” (Berns, 2013, p. 22). The macrosystems of Australia are particularly important in this research as they are the overarching systems that impact all who attend ASIA in one way or another. A macrosystem acts as a “pattern or set of instructions for exosystems, mesosystems and microsystem” (Berns, 2013, p. 22). Cultural, religious or other large trends in Australian society have the power to significantly impact what occurs in exosystems, mesosystems and microsystems. A cultural macrosystem influences the worldview and actions of those within it.

**Religion in Australia.**

It was noted when considering the chronosystem that a significant and continuing shift in the religious culture of Australia has taken place over the last fifty years (Mason et al., 2007, p. 51). In this section the current cultural state of Australia as it relates to religion will be considered in more detail. While a shift towards secularism and away from religious observance may have occurred, an examination of the current attitudes towards religion in Australia will provide a clearer picture of the current religious climate.

According to the 2011 Australian census 61% of Australians still claim a Christian affiliation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014, p. 51). Other surveys however indicate significantly lower levels of adherence (Mason et al., 2007, p. 74; McCrindle Research,
A Roy Morgan survey in the last quarter of 2013 revealed that 52.6% of people claimed Christianity as their religion (Roy Morgan Research, 2014). A 2011 survey by McCrindle Research revealed that “while 40% of people identified their religion as Christianity” the figure dropped to 33% when asked if they agreed with the statement “I consider myself as a Christian” (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 8).

Many Australians still nominally identify with Christianity but this affiliation does not necessarily translate into high levels of knowledge, belief or practice (Mason et al., 2007, pp. 96, 124). The 2010 General Social Survey (GSS) revealed that in Australia 15% of men and 22% of women aged 18 years and over claimed to have actively participated in a religious or spiritual group. This nominal affiliation is emphasised by the finding that only 7% of men and 9% of women reported that they did voluntary work for their church or religious organisation (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013).

Statistics for church attendance also reveal that while Catholics are the nation's leading church-attenders with 50.2% of adherents attending, only 12% -13% of those identifying as Anglicans are church attenders (Gilchrist, 2004; National Church Life Survey, 2011). Across all participating denominations the National Church Life Survey in 2011 found that 17% of respondents attended church at least monthly (National Church Life Survey, 2011). Further, a McCrindle study indicates only 8% of Australians attend church regularly (McCrindle, 2013). The Anglican Church’s own national webpage suggests that weekly attendance may be as low as 5% of those who identify with the denomination in the census (Anglican Church of Australia, 2014). McCrindle’s research has revealed that of the 66% of those who identify themselves with a particular religion, 42% indicated that they “rarely or never worshiped as a group”, another 24% indicated that they were not at all active in practicing religion even though they identified with it (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 6). Only 13% “indicated that they were extremely involved with practising their religion or worshipped as part of a group regularly” (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 6) While a majority of Australians may still identify with the Christian faith a significant proportion of this number do not actively practice or engage with it on a regular or consistent basis (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 6).
McCrindle Research found that 33% of people agree with the statement “I consider myself Christian” and he identified another 24% as being “warm” towards Christianity. This was because they either said they believed in Christianity but didn't practise it, believed much of it but had doubts, or believed much of the ethics and values of Christianity but did not practise it (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 7). Additionally McCrindle asked questions of people’s openness to the Christian faith. The results indicated that 51% of respondents were not at all open to the Christian faith with the remaining 49% at various stages of openness (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 2). McCrindle Research found that Australians rarely if ever talk about religion (McCrindle Research, 2011).

When asked the question: Do you ever talk about spirituality or religion when you gather with friends, 47% responded “no–never” and 46% responded “occasionally”. This indicates the low priority religion has in everyday discussion (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 26). When asked about the delivery of information relating to spirituality the least popular method of engagement was small groups with 66% saying they were not at all interested. The more popular methods of engagement were those of a more private nature such as accessing websites and television (McCrindle Research, 2011). This seemed to indicate according to writers of the report that Australians would prefer to explore this information discretely. This provides further evidence that Australians feel that religion should be kept private (McCrindle Research, 2011, p. 27).

Australia is often described as being pluralistic however the 2016 Census data reveals very low levels of identification with other religions. Two point four percent of the population identify as Buddhist, 1.9% Hindu and 2.6% Islamic. The largest group after the combined Christian denominations is “no religion” at 30.1% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). In regards to those attending schools it might be noted that younger people make up a high proportion of those reporting no religion (around half who did so being less than 30 years old). Older people in Australia are considerably more likely than younger Australians to report a religion: only 10% of people aged 65 years and over reported no religion in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013).
A global Gallup poll conducted in 2008 indicated that nearly 70% of Australians stated that religion had no importance to them. While a Nielsen poll conducted in 2009 claimed that 50% of Australians say religion is important or very important in their lives, 84% agree that “religion and politics should be separate” (Nielsen, 2009, p. 1).

While being the largest religious group in Australia, Christianity does not represent an overwhelming majority of Australians. Many of those who claim a Christian belief seem to do little to act on it. Further there are many people who hold other religious beliefs or more likely no religious beliefs at all. In Australia religion is considered a private matter not to be discussed regularly or openly (Mason et al., 2007, p. 164). Accordingly Australians seem to be somewhat apathetic or disinterested in religion.

The impression the religious macrosystem in Australia has on young people could be summarised by saying that religion is characteristically an individual choice and not considered as important for most people’s lives. There are many people who adhere to no religion at all and this is considered to be an acceptable choice in Australia. Even those who claim to be an adherent of a particular religion do not necessarily practise it. This type of environment would be likely to discourage young people from adopting faith or at least feel apathetic about it. Unless there are powerful influences exerted towards Christianity it is unlikely that the wider culture would encourage young people to be Christian.

**Faith development and the exosystem.**

The exosystem refers to settings in which children are not active participants, but that affect them in one of their microsystems (Berns, 2013, p. 21). Two exosystems that have the potential for significant impact on students in ASIA are those of the governing body of the school, and the state and federal governments which develop policy and regulations for schools. The nature of these bodies in shaping the religious life of the school were discussed in Chapter Three when considering the systemic factors impinging on ASIA’s ability to operate a plausibility structure. In brief the decisions these bodies make may impinge on the school’s freedom and ability to organise itself in way that would maximise outcomes in the domain of faith development.
The nature of parental work today in Australia has the potential to have significant impact on the way parents socialise their children. Over the last three decades there have been major changes to the configuration of work and family life in Australia. Increasingly work is demanding more of people meaning that they may spend less time in the home interacting with children. There is evidence in Australia that this is occurring. The majority of households now have two parents employed. Working hours have increased since the 1970’s and many workers have a dual caring role involving both their own parents and children (Families Australia, 2008, p. 1).

While parental influence towards the development of a Christian faith is positive for children in households with Christian parents, research in Australia and overseas also indicates that Christian families do not do many of the things in the home that might develop faith (Bunge, 2008, p. 349; Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 31). Some studies indicate that very few families even discuss faith in the home setting (Bunge, 2008, p. 349). While families may go to church and participate in its life they do not reinforce it in the home setting (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 31). If schools are to impact students in terms of faith development they may need the support of their families.

**Faith development and the mesosystem.**

The mesosystem is focused on the interactions and linkages that occur between two microsystems (Berns, 2013, p. 20). In particular the linkages between the family and other microsystems are important because of the role parents may exert (Bogenschneider, 1998; Cornwall, 1988, p. 1672). Regnerus, Smith and Smith note that adolescent religiosity has consistently been linked with peers, family and formal religious education (Regnerus et al., 2004, p. 28). Research into religious development seems to suggest that when family, peers and church are in alignment they reinforce one another and increase the strength of socialisation (Cornwall, 1988, p. 17). In Australia “students from church attending families are more likely to believe in God and attend church and will generally respond more positively to encouragement for their faith within the school” (Hughes & Reid, 2012, p. 14). Unfortunately within Australia the data would suggest that a minority of students would have religiously active families, belong or participate in a church or have many religious peers.
**Faith development in the microsystem.**

The microsystem includes those “activities and relationships with significant others experienced by a developing person in a particular small setting” (Berns, 2013, p. 16). Family, peers, the school and the media are the four key microsystems for this study. It is widely acknowledged that these microsystems act as powerful socialising forces in the lives of the young people who dwell in them (Cornwall, 1988). While each will have a varying degree of influence on different individuals, these microsystems are central to the socialisation of young people in Australian society (Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 22).

**Family.**

Family is the microsystem that has the most significant impact on human development in a range of domains (Berns, 2013, p. 77). In most societies the family is the primary socialiser of the child, and the parents are the main agents (Berns, 2013, p. 77; Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 22). In the early years, interaction with family members makes up the majority of the child’s experience of the world. Throughout childhood, parent-child interactions occur with a very high frequency over an extended period of time. Furthermore parents generally have a deep and significant relationship with their child. This exerts a powerful influence over their development into adulthood (Sowmya, 2013, p. 247; Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 22). While questions exist around the influence parents and family have as a person grows and matures it is generally agreed that they remain an enduring influence throughout life (Myers, 1996, p. 864; Sowmya, 2013, p. 247; Swart & Grauerholz, 2012, p. 30). Australian surveys confirm the importance of families by showing that young people themselves consider their parents as most influential in their lives (Cave, Fildes, Luckett, & Wearing, 2015, p. 16; Fildes, Robbins, Cave, Perrens, & Wearing, 2014, p. 14).

Within this context it is not surprising that the family microsystem contains the most significant influences on the development of faith (Bellamy et al., 2004, p. 4; Cornwall, 1988; Hood, Spilka, & Hill, 2009, pp. 112-114, 118; Martin, White, & Perlman, 2003, pp. 169, 185; Mason et al., 2007, p. 157; Myers, 1996; Paloutzian & Park, 2005; Regnerus et al., 2004, pp. 28, 34; Voas & Storm, 2012, p. 378). While it can be recognised that the “parent–child transmission of religiosity” (Regnerus et al., 2004, p. 28) is significant and
that “one’s religiosity is largely determined by the religiosity of one’s parents” (Myers, 1996, p. 858) it is certainly not inevitable that children will adopt the faith or practices of their parents (Voas & Storm, 2012, p. 378). International research indicates that only half of parental religiosity is transmitted to children leading to generational decline (Voas & Crockett, 2005, p. 22). Parental attitudes and enthusiasm to church attendance, prayer, religiousness and religious ideology have been identified as significant in faith development (Bengtson et al., 2009, pp. 340-342; Francis & Brown, 1991, p. 119; Mason et al., 2007, pp. 156-157, 164-165; Regnerus et al., 2004, p. 28).

Australian research on the social influences on faith finds that parents have been the most significant influence for church attenders and active Christians (Bellamy et al., 2004; Mason et al., 2007, p. 156). For Anglican and Protestant church attenders mothers were a significant influence for 50% of those reporting with fathers being influential for 33% (Bellamy et al., 2004). Mason, Singleton and Webber confirm the overwhelming influence of parents and the particular importance of a mother’s attendance at church (Mason et al., 2007, pp. 156-157). Seventy five percent of those who become Christian before the age of 10 cite their parents as being the most influential people. The percentage reporting parents as the primary influence declines to 33% for those who became Christian after 20 years of age (Bellamy et al., 2004).

There are a range of variables relating to the parental influence that have found to be significant. Bellamy found that parental faith in God was influential for 68% of responders while the way they lived out that faith was influential for 53% (Bellamy et al., 2004, p. 4). The level of importance parents place on religion is also influential. Smith discovered that 67% of adolescents place a high value on their religion if their parents did as well (Blakesley, 2011, p. 8). Mason, Singleton and Webber identify mother’s attendance and family talk about religion as significant for active Christians (Mason et al., 2007, p. 156). Voas and Storm highlight that in Australia the impact on children of two church going parents is stronger than just one (2012, p. 393).

The research discussed so far underlines the significant influence parents in Australia have in the domain of faith development. In fact it has been found through cross-national research that in more secular countries like Australia family influence is more
significant than in more religious nations (Mason et al., 2007, p. 157; Voas & Storm, 2012, p. 393). This however should not be interpreted as a sign of hope in a nation with declining religious adherence. In Australia, approximately “12% of children living in a couple family had both parents reporting no religion” while another “11% had one parent reporting no religion” (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). The Australian Bureau of Statistics found that 79% of children responded that they had no religion if at least one of their parents also cited no religion. When both parents reported that they had no religion the figure rises to 97% (2013). A tiny 2% of young people in the 0-14 age bracket reported having a religion if neither of their parents did (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). These results further underline the powerful influence parents exert over children in aspects of faith and religiosity and that culture is not simply transmitted unidirectionally (Paloutzian & Park, 2005, p. 133).

**Peers and friends.**

After parents and family the socialising influence of peers and friends is generally identified as being of most significance (Blakesley, 2011, pp. 8-9; Erickson, 1992, p. 131; Hood et al., 2009, p. 118; Ozorak, 1989, pp. 460-461; Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Indeed in particular areas, such as delinquent behaviour, peer influence seems to have more impact than parental or family factors (Caputo, 2004, p. 504).

It seems that friends and peers are important in acquiring and maintaining religious beliefs and behaviour (Ozorak, 1989, pp. 460-461; Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Research conducted by the National Church Life Survey has 21% of responders indicating that friends and neighbours were influential in faith development (Bellamy et al., 2004, p. 40). While the Christian Research Association found that in Catholic Schools young people report that friends are also significant (Hughes & Reid, 2012, p. 13). Further research carried out in twenty ASIA saw students rank friends as second most important next to family with regard to the “relative importance of various influence on their thinking about life” (Hughes, 2012).

Young people appear to surround themselves with people who have similar religious beliefs (Blakesley, 2011, pp. 8-9; Gunnoe & Moore, 2002, p. 620; Ozorak, 1989, pp. 460-461). Regnerus, Smith and Smith found that if the church attendance patterns of one’s
friends are low this will decrease the likelihood of a young person going to church themselves (Regnerus et al., 2004, pp. 34‐35). Mason, Singleton and Webber found church attendance of friends a significant influence in Australia (Mason et al., 2007, p. 156). The exact mechanism for how this socialisation among peers occurs is unclear but it seems that peers communicate what behaviour is appropriate and accepted in a group. They model particular patterns of behaviour, and they discuss issues around worldview and in relation to religious faith (Erickson, 1992, p. 140). This communicative engagement with peers and the sharing of common activity does then contribute to an adolescent’s religiosity or lack thereof (Blakesley, 2011, p. 9).

Mass media

Mass media refers to a wide range of communication methods in which large audiences are able to receive information. This includes broadcast, print and digital media and covers artefacts such books, magazines, television, videos, computers, radio and the internet (Berns, 2013, pp. 204‐205). Young people are socialised differently by mass media than other socialising agents. They have a much more direct role in what socialises them in this domain due to greater choice and control over what they consume (Arnett, 1995, p. 529). In effect they tend to self-socialise depending on their personal preferences. This may mean that they will receive different or conflicting socialisation to the other sources in their Microsystems.

On average young people in Australia in 2007 spent a total of four hours and 49 minutes consuming media a week (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2010, p. 2). This includes engagement with traditional broadcast television, DVD’s and downloaded audio visual content (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2010, pp. 2-3).

Increasingly the internet is a key socialiser because of its ubiquity and frequency of use. Over any four week period 95% of 8-11 year olds and 100% of the 16-17 year olds surveyed had accessed the internet (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2011b, p. 6). The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated in the 12 month period prior to April 2009 79% of children aged 5-14 years accessed the internet (Australian Bureau
of Statistics, 2011, p. 2). In 2007 it was found that 17% of children had a computer in their bedroom, 10% with internet access (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011, p. 2).

Australian adolescents vary in their internet usage with evidence suggesting that between 10-30% may spend in excess of 10 hours week (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011, p. 4; Raising Children Network, 2010). Time spent using the internet increases with age (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011, p. 4). As internet enabled mobile phone usage has increased with 94% of young people owning a phone by 17 year of age, ease of internet access also increases (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2011b, p. 31).

As young people age their use of the internet becomes increasingly important (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2011a, p. 3). It shifts from being an activity that is used to fill gaps between other activities to being a primary activity in itself. Accordingly it is a “source of entertainment, information and education” (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2011a, p. 3). Social media is then increasingly important and has become for young people a primary way of developing and expressing their identity (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2011a, pp. 13, 39). The frequency and way young people engage with media means they are developing their own culture (Raising Children Network, 2010).

It seems that the consumption of certain sources of media may influence the practice and importance of religion in young people’s daily life, but it may not affect their beliefs (Davignon, 2013). In the USA one researcher found that “viewing R-rated movies does indeed lead to decreases in church attendance and salience of religious faith, but it does not influence certainty and selective acceptance of religious beliefs” (Davignon, 2013, p. 615). Further, exposure to media depicting certain behaviours is reported to increase intention to engage in those behaviours (L’Engle, Brown, & Kenneavy, 2006, pp. 189,191). This link between consumption of particular media content and demonstrable behaviours may indicate that it plays a significant socialising role in the lives of young people.
Media is now a very significant socialiser of young people. The media they have access to will be pluralistic like the society they are embedded in. The influence of media must however be seen in its context. Young people do not accept and absorb everything they see. Their processing of the content is “shaped by a range of other influences, including interactions with peers, parental guidance, family attitudes, the things they learn at school, cultural trends, their personal likes and dislikes, and their sense of place in the world” (Raising Children Network, 2010).

**School.**

The school environment is a significant socialiser of young people (Barrett et al., 2007, p. 1024; Rîşnoveanu, 2010). In Australia most children spend 12 years in formal primary and secondary education. This usually involves attending school for roughly six hours a day for 40 weeks of the year. This quantity of time spent in a defined community will have a considerable impact on a range of developmental areas (Berns, 2013). The ways that ASIA seek to socialise children with respect to faith was outlined in Chapter Three. Not all of the socialisation that takes place within the school is under the control of the governing, teaching and supportive structures of the school. Socialisation also occurs in all the informal settings of the school including the playground and between classes as students interact with one another. It is then a plural socialising universe (Rîşnoveanu, 2010, p. 76).

Research on the impact of the school environment on student religiosity has been generated primarily from Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States of America. While there may be social and cultural differences between these places and Australia, there are enough similarities to provide initial indications of how the Australian context may perform. Each of these contexts arise from the Western tradition of thought and culture, and the research drawn from each context explores Christian schools in a pluralistic society. There is some research in the Australian context focussing on Catholic Schools. Even though this research does not consider the specific context of ASIA, as each of the different fields of data examines socialisation in schools it can begin to give an indication of how it may progress within ASIA.
**Dutch and German research.**

Dutch Protestant, Catholic and Public Schools have been found to have “no significant main effect on religious commitments and explorations of pupils” (Bertram-Troost, de Roos, & Miedema, 2007, p. 132). Once background variables such as religious denomination and importance of parent worldview were considered the differences between the schools were insignificant and had no real impact on a student’s worldview or religious identity formation (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007, pp. 146-147). In the German context it was found that once the student’s own religiosity was accounted for there were only small differences between the schools, irrespective of type, indicating that the school programme had little impact on changing the student’s values (Hofmann-Towfigh, 2007, p. 460).

**American research.**

A number of researchers have used the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (NLSAH) to explore school effect on student religiosity in the United States of America. One of the factors found to be most important in the religious transformation of adolescents was the religiosity of schoolmates (Regnerus & Uecker, 2006, pp. 220, 232). There is some relationship between the church attendance patterns of one’s school mates and a young person’s probability of going to church. The importance school mates place on religion in their own life also has an impact, either positive or negative (Regnerus et al., 2004, pp. 34-35). Further the overall level of religiosity amongst the students in the school seems to impact adolescent religiosity more than the religious status of the school (Regnerus et al., 2004, p. 34). In other words a school with a high number of religious students will have a greater impact than those with only a few. However religious schools appear to have a general impact on religious service attendance and religious decision making of students (Uecker, 2009, p. 364).

Uecker discovered using the NLSAH that students who attended a protestant school were more religious as young adults than those who attended a secular school. Uecker concludes that “protestant schools appear to be successful agents of religious socialization in part because they foster a religious environment” (Uecker, 2009, p. 364). He affirms the idea that religious environments serve as effective plausibility structures.
and that they steer individuals into other religious contexts. In effect students who experience a strong plausibility structure will seek out other strong plausibility structures after school in order to sustain their faith. Uecker suggest this has to do with the emphasis school administrators place on religious development in the school. One of the key differences between school types is the degree to which they placed religious development as a primary goal (Baker, Han, & Broughman, 1996, pp. 7-9; Uecker, 2009, p. 365). Finally Barrett et al using the NLSAH found that “students religious beliefs and behaviours are influenced systematically and observably by the type of religious climate within the school” (Barrett et al., 2007, p. 1024). They found that the religiosity of the school does positively predict public and private religiosity.

Uecker concludes that immersion in a religious culture in a school can have an impact on young people. He says

Protestant schoolers are surrounded by a community of religious peers and adults who place a high premium on religious faith and practice and who encourage religious and spiritual development in students. This religious community serves as a plausibility structure that helps to sustain religious commitment (Uecker, 2008, p. 580).

Britain.

British research concludes that school had very little real impact on adolescent attitude to prayer and even a small negative finding for those attending Church of England secondary schools when compared to the effect of church and home (Francis & Brown, 1991, pp. 119-120). However where there is a high level of religiosity amongst peers and the Christian faith is central to the life of the school a positive impact can be discerned (Francis, ap Siôn, & Village, 2014, pp. 51-52). A review of a wide range of recent research by Green concluded that while Church of England Schools can help affirm the religious beliefs of Anglican students they seem to have little impact on students with no existing belief (Green, 2009, p. 42). Considering all the international research, there is a lack of consistency across the board, however there does not appear to be a clear school impact on faith development (Green, 2009, pp. 77-78).
Australia.

There has been relatively little research conducted in Australia on school influence on faith. Work done by Hughes and Reid indicates that school encouragement can work well for those attending church but “on the other hand students with little interest in religious faith will often act negatively when they encounter it in school” (Hughes & Reid, 2012, p. 14). They indicate that student background is a significant influence and that there is little the school can do to influence students if the family has no interest (Hughes & Reid, 2012, p. 13). Hughes and Reid also note that there is considerable difference between schools where “at one school just 12% of students affirmed the school helped them to believe in God, whereas at the other end of the spectrum 69% of students said their school helped them to believe” (Hughes & Reid, 2012, p. 14). Mason, Singleton and Webber found that the type of school either private, Catholic or government showed no significant influence on student spirituality (Mason et al., 2007, p. 165). In outlining their conclusion however they highlight the limitations of their research and affirm that a more focussed investigation needs to occur (Mason et al., 2007, p. 165).

Broadly speaking the findings of these studies seem to indicate that school environment is important but primarily with respect to the religiosity of one’s classmates rather than the religious status of the school. In essence it is more important that many religiously leaning students attend the school than that the school proclaims itself Christian. This suggests that an irreligious student who attends a school with a high level of general religiosity, that is many church attending and religiously inclined students, may be more likely to be influenced towards religiosity themselves. There are indications however that with sufficient religiously inclined students and a strong focus on the Christian aspects of the school that there will be some impact on students.

Conclusion

In Australia the majority of students in ASIA are socialised in a milieu that while not necessarily against religious expression is not overtly religious. The Australian chrono–and macrosystems do not socialise people towards the Christian faith. The movement in these systems has been away from what was primarily a Christian culture towards a secular and pluralistic one. The most significant socialiser of faith amongst the
microsystems is the family. Friends, peers, the media and school also contribute to this faith socialisation but they are not as powerful an influence as the family, either negatively or positively. The school environment can function as a plausibility structure for the Christian faith but it is highly dependent on the religiosity of the students attending. The religiosity of the teachers and the commitment of the school to maintain a Christian ethos as a primary focus is also important. For the majority of students in ASIA most of the socialising agents they interact with will not encourage the adoption of the Christian faith. In this broader context of socialising agents the school will be working against powerful forces when seeking to influence student faith development. This is particularly true of those students who do not come from Christian families.
Chapter Four Summary

The wider context of students who attend ASIA means that a plausibility structure approach for the development of faith faces significant opposition.

1. Young people are socialised across many contexts.
2. Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory provides a lens for analysing the social influences on young people in the domain of faith development.
3. Chronosystem changes in Australia means that young people find themselves in a society that has moved away from religious belief being a social norm to one where it is an optional and personal choice.
4. The Australian macrosystem is largely secular in terms of religious belief and practice. This means that young people in ASIA would not be influenced towards faith by the macrosystem.
5. The Exosystems of school governing bodies, and state and federal governments have significant potential to shape the Christian ecology of the school in positive and negative ways. The changing nature of parental work may have a significantly negative impact in Australia.
6. Mesosystem linkages supporting faith development are weak or non-existent for the majority of students in ASIA.
7. The Microsystems of family, peers and the media are significant influencers for faith development. Students in ASIA are unlikely to experience them as encouraging towards the Christian faith.
8. Schools can be influencers of faith development if their plausibility structure is strong. This is a challenge for ASIA to address.
Chapter Five

A Framework and Tool for Evaluating Mission

Assertion

Attention

Anglican School Mission

ASIA as a Plausibility Structure

Student Socialisation

Attention

Plausibility Structure Hypothesis

Decision

Model and Tool for Evaluating Future Mission
Introduction

This study began by giving Attention to the Christian mission of ASIA. The statements ASIA and their governing and affiliate bodies make about mission and the actions they use to implement this mission where explored. It was noted that an overarching strategy seemed to be present in ASIA’s Christian mission. The use of the school as a plausibility structure for faith development was established. Accordingly a plausibility structure approach is a suitable description of ASIA’s missional strategy.

In the Assertion phase of this study the effectiveness of ASIA’s plausibility structure approach was explored. As the plausibility structure approach employs the school as a vehicle of socialisation its ability to act effectively as such was examined using systems theory. Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory was then used as a framework for evaluating the likely effectiveness of the school’s socialisation attempts in light of the wider contexts young people exist within.

Young people are the targets of a wide range of socialising forces, some more powerful than others. A plausibility structure approach may be less effective at developing faith in students in ASIA than would be hoped for, for two reasons:

1. The internal plausibility structure of the school for the Christian faith may be compromised and therefore present a plurality of worldviews.
2. Even if the school were able to produce an effective plausibility structure, the external contexts and systems that socialise young people in Australia are likely to be at odds with the direction of the school’s socialising efforts and provide more powerful systems of socialisation.

That students may be socialised into the Christian faith in the school because they observe it as an attractive or plausible worldview is not flawed in and of itself. There is evidence that this strategy can be effective in influencing the religiosity of young people in certain circumstances. This is so if the plausibility structure is very strong and supported by other plausibility structures such as family and church (Cornwall, 1988; Lowe, 2012; Uecker, 2009).
The suitability of ASIA’s Christian mission goals are not being brought into question. It is not being suggested that ASIA should stop seeking to help students explore, experience and understand the Christian faith. Neither is it being advised they cease from seeking to build a community shaped by the Christian faith. InAsserting the pervasiveness of other socialising forces however the plausibility structure approach taken by ASIA may have limited or compromised effectiveness for faith development.

In the Deciding phase of this thesis investigative action needs to be taken to discern what ASIA may do to further its Christian mission. The role relevant systems and contexts play in socialising young people and how these may be used to evaluate the elements of ASIA’s Christian mission has been explored. Bronfenbrenner’s model will continue to be employed to provide the elements for a fuller analysis of local conditions and as a guide to action for faith development in the school setting. The use of Bronfenbrenner’s model of person, process, context and time to this point has centred primarily on person, context and some aspects of time. In preparing for this fuller analysis the elements of process and time now need to be considered. In doing so a framework for evaluating Christian mission in ASIA may then be more clearly articulated. This will in turn give rise to the creation of a tool for evaluating mission actions in schools and the articulation of future directions for the Christian mission of ASIA.

**Bronfenbrenner and Proximal Processes**

Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model of development centres on four key elements and the interactive and changing relationships between them (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 795). The four components are process, person, context and time. In Chapter Four the roles person and context play in this model were outlined and then used to consider the socialising influences on young people in Australia. In Bronfenbrenner’s later work processes became the core of the model because he came to realise the significant power proximal processes can have over context and personal characteristics (Tudge et al., 2009, p. 199).
Bronfenbrenner outlines the key features of these processes in two propositions:

**Proposition I**

[H]uman development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment. To be effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130).

**Proposition II**

The form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes effecting development vary systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the developing person; of the environment—both immediate and more remote—in which the processes are taking place; the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration; and the social continuities and changes occurring over time through the life course and the historical period during which the person has lived (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130).

Bronfenbrenner considers proximal processes as the “primary mechanism producing human development” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 795). Proximal processes include actions such as nursing a baby, playing with a young child, group play, reading, caring for others and learning. They are activities that are repeated and become more complex over time. When proximal processes take place between two people who have a strong emotional attachment the developmental power of the process is increased (Bronfenbrenner, 2004, p. 130). Proximal process may even be strong enough to mediate the effect of powerful contextual factors (Ashiabi & O’Neal, 2015).

Further, time is also a key factor in the power of proximal processes specifically through “exposure”. The term exposure relates to the nature of the temporal contact between the person and the process (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118). Exposure varies along the dimensions of duration, frequency, interruption, timing and intensity as outlined below in Bronfenbrenner and Evan’s Corollary IA.
Corollary IA:

Exposure refers to the extent of contact maintained between the developing person and the proximal processes in which that person engages. Exposure varies along the following dimensions:

1. Duration. On average how long is the period of exposure? What is the length of the session?
2. Frequency. How often do sessions occur over time – hourly, daily, etc?
3. Interruption. Does exposure occur on a predictable basis, or is it often interrupted?
4. Timing of interaction is critical….persistent mistiming of responsiveness can disrupt the development of self-regulatory behaviour.
5. Intensity refers to the strength of the exposure. When exposure to proximal processes is brief, happens infrequently does not take place on a predictable basis, developmentally-disruptive outcomes are more likely to occur (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118).

These elements are helpful when considering the influence of time on proximal processes. Time can also be categorised in a manner similar to that of context with its spheres of influence. This includes micro-time which focuses on what is happening during a specific activity, meso-time which explores the degree to which processes occur with consistency in the person’s environment and macro-time which is, in effect, the chronosystem explored in Chapter Four (Tudge et al., 2009, p. 6). The chronosystem highlights the way a person’s development is influenced by the period of history they live within (Berns, 2013, p. 25; Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Bronfenbrenner’s model highlights that proximal processes are the drivers of development. Yet person, context and time mediate the direction and power of these processes (Bronfenbrenner, 2004). Accordingly for a fuller picture of developmental mechanisms the way processes interact with these three elements needs to be considered. To do this some of the processes used in ASIA for faith development that were identified in Chapter One will be explored. They will be discussed in light of Bronfenbrenner’s model and the research pertaining to their effectiveness.

While there will be inevitable variation between schools in how they conduct these different processes the analysis of ASIA’s mission in Chapters One and Two shows that
there are also many commonalities that can be considered. Bronfenbrenner’s Propositions I and II, and Corollary IA, relating to exposure, will be used as the basis of this evaluation. They will later form the core of the evaluative framework that will be presented.

The processes of chapel, chaplain, religious education and service were the most widely used of the processes employed by ASIA and will now be evaluated. Where possible each of these four processes will be described using the following questions:

1. What is the:
   a. form of the process; and
   b. content of the process?

2. What indications are there of the:
   a. power of the process; and
   b. direction of the process?

3. How are the characteristics of the developing person and environment taken into account?

4. How does the process become more complex over time?

5. What is the nature of the reciprocal interaction?
   a. How reciprocal and how interactive is it?

6. Is there an emotional attachment that may increase the impact of the process?

7. What is the nature of the frequency of the process and to what degree is it continued over an extended period of time?

8. Are there issues relating to interruption, timing or intensity that may interfere with developmental outcomes?

Chapel.

The most commonly occurring Christian mission action reported by ASIA on their websites is worship or chapel. Ninety percent of ASIA list this as a Christian mission action. A wide variation in the style, content, duration and frequency of chapel services occurs across ASIA (Edwards, 2014, pp. 73-74). There is likely to be common features in many schools due to the grounding and influence of Anglican Prayer Book worship (Edwards, 2014, pp. 73-74).
Literature about chapel attendance in ASIA suggests that those attending chapel are likely to be non-religious and it is possible they will never have been to a worship service in a church (Edwards, 2014, p. 74; Stewart, 2012, p. 220). The content of chapel is likely to include hymns or religious singing, Bible reading, prayer and a message or sermon (Shepherd, 2002, p. 15; Stewart, 2012, p. 229). It may include elements that seek to make the worship more engaging for students such as video, drama and the use of technology (Edwards, 2014, pp. 74-75; Stewart, 2012, p. 229).

It is possible that secular students may bring a degree of ambivalence to the schools chapel service. This may cause apathy towards or even resentment to being made to attend an overtly religious activity. Alternatively students may find the reflective nature of worship enjoyable and the themes explored interesting. The experience may be different to any other activity they engage with in day to day life. However, even if chapel is conducted in a very open and engaging way it is possible that students will feel religion is being forced upon them (Stewart, 2012, p. 74).

Frequency may be a complicating factor in considering the impact chapel has on students. If students feel negatively about being compelled to attend chapel it may be that more frequent chapel attendance may intensify this negative experience. If on the other hand it has a positive effect less than weekly may undermine its effectiveness. Little empirical research has been done that might give an indication of the power and direction of chapel as a proximal process. Hughes indicates that chapel attendance seems to add little to a secondary student’s thinking about life. Particularly when compared to the influence of family and other elements of schooling (2012, pp. 14-15).

Chapel in ASIA is conducted in a way that reflects the personal characteristics of the socially and intellectually developing people participating. This is particularly evident when considering the difference between primary school and secondary school chapel services. Chapel for Year 12 students will be more advanced than that which is provided for students in Year One. As a proximal process however, chapel may not be developed sufficiently over a student’s time at school to have the complexity necessary to drive their faith development. Complexity in the chapel space may be reflected by more intellectually challenging input in terms of theological thought, language and concepts
in prayers and music (Shepherd, 2002, pp. 15-16). It may require more of the participant in terms of inner engagement and reflection. There may be a number of reasons that this complexity is not created. These might include the time set aside for chapel, the attitude students bring to it and pressures to keep students engaged or entertained.

A relational attachment with the chaplain or whomever leads the chapel may enhance it as a process. In many schools the ratio of students to chaplains is so high that it would limit the depth of relationship that chaplains might hope to develop thus compromising the benefit of this effect (Shepherd, 2002, p. 18).

Religious Education.

Eighty four percent of ASIA list religious education as a Christian mission action on their website. Like chapel there will be great variation in the time, content and quality of religious education between schools (Edwards, 2014, p. 76). A range of mostly anecdotal problems perceived with religious education are reported. These include the limited amount of time and resource it is given and the lack of trained specialist teachers (Anglican Schools Commission, 2015, pp. 2-4; Edwards, 2014, p. 77). Students may bring some scepticism, apathy, and even hostility to the subject for the same reasons as chapel attendance. Its seems to be only marginally more significant than chapel attendance for ASIA secondary students (Hughes, 2012).

However, religious education may have significant potential to ameliorate student negativity through the elements that make proximal processes more powerful. An excellent teacher who engages with students over a number of years by employing good pedagogical technique has the opportunity to build a strong connection with students. This is likely to increase their positive regard for the subject. Religious education can be made to become more complex over time if a curriculum is developed that builds upon itself over the years and engages students in topics that are of interest to them. Frequency will play a negative or positive role depending on how students feel about the subject and the direction of development the process is leading them. Accordingly if students are hostile to religious education and it is conducted in a way that lacks the necessary intellectual complexity it may have a corresponding negative effect on their faith development.
Chaplain.

Chaplaincy is listed by 80% of ASIA as a mission action. Chaplaincy may take many forms and there is great diversity in the specific activities that any chaplain may engage in (Edwards, 2014, p. 75). The other mission actions undertaken by ASIA may be a core part of the chaplain’s role along with activities of pastoral care (Lowe, 2012, p. 156; Wilson, 2014, p. 187).

Unlike other processes listed here that are activities, a chaplain is a person who undertakes activity. Specifically they use their status as a religious person, and the interactions they have with others as a relational process (Lowe, 2012, p. 156; Shepherd, 2002, pp. 16-17). It is this relational role that is being evaluated here rather than any specific activities they may carry out (Lowe, 2012, pp. 157-158). As chaplaincy is then a process grounded in relationships it is a potentially powerful role. This is particularly so as chaplains often care for individuals who need healing or care (Lowe, 2012, p. 158; Wilson, 2014, p. 189). Yet in many schools there is only one chaplain for hundreds of students. The capacity for a chaplain to form deep relationships with many students in a way that might be significant as a proximal process is then compromised (Lowe, 2012, p. 166; Wilson, 2014, p. 189). This underscores research showing the chaplain ranked last in terms of influence on “thinking about life” (Hughes, 2012).

Service.

There is a significant body of research literature about the positive outcomes of service engagement for students particularly when it is linked with elements of the formal curriculum of the school (Carracelas-Juncal, Bossaller, & Yaoyuneyong, 2009, p. 29; A. M. Johnson & Notah, 1999, pp. 454-456; Parker et al., 2009, pp. 586-587). The ASA website links to over thirty articles written by staff in different schools about their service programs (Anglican Schools Australia, 2016b). These describe a great variety of activities that students engage in under the aegis of serving. It is likely that the approach taken is somewhat similar to that which occurs in Catholic Schools as described by Engebretson (2009) in which students participate in experiential learning through service activities beyond the classroom and reflection upon these activities in the classroom.
Service as a process has potential for its form and content to be adapted in order to suit the developing person and the environment. It may be possible for it to be connected successfully with the Christian faith in a way that encourages faith development (Price, 2008, p. 220; Radecke, 2007). It is also possible that through the activity lengthy and significant relationships may be built with chaplains and other Christian staff who may have a significant personal influence on faith development. However unless service programs are combined with reflection by students connecting it to the Christian faith they alone will have little impact on faith development (Engebretson, 2009, p. 203; Price, 2008, p. 220).

Summary

This limited and superficial evaluation of chapel, religious education, chaplaincy and service as proximal processes indicates that while they have significant potential, current research suggests that they are falling short of the influence on student faith development they could have. While it is difficult to address the cultural attitudes that students may bring to religious activities there are three elements that could improve outcomes. In all of these processes appropriate time and space needs to be given in order to develop the process and deepen the relationship between the participants. Work needs to be done in developing the complexity of the processes across the timespan of student engagement. Finally, some of the processes need a more disciplined pathway to guide student reflection and therefore intentional connectedness with the Christian faith.

Framework for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA

In developing a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of Christian mission actions in ASIA Bronfenbrenner’s four key elements, process, person, context and time will be taken into account. As the mission action (process) chosen will drive development and is therefore of primary importance it will be considered twice: the first and last steps of the framework. The first time as the initiation of action, the second as it has itself been changed by the person, context and time with which it interacts. A consideration of personal characteristics, context and time will be used to shape the process and evaluate if it is likely to have the desired outcome.
The characteristics of the developing people, being the targets of the process, should be explored in order to see how the process might be shaped to have maximum influence. These characteristics will determine aspects of the content, form, power and direction of the process. In ASIA the critical personal characteristic will relate primarily to aspects of human development usually connected with age. For example if worship is being designed as a faith development process the age of the students will influence the style and substance of the message being given, the length and form of the liturgy, the likely power it will have and whether it might have a positive or negative direction.

The context of the students will then be explored to consider how this may shape the content, form, power and direction of the process. These may include cultural factors, patterns of media consumption, family, experience of the Christian faith and information about how young people like to communicate. This analysis will include consideration of the different systems outlined by Bronfenbrenner. Using the example of worship, students who have high levels of visual literacy and due to their home culture may respond more favourably to visual content. Negative attitudes towards religion carried from the macrosystem may have to be addressed if the process is to have a positive direction.
Examination of time will consider how duration, frequency, interruption, timing and intensity may influence the content, form, power and direction of the process. How the length of activities make students feel about a process may be important, as well as their frequency. The time of day could also have a significant impact on student engagement. Frequent interruption for other school activities may send students a negative message about the process leading them to holding negative feelings towards it.

This framework is by no means exhaustive but it is holistic in the sense that it considers the mission actions from the perspective of the whole system. Attention to the four elements of process, person, context and time (PPCT) can help ASIA to find and shape processes effective for faith development in students. It would be possible after the implementation of a process to use a PPCT research tool design to gather evidence to validate the effectiveness of the mission action.

A range of research methods could employed to evaluate the impact the mission action has in terms of student outcomes. The approach used would depend on the nature of the mission goal and action employed but could include surveys or in-depth interviews. A PPCT research design focused on student outcomes however would be the ideal design considering the complexity and nature of mission goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Details of Process (mission action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Form, Content, Timing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing Research about the Process</td>
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<tr>
<th>Person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Details of the person(s) who is engaged in the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the developing person(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cognitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social</td>
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<td>• Physiological</td>
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<td>• Age related</td>
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</table>
Generational characteristics

- Technology usage
- Learning and communication styles

Context

Details and characteristics of the system the process will take place in.

The characteristics of the environment.

Key characteristics of the micro, meso, macro, chrono – systems.

The nature of the relationship between those engaged in the process.

Time

Time factors

- Duration
- Frequency
- Interruption
- Timing
- Intensity
- Increasing Complexity

Process

How does or could the “characteristic of the developing person and the environment” impact or change the:

- form of the process,
- power of the process,
- content of the process, and
- direction of the process.

Figure 8. Detailed Framework for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA

The Framework for evaluating mission in ASIA may be turned into a tool for evaluating future mission actions. Like the Framework it is grounded in the model of person, process, context and time. This tool represents initial thinking based on what has been learnt in this thesis and would require further research to validate it.
The assumptions underlying the Tool will be discussed below. It will then be presented with commentary on each section. Finally an example of how the tool could be used will also be outlined to highlight its function and potential usage.

**Assumptions.**

There are a number of assumptions that underlie the tool.

1. *One of the primary goals of any mission action is the transformation of the individual’s worldview in a way that contributes to faith development.*

   Seeking to contribute to faith development does not always mean the action is directly seeking to convert people to the Christian faith. It may also mean, that the action proclaims or engages individuals in the Christian Gospel in a way that seeks to positively commend this worldview to them in a transformative way (Cooling, 2008, p. 5). Mission is intended to be transformative of individuals, of society and of the world (Church of England, n.d.; Cooling, 2008, p. 5). Earlier in this thesis faith was defined as a “commitment of the mind”, an “affair of the heart”, and “results in good actions”. Faith development in the Christian context is the growth and development of these aspects of a person towards a Christian worldview (Strommen & Hardel, 2000, p. 75).

2. *Any mission strategy or action should be grounded in an understanding of the people it is directed towards and tailored to engage them in the most effective way.*

   Mission actions should seek to engage people as effectively as possible. Many factors can either detract from or enhance engagement. In order to ameliorate detracting factors and enhance those beneficial elements a broad knowledge of the people involved should be sought. This would include aspects of culture, worldview and developmental profiles (Doe, 2008, p. 5). This information should then be used to shape the mission action in a way that might communicate most effectively with them in a range of domains including the physical, cognitive and affective. For example if it is discovered that the majority of people come from an unchurched or secular background this must be taken into account in the type of action implemented.
3. **Faith development is a process dependent on socialisation and therefore mission actions should address social context.**

As discussed throughout this thesis social factors can play a significant role in the development of faith and worldview (Yang & Abel, 2014, p. 1). It is essential that these factors are considered and addressed in any mission action if an holistic approach is to be taken.

4. **The user of the tool will have a basic grounding in theology and missiology.**

The primary purpose of this tool is the effectiveness of mission actions in relation to social contexts. It does not seek to evaluate the theology or missiology of any particular mission action. While it is based in a particular developmental model it does not impose a theology. This being the case it may be useful to people from a range of theological positions. A corollary of this flexibility is that practitioners using the tool will need to evaluate the actions they intend to change or implement in the light of their own theology, missiology and tradition.

**Tool for Evaluation of Mission in ASIA**

In order to make the Framework of most value for mission practitioners a tool has been developed for the evaluation of mission actions. This tool could be used by those working in ASIA or in any organisation that has the intention of developing faith.

The tool is formed as a series of questions with accompanying commentary. These questions help to draw together information that may aid in the identification of factors that may enhance or detract from the effectiveness of a mission action. The tool may be used as part of a team consultation or by an individual practitioner. Ideally the questions would be answered by a group of people who might offer their own insights into the characteristics of the students and the various systems (micro, meso, macro, chrono) that influence them. This is important for two reasons. First in-depth research may not be available that pertains to the young people being considered. Second practitioner input provides information about local contexts and cultures. Some understanding of Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model will assist in understanding the logic and functioning of the tool however the commentary will also provide guidance.
Information gathered from credible, researched based sources should be sought. This could include data collected at a state or national level such as from the national census. Information and research with a local focus would also be of particular value for understanding the students being engaged in a more specific way. This could include local government research. The practitioner also may have a clear understanding of aspects of the local community drawn from personal observation that should be taken into account. Therefore a mix of research and personal observation and reflection can contribute to a clearer picture of the different systems young people participate in. Information in the form of surveys on particular topics could be collected if there are questions about particular aspects of the person or context.

The tool could be used for a number of purposes. It could be used to:

1. evaluate a current mission action or process,
2. evaluate a future mission action, or
3. improve current mission actions through an action-reflection process.

The tool is designed to be used cyclically. Working from process through person, context and time brings reflection of mission actions back to the process as it has itself changed for further adaptations. Reflection supported by the tool could be performed through a number of iterations in order to understand the school community in great detail.

While the mission action evaluation tool is designed with student outcomes in mind, it is primarily focused on the development and evaluation of mission actions. The evaluation of student outcomes must take place separately from the tool. This information would be fed back into the tool which is recursive.

The tool as it would be presented to, and used by practitioners now follows.
Mission Action Evaluation Tool

Introduction to the Tool and Bronfenbrenner.

The Mission Action Evaluation Tool (MAET) has been created to help chaplains and others involved in the Christian mission of schools to make decisions about how best to design and implement processes to develop young people’s faith. It is based on Urie Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems model and seeks to enhance developmental processes through the consideration of personal and contextual factors. While the tool does not measure student outcomes, these can be evaluated as part of its use.

Knowledge of Bronfenbrenner’s model is not necessary to use the tool but a brief introduction is provided below along with commentary throughout to help you understand the purpose of each section. In the MAET the word ‘process’ is central and simply refers to the actions taken to help students develop faith. These processes could be complex activities containing multiple elements such as chapel or religious education or simpler ones of a single element like prayer.

**Bioecological Systems Model.**

- How do people develop in the various aspects of their life?
- What are the processes that enable growth?
- What factors positively or negatively influence development in any particular domain?
- Are there processes that can shape and enhance development?

Urie Bronfenbrenner provided a mechanism to answer these questions by creating a unique way of understanding and investigating human development. His bioecological systems model demonstrates how people’s development is shaped by many factors, including their environment. While Bronfenbrenner did not discuss the spiritual domain, his model and ideas are applicable to the exploration of faith development as it is developed in a social context.

In Bronfenbrenner’s model there are four key elements that influence development. They are:

- the characteristics of the person,
- the process driving development,
- the context the development occurs within, and,
- time factors.

It is helpful to consider each of these so that a full picture of the young person’s environment can be drawn.

**Process.**

For Bronfenbrenner development is driven by processes. These are interactions that occur between people and the objects in their environment. A process may be anything that a person does that leads to their growth in a particular domain. For instance reading is a process that leads to intellectual development. Processes can be designed to have an optimal beneficial impact. In this tool processes are central and refer to the things we do to help young people grow in faith.

**Characteristics of the person.**

While every person is different, many students will have things in common with one another such as their level of physical and cognitive development. These characteristics influence the way that a person responds to a particular process. Practitioners can use their understanding of these characteristics to create, shape and choose more effective processes. For example reading picture books might be an effective process for a preparatory age student but not for a Year 11 student.

**Context.**

The environment a person is embedded in also influences the nature of development. Bronfenbrenner divided the environment into a number of systems. These systems include those the person acts within such as home and school, as well as those that are distant yet still influential, such as a parent’s work or government. Being aware of how these contexts influence people aids in the shaping of developmental processes. For example students who are habituated to being autonomous at home will have a greater ability to be so at school.
Time.

Time is also an important element in development. The frequency, duration and repetition of a process will influence its effectiveness in a number of ways. Frequency and repetition will contribute to reinforcing the effect the process has on the individual. They will also allow for the process to become more complex as the person grows. The duration of an activity will signify its importance and will enable the person to become proficient more quickly.

The model below outlines the steps the MAET takes. It begins by exploring the outcomes you are hoping for in the school. These are your mission goals. From these goals it progresses through each of the elements in Bronfenbrenner’s model to choose, shape and refine the process you intend to implement.

Figure 9. Framework for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA
Phase One: Mission Goals

Describing your school.

Begin by reflecting on your school and the things that give it a unique identity. This task may help you identify aspects of school life you hadn’t previously noticed and will start you thinking about context. If you are working as group it may reveal the different ways members perceive the school. This is helpful when you start thinking about your mission goals.

- Describe the important features of your school as:
  - An educational institution. (Where is your school in its life cycle? What image does it wish to project to the wider community? What are its strengths and weaknesses?)
  - A community that includes students, teachers, parents and staff. (What do they like or value about your school? What do they struggle with? How do they respond to the religious aspects of the school?)
  - An Anglican Church institution in relationship with Diocesan structures.

Spiritual SWOT analysis.

Next you will focus more specifically on the spiritual or religious nature of your school community. A SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is a useful tool for doing this. Your analysis can include all kinds of information including student opinions, parental actions, and thoughts on the structural aspects of the school. It might be helpful to ponder: What are the things in your school that help or hinder your students developing faith?

- Perform a spiritual SWOT on your school community. Thinking about student faith development, what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the development of faith in your school?
The development of faith.

Your conception of how faith develops can influence the actions you take to implement mission. For instance if you think that faith develops through understanding religious ideas the process you use may revolve around religious education. At this point it is useful to investigate these ideas before moving on to consider how mission might be implemented.

- What is your understanding of how people develop faith? (How do people become Christians?)
- What processes or experiences do you think help people to develop faith? (What processes help people become Christians?)
- What supports your thinking in the area? (Research others have done, experiences you have had)

Barriers to faith development.

Later on you will spend time focusing specifically on the students and their context. It is helpful before doing so, and prior to the next step of creating a mission goal, to think about the big personal or contextual issues that might get in the way of students engaging with or developing faith. These big issues could be at the societal level, such as social views on religion, or could be more personal, such as family attitudes.

- What do you think are the top three barriers to students engaging with or developing faith?

Creating a mission goal.

Having explored how people develop faith it is time to make some decisions and set a goal. Taking into account all you have discussed so far:

- What do you wish to achieve through your mission actions?
- What do you hope will happen as a result of what you do?

Your initial goal may be further refined as you progress. Make the goal more specific than “help students become Christians”, try to think of the changes or experiences that might help them to move towards the Christian faith. Some examples of this are: (1) help students understand faith, (2) provide students with experiences of awe and wonder, (3) help student practice elements (...choose one...) of the Christian faith.
The following questions are all focused on helping you sharpen your mission goal and implementation.

- Reflecting on your community and your ideas about how people develop faith decide on a specific mission goal that your community wishes to address.
- List your ideas for activities or processes that might help achieve this goal?
- How might the person be changed through these processes?
- What evidence might show that this goal has been achieved?

**Phase Two: Process**

Having explored your school, thought about how people come to faith, and proposed a mission goal, it is time to consider what processes you might use to implement your goal. This section focuses on the details of the process but before you begin it is helpful to consider some of the things Bronfenbrenner discovered about effective developmental processes.

**Tips for Process Design.**

Bronfenbrenner identified certain elements that may enhance the effectiveness of any process. It is useful to keep these in mind as you develop your own processes.

**Tip 1: Put the process in the context of the most effective microsystem.**

Microsystems are the small settings that students participate in such as family, school and church. Generally the family is the most influential microsystem. This means that a process that occurs in the family environment is likely to have a more significant effect than those occurring in others such as school or church. Research on the social influences acting on young people of the type you are working with can help to identify which microsystem might be the most significant for any particular process.

**Tip 2: Use as many Microsystems as possible.**

Processes don’t need to be placed in only one microsystem. It might be possible to have a particular process occur in multiple settings such as school and family. When this occurs the effectiveness is likely to be increased. For instance research indicates that if
reading to children is done both at home and school, rather than in only one of these contexts development is enhanced.

**Tip 3: Address the impacting issues from the macrosystem.**

The macrosystem is the overarching system that contains elements such as a person’s culture or religion. In its broadest conception it is the society the person lives in. This system provides instructions for the lower systems such as family and school. It may be beneficial to think of the influences coming from these larger systems and consider how to identify and address them through your chosen process. For instance consumerism may be a particularly dominant influence on young people’s thinking and worldview. It may undermine elements of their emerging spirituality. Actions might be taken to help them reflect on the nature of these influences in order to allow them make more conscious decisions.

**Tip 4: Increase complexity over time.**

Processes should become more complex over time if development is to continue. Once an individual has mastered a particular process further development may not occur unless it is changed to make it more difficult or challenging. This could include increasing the complexity of the content or changing the type of interaction.

**Tip 5: Leverage close relationships.**

Close relationships can enhance development. Those people who have the most significant relationship with the developing person in any setting should be involved. For example it is more likely that a classroom teacher who spends many hours with students will be more influential than a chaplain who may only see them once a week.

**Choosing a mission action.**

- Choose a process (mission action) you will use to implement your chosen goal.
  - Outline your initial ideas of how the mission action might be implemented.
  - Describe how it will achieve the mission goal referencing each of the 5 tips above.
Discuss any research about the process or mission action being used.

**Phase Three: Person**

**Describe your students.**

Having described the process you wish to implement it is now important to think about who it will be targeted at. Thought needs to be given as to how the personal characteristics of the students will shape what you do. Of course all students are different but they also have much in common. If you have a wide range of ages to engage with some thought needs to be given to how the process might be adapted for their different developmental levels.

- Describe the people the mission action is directed towards in terms of their personal and developmental characteristics. Include your own observations as well as those from formal research. The following aspects may be relevant:
  - Cognitive stage of development.
  - Social stage of development.
  - Physiological stage of development.

**Personal characteristics and process design.**

Now think about how the characteristics of the person(s) you wish to be influenced by the process might in turn impact the power, direction, form and content of the process.

The power of the process relates to how significant the influence of the process might be. The direction of the process determines whether the process moves the person in the intended developmental direction or not. The form of the process relates to how the process is implemented. This includes elements such as where it is located, who leads it and how long it takes. The content of the process relates to the nature of the interaction that occurs.

The direction and power of the process may be more effective if done in ways that take into account the personal characteristics of those being ministered to. In other words the form and content of a process can be shaped to enhance its power and direction.
• How might the characteristics of the developing person impact the:
  o power of the process, and
  o direction of the process.
• Thinking of the characteristics of the developing person you have identified, how might the form and content of the process be shaped to have:
  o optimal power, and
  o positive direction.

Phase Four: Context

Describe your students’ context

In this section consideration is given to the student’s context. Context might be thought of as the environment surrounding the students and the different settings that they participate in. These contexts may also be called systems. The context can have a significant influence on how students engage with processes and develop.

You have already begun thinking about the context in Phase One when you reflected on your school. As you reflect on the students’ context try to think of the way that it might influence their engagement with the Christian mission of the school. For example how might parental thoughts about Christianity impact the way students think about it.

• Describe the context of those the mission action is directed towards, focussing on aspects that might the influence student’s spiritual or religious ideas and experience.

Reflect on the following systems:

  o Family.
  o Friends and Peers.
  o Church.
  o Culture and Society.
  o Religion.
  o Generational information.
  o Media and Technology.
The context and process design.

Now think about how the context might impact the power, direction, form and content of the process.

The power of the process relates to how significant the influence of the process might be. The direction of the process determines whether the process moves the person in the intended developmental direction or not. The form of the process relates to how the process is implemented such as where it is set, who leads it, how long it takes. The content of the process relates to the nature of the interaction occurring.

Because of contextual factors the direction and power of the process might be more effective if done in particular way. In other words the form and content can be shaped to enhance the power and direction.

• How might the context described impact the:
  o power of the process, and
  o direction of the process.

• Thinking of the characteristics of the context how might the form and content of the process be shaped to have:
  o optimal power, and
  o a positive direction.

Phase Five: Time

Time and process design.

In this section the way time is used in the process will be considered. The duration and frequency of a process can influence its effectiveness. Something done every day, if it is enjoyed, might have a powerful enhancing effect over time. Conversely, if it is not enjoyed a daily activity may have a powerfully negative effect. Something done only once a year may be less influential, depending on the intensity of the experience. For example a week long camp held once a year may have more impact than some activities held on a weekly basis because of the opportunity for intense experience. In general processes performed over a long period of time, such as a number of years, are more likely to be influential than those done over a short period.
• What will be the duration and frequency of the activity?
• Over what time span will it be continued?
• How will the process become more complex over time?
• What is the intensity of the time usage? (e.g. is it a half an hour of excitement opposed to a day of boredom?)
• Reflecting on these elements how might time be used to shape the process so it has:
  o optimal power, and
  o a positive direction.

Phase Six: Process Review

In this final section it is time to step back and do a final review of the process you have developed.

• Describe in detail the form of content of the process.
• What personal, contextual and time factors have been taken into consideration in shaping this process?
• Are there any personal, contextual or time issues that may still impinge on the effectiveness of the process? How might these be addressed?
An Example of Using the Tool: Engaging the Inner Life

To demonstrate how the Tool may be applied, the responses of a fictional planning group at a school is presented below. All elements of the following scenario are fictional, but derived from the common contexts, people and processes found in ASIA, as described throughout the extant literature on ASIA. The sections of the Tool repeated from above appear in grey.

Peta is the Director of Mission at St Blaise’s Anglican College, a co-ed preparatory to year 12 school in Brisbane, Australia. Peta convenes a group of key teachers and leaders to discuss the development of the Christian mission of the school and to work through the Mission Action Evaluation Tool.

Figure 10. Framework for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA
Phase One: Mission Goals

Describing your school.

*Begin by reflecting on your school and the things that give it a unique identity. This task may help you identify aspects of school life you hadn’t previously noticed and will begin your thinking about context. If you are working as group it may reveal the different ways members perceive the school. This is helpful when you start thinking about your mission goals.*

- *Describe the important features of your school as:*
  
  - *an educational institution. (Where is your school in its life cycle? What image does it wish to project to the wider community? What are its strengths and weaknesses?)*
  
  - *a community that includes students, teachers, parents and staff. (What do they like or value about your school? What do they struggle with? How do they respond to the religious aspects of the school?)*

St Blaise’s is a relatively young school at twenty years of age. There is still considerable flexibility in how the Christian mission of the school is conceived. Strong traditions have not yet been developed. There are 1400 students across the school with approximately 100 in each year level. At this stage of its life the school does not have a distinct identity as an academic or sporting school. Many parents like the modern feel the school has. St Blaise’s has a reputation as a school that cares about its community and it works to maintain this view. This reputation has become more difficult to maintain as the school has grown. ‘Affordable and excellent’ is a key image the school wants to project to the wider community. Being relatively young, the school still has limitations on its budget which at times restricts its ability to fulfil some aspects of its vision. More resources are directed toward what are considered essential activities such as developing the academic capacity of the school than towards its spiritual aspects.

A majority of students claim adherence to a Christian denomination through the school enrolment process, however teachers estimate that less than 5% have any regular involvement with a church outside of the school. The school is their only
significant exposure to the Christian faith. Some parents say they had a connection with a church as children. At times students and parents exhibit apathy towards religion as it is expressed in the school. This is expressed overtly when students complain about chapel or religious education being boring or by lack of attendance at non-compulsory religious activities. The group agrees that the majority of parents are not sending their children to St Blaise’s for religious reasons but for what they perceive as the quality and prestige of a private education.

**Spiritual SWOT analysis.**

Next you will focus more specifically on the spiritual or religious nature of your school community. A SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is a useful tool for doing this. Your analysis can include all kinds of information including student opinions, parental actions, and structural aspects of the school. It might be helpful to ponder: What are the things in your school that help or hinder your students developing faith?

- **Perform a spiritual SWOT on your school community. Thinking about student faith development, what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the development of faith in your school?**

**Spiritual SWOT.**

**Strengths**

- The Principal and school staff are supportive of the Christian tradition.
- The school has a commitment to expressing its Christian tradition but is flexible about how it is enacted. There are not strong feelings about how worship might be conducted.
- Religious education in both the primary and secondary section is one 45 minute lesson a week and all the religious education is conducted by specialist teachers.
- Chapel is held on a weekly basis and is an informal worship service with hymns, prayers, readings and a message from the chaplain. It seeks to
engage non-believers while still giving them an experience of Christian worship.

- Parents are generally supportive of all aspects of the school. There are few complaints or negative comments about religious aspects of the school.
- The youth of the school provides freedom and flexibility for change.

Weaknesses

- Students don’t come from families committed to the Christian faith.
- A relatively small amount of time is given to religious education and chapel.
- There is a perceived lack of funding for the spiritual aspects of the school by the chaplain and other Christian staff.
- There isn’t an integrated approach to faith development across the school.
- There is apathy by the students towards the religious elements of the school seen by physical and verbal expression of boredom. Students complain about having to do religious education at times.

Opportunities

- School is preparatory to year 12 which allows work with children from a young age and for an extended period of time.
- There is an open opportunity to develop faith development activities as supported by the school leadership.
- There is the possibility of engagement with families due to their general level of interest and engagement with the school.

Threats

- Students in different age brackets seem disinterested in religion and spirituality.
• Families may undermine the Christian aspects of the school by being dismissive or making negative comments about faith or religion to their children.

• Parents may resist a stronger emphasis on the missional elements of the school and this may impact enrolments.

• Some staff may not support the Christian elements of the school. This may mean they will show negativity towards religion in class or not carry out religious tasks such as teaching religious education with enthusiasm.

• Religious activities may have a negative impact on students who feel that religious belief and practice is being forced upon them.

• As the school seeks to solidify its identity it may push religious aspects to the side to increase its academic or sporting profile.

The development of faith.

*Your conception of how faith develops can influence the actions you take to implement mission. For instance if you think that faith develops through understanding religious ideas the process you use may revolve around religious education. At this point it is useful to investigate these ideas before moving on to consider how mission might be implemented.*

• What is your understanding of how people develop faith? (How do people become Christians?)

• What processes or experiences do you think help people to develop faith? (What processes help people become Christians?)

• What supports your thinking in the area? (Research, experiences etc)

Peta’s group discuss their understanding of how people develop faith. There are four key elements they agree upon.

1. Social influences.

The group thinks that student openness to exploring spirituality changes as they get older. They notice how young children in the school are quite open to exploring the spiritual side of life and hearing stories from the Bible. They are enthusiastic about activities such as chapel and participate freely. As students enter the teenage years they
seem to become more sceptical and resistant. The group agrees that this is possibly due to the influence of family, friends and society.

The social influence of family and friends contribute to a student’s perspective on spirituality and the degree to which they value it. The denial of the spiritual realm may lead people to be more sceptical and less engaged with school mission activities. In the primary years many parents are open to their children’s spiritual exploration but are more open about their scepticism or doubts when their children begin to think more critically and ask questions coinciding with adolescence. Students are less aware in primary years that religious beliefs are not publically agreed truths.

There are a few strategies the group think might be important to address this issue. The school needs to work hard on building a supportive school community that encourages spiritual exploration in the Christian tradition. Families need to be recruited as advocates and encouragers of spiritual exploration in the home. Some work might need to be done in helping parents to understand and acknowledge the benefit that spiritual practices such as prayer can have on the wellbeing of their children. Finally, classroom teachers, who play a significant role in student’s day to day life, may be the key people to lead faith development processes in the school.

2. Positive and powerful experiences.

The group share with one another their own experiences of becoming a Christian. They recall positive experiences in youth groups, churches and on camps. They agree that there is something powerful about positive experiences had within a relational context. If these experiences are fun, positive, relational and meaningful they can have a significant impact on the person’s feelings about faith. These experiences may lead to people engaging more deeply and wanting to explore further. It may not only increase the positive regard in which they hold the Christian faith and Christians but also places them in a position where they can consider their own beliefs.

3. Reflection and meaning making.

Peta’s group also agree that there needs to be intentional reflection after intentional experiences in order for people to make meaning. When students have meaningful
spiritual experiences and an opportunity to reflect upon them they begin the internal work of incorporating these experiences into their own worldview. When these experiences are repeated over a long period of time they have the potential to change personal behaviour. The group thought that while the need for reflection could have been listed under ‘positive and powerful experiences’ that it should be a separate item because of its significance.

4. **Focus on the affective.**

Peta’s group reflects on some of the reading they have done recently. Influenced by James K.A. Smith they agree that it is not just the cognitive side of a person that needs to be influenced but the affective. This is achieved through engaging in practices that shape a person’s desires (J. K. A. Smith, 2009). They reflect on the research they have read that highlights the importance and power of experiential learning (Eyler, 2009). Flexibility and choice are also discussed as being important elements for a generation used to having many options (Mason et al., 2007, p. 339).

**Barriers to faith development.**

*Later on you will spend time focusing specifically on the students and their context. It is helpful before doing so, and prior to the next step of creating a mission goal, to think about the big personal or contextual issues that might get in the way of students engaging with or developing faith. These big issues could be at the societal level, such as social views on religion, or could be more personal, such as family attitudes.*

*What do you think are the top three barriers to students engaging with or developing faith?*

The group have a vigorous discussion about this question and decide on the following list.

- Family and peer attitudes of negativity or apathy to religion.
- High levels of distraction away from reflection and spirituality, specifically social and other forms of media.
- Failure of mission practitioners to communicate clearly and in a way students understand.
Creating a mission goal.

Having explored how people develop faith it is time to make some decisions and set a goal. Taking into account all you have discussed so far:

- What do you wish to achieve through your mission actions?
- What do you hope will happen as a result of what you do?

Your initial goal may be further refined as you progress. Make the goal more specific than “help students become Christians”, try to think of the changes or experiences that might help them to move towards the Christian faith. Some examples of this are: 1. help students understand faith, 2. provide students with experiences of awe and wonder, 3. help student practice elements (...choose one...) of the Christian faith.

The following questions are all focused on helping you sharpen your mission goal and implementation.

- Reflecting on your community and your ideas about how people develop faith decide on a specific mission goal that your community wishes to address.

Peta’s group think about how they see people developing faith. Then they discuss and propose possible mission goals. They decide the one they wish to give immediate priority to focuses on helping students develop their inner life.

The group talk about how students seem so distracted by media and are always listening to music or watching a screen. They feel that unless they can be still and listen to what is going on inside themselves it is hard for them to have any sense of spirituality or hear God in their lives. They also assert that helping students connect with the inner life will enhance other mission actions taken in the school.

The specific mission goal they decide on is:

To provide students with the opportunity to learn to be still and connect with their inner life.

- List your ideas for activities or processes that might help achieve this goal?
The group name a range of processes that could be used to achieve the mission goal including prayer, meditation, teaching stillness, reflection on experience, educating students about the inner life.

- **How might the person be changed through these processes?**

  These activities would teach students to be more reflective and to listen to their inner self. It would help them to be more comfortable being by themselves and not distracted by any form of media. Helping students to be more aware of their thoughts and feelings will enable them to be more conscious of how they think and act in particular situations. These activities may also help them to be more aware of the presence of God.

- **What evidence might show that this goal has been achieved?**
  - A growing comfort with and ability to be still and silent.
  - An appreciation of the value of silence and a desire to use it when not instructed.
  - An ability to articulate thoughts and feelings during quite times.

**Phase Two: Process**

**Choosing a mission action.**

*Having explored your school, thought about how people come to faith, and proposed a mission goal, it is time to consider what processes you might use to implement your goal. This section focuses on the details of the process and before you begin it is helpful to consider some of the things Bronfenbrenner discovered about effective developmental processes.*

- Choose a process (mission action) you will use to implement your chosen goal (eg. prayer, service etc)

Peta’s group decided that the Christian practice of prayer in its broadest conception would be the mission action they would implement. Although St Blaise’s has had students engage in practices such as meditation and mindfulness it was felt that prayer would fulfil the same need and would be grounded in the Christian tradition. Their intention is that it will be very experiential and may have elements of choice and flexibility.
Outline your initial ideas of how the mission action might be implemented

Initial thoughts are that experiential prayer might be implemented with younger students on a regular basis. This would begin by teaching students to be still and to listen. As students master the ability to be still, elements from Christian meditation and prayer would be added. Prayer Spaces could also be used as a way of fostering prayer. The primary place that this mission action would take place would be in the classroom led by the student’s pastoral care teacher. The group also discussed how parents might be encouraged to take up a practice at home with their children. They believe this would have a greater chance of success in primary school years.

Tips for Process Design.

**Tip 1: Put the process in the context of the most effective microsystem.**

Microsystems are the small settings that students participate in such as family, school and church. Generally the family is the most influential microsystem. This means that a process that occurs in the family environment is likely to have a more significant effect than those occurring in others such as school or church. Research on the social influences acting on young people of the type you are working with can help to identify which microsystem might be the most significant for any particular process.

**Tip 2: Use as many microsystems as possible.**

Processes don’t need to be placed in only one microsystem. It might be possible to have a particular process occur in multiple settings such as school and family. When this occurs the effectiveness is likely to be increased. For instance research indicates that if reading to children is done both at home and school, rather than in only one of these contexts development is enhanced.

**Tip 3: Address the impacting issues from the macrosystem.**

The macrosystem is the overarching system that contains elements such as a person’s culture or religion. In its broadest conception it is the society the person lives in. This system provides instructions for the lower systems such as family and school. It may be beneficial to think of the influences coming from these larger systems and
consider how to identify and address them through your chosen process. For instance consumerism may be a particularly dominant influence on young people’s thinking and worldview. It may undermine elements of their emerging spirituality. Actions might be taken to help them reflect on the nature of these influences in order to allow them make more conscious decisions.

**Tip 4: Increase complexity over time.**

Processes should become more complex over time if development is to continue. Once an individual has mastered a particular process further development may not occur unless it is changed to make it more difficult or challenging. This could include increasing the complexity of the content or changing the type of interaction.

**Tip 5: Leverage close relationships.**

Close relationships can enhance development. Those people who have the most significant relationship with the developing person in any setting should be involved. For example it is more likely that a classroom teacher who spends many hours with students will be more influential than a chaplain who may only see them once a week.

- *Describe how it will achieve the mission goal referencing each of the 5 tips above.*

This practice will teach students to be still and to be aware of their thoughts and feelings. If it is implemented across the school and if students see its value and enjoy it the goal will be achieved. It will teach them the basic skills they need to be able to pray. While stillness is not prayer in its complete form it is the basis of skills students need to be able to engage in prayer.

- *Discuss any research about the process or mission action being used.*

One of the group mentioned that there is research that shows prayer has benefits for young people’s well-being even if they do not necessarily hold traditional Christian beliefs (Francis, 2005). This could be useful in convincing parents to practice prayer at home with their children.
Phase Three: Person

Describe your students.

Having described the process you wish to implement it is now important to think about those to whom it will be targeted. Thought needs to be given as to how the personal characteristics of the students will shape what you do. Of course all students are different but they also have much in common. If you have a wide range of ages to engage with some thought needs to be given to how the process might be adapted for their different developmental levels.

- Describe the people the mission action is directed towards in terms of their personal and developmental characteristics. Include your own observations as well as those from formal research. The following aspects may be relevant:
  - Cognitive stage of development
  - Social stage of development
  - Physiological stage of development

Peta’s group has decided that initially they will focus their mission action on students in the preparatory to year three age group. These students who are attending St Blaise’s in this group are between five and nine years old. Drawing on their own knowledge and experience, and available literature, the group make the following observations.

This age group is still developing cognitively and most will not be able to think abstractly (Wassell, Daniel, Howe, & Gilligan, 2011, p. 174). Yet students at this age will have some capacity to reflect on their own inner thoughts and those of others (Wassell et al., 2011, p. 186). These developing children will use their body as a primary way of learning and will explore their world through their body and movement before processing it with their mind (Expeditionary Learning, 2014, p. 2). They will find comfort in regular rhythms and patterns through the day and enjoyment in repetition of story and action (Expeditionary Learning, 2014, p. 1). Stories are important for children to construct meaning and to develop the language and skills to think about big ideas (Expeditionary Learning, 2014).
Personal characteristics and process design.

Now think about how the characteristics of the person(s) you wish to be influenced by the process might in turn impact the power, direction, form and content of the process.

The power of the process relates to how significant the influence of the process might be. The direction of the process determines whether the process moves the person in the intended developmental direction or not. The form of the process relates to how the process is implemented. This includes elements such as where it is located, who leads it and how long it takes. The content of the process relates to the nature of the interaction that occurs.

The direction and power of the process may be more effective if done in ways that take into account the personal characteristics of those being ministered to. In other words the form and content of a process can be shaped to enhance its power and direction.

- How might the characteristics of the developing person impact the:
  - power of the process, and
  - direction of the process.

Power of the process

The age of the students will mean that the power of the process might be quite strong. This is because of their openness, the regularity within which the process will be conducted, and their close relationship with the person leading it. If the process is performed well over the course of many years it likely to have significant power. The power may be weakened if the students are asked to do too much too soon. Their age will impose limitations in this area. If they become bored or frustrated by their inability to fulfil what is asked of them because of time factors or their own immaturity then they may lose interest or cease to have positive feelings towards the process. Students will need to be monitored to ensure age appropriateness and that the level of challenge is sufficient but not excessive.
Direction of the process

This may vary from student to student. Peta’s group thinks that as it becomes a ritual over time students will enjoy it, it will have a beneficial impact on them and therefore the direction of influence will be positive. Some students may be frustrated early on. The process will need to be kept short but still challenge them. Students will also need to understand the benefits for them to persevere. Peta’s group are prepared to be patient, allowing time (eg. months, years) for the students to grow in their skill. The simple processes initially used (eg. stillness) will lead to more complex activities (eg. different forms of prayer or meditation) as the students grow and learn.

- Thinking of the characteristics of the developing person you have identified, how might the form and content of the process be shaped to have:
  - optimal power, and
  - positive direction.

Peta’s group reflect on how the information gathered about personal characteristics will help in creating an experience of prayer that will be most engaging and developmentally appropriate. Younger students with shorter attention spans will necessitate keeping prayer experiences short. Some students in this age group may learn better by doing something physical so a more active approach may be necessary (Expeditionary Learning, 2014, p. 2). This could include activities such as using colouring while praying, as is used with the Praying in Colour program, or activity stations such as those used by Prayer Spaces in Schools. Helping students to learn about their inner self through story and ritual may also be a useful strategy (Expeditionary Learning, 2014, pp. 1, 3).

With this age group the form of the process will need to be simple but engaging. Students may need to learn basic techniques to still their body. The content of any teaching will need to be simple and relatively concrete. They might need to learn about Christian ideas about prayer, how it is conducted and how it connects with the concept of God. These aspects can easily be integrated into the religious education curriculum
of the school. For example students might learn about the Lord’s Prayer and the model that it provides for praying one’s own prayers.

**Phase Four: Context**

*Describing your student’s context.*

In this section consideration is given to the students context. Context might be thought of as the environment surrounding the students and the different settings that they participate in. These contexts may also be called systems. The context can have a significant influence on how students engage with processes and develop.

You have already begun thinking about the context in Phase One when you reflected on your school. As you reflect on the students’ context try to think of the way that it might influence their engagement with the Christian mission of the school. For example how might parental thoughts about Christianity impact the way students think about it.

- Describe the context of those the mission action is directed towards, focussing on aspects that might the influence student’s spiritual or religious ideas and experience.

Reflect on the following systems:

- Family
- Friends and Peers
- Church
- Culture and Society
- Religion
- Generational information
- Media and Technology

Peta’s group has a long discussion about various contextual issues impacting their students. They identify the following important points to take into consideration.

- Apathy or even negativity to Christianity in wider contexts may influence students however it is expected that at this younger age group it will be less influential.
- Spiritual practices are generally seen as positive by wider society and this will help its acceptance.
- The family microsystem may generate negativity towards the Christian faith. At this age parents may not be overtly discouraging. It is more likely that children have little experience of prayer as a practice.
- The prevalence of the use of digital media and screens may mean that students are not used to engaging with their inner self. They may find prayer difficult, or conversely, different and exciting.

**Context and process design**

*Now you will think about how the context might impact the power, direction, form and content of the process.*

The power of the process relates to how significant the influence of the process might be. The direction of the process determines whether the process moves the person in the intended developmental direction or not. The form of the process relates to how the process is implemented such as where it is set, who leads it, how long it takes. The content of the process relates to the nature of the interaction occurring.

Because of contextual factors the direction and power of the process might be more effective if done in particular way. In other words the form and content can be shaped to enhance the power and direction.

- **How might the context described impact the**
  - power of the process, and
  - direction of the process

**Power.**

This process could be quite powerful because it may be outside of student’s present experience. This will have a positive impact because it may be unlike any activity they have engaged in before. Being an out of context experience might make it confronting for students but also powerful.
**Direction.**

The group agrees that while the wider context in Australia has the potential to make students reluctant to engage in spiritual exercises the age of the students will largely counteract this. This is because at this age children are largely unaware of the wider social context and are often given a freedom to explore spirituality without judgement. It is possible that some students may be resistant. This may negatively affect the direction of the process. This resistance may come from the student believing that the activity is a form of behaviour control or possibly from parents who are overtly negative towards religion in the school.

- Thinking of the characteristics of the context how might the form and content of the process be shaped to have
  - optimal power, and
  - a positive direction

**Form.**

- As mentioned already the duration of the process will need to be kept short.
- Focussing on form over content initially will also keep the process religiously neutral.
- Having parents understand the benefits of the process and practicing it at home will strengthen the power and direction. This is because the microsystems of the school and home will reinforce one another and underline the importance of the activity for the student.

**Content**

- Initially the content should focus on the benefits to the students.
- A focus on enjoying the experience and having students gain control of themselves may also increase its positive direction.
- Framing the process as a break or mini holiday from a busy brain and other similar ideas might appeal to students.
Phase Five: Time

**Time and process design.**

In this section the way time is used in the process will be considered. The duration and frequency of a process can influence its effectiveness. Something done every day, if it is enjoyed, might have a powerful enhancing effect over time. Conversely, if it is not enjoyed a daily activity may have a powerfully negative effect. Something done only once a year may be less influential, depending on the intensity of the experience. For example, a week long camp held once a year may have more impact than some activities held on a weekly basis because of the opportunity for intense experience. In general processes performed over a long period of time such as a year are more likely to be influential than those done over a short period.

- What will be the duration and frequency of the activity?
- Over what time span will it be continued?
- How will the process become more complex over time?
- What is the intensity of the time usage? (e.g. is it a half an hour of excitement opposed to a day of boredom)
- Reflecting on these elements how might time be used to shape the process so it has:
  - optimal power, and
  - positive direction

There are many ways that time can be applied beneficially to optimise the process of prayer. Because prayer activities can be done in a relatively short period of time it can be implemented on a daily basis or even several times each day. If done well the frequency and repetition of a daily process has the potential to be quite powerful. The age of the children requires the duration of each activity to be short, however they can be extended as students mature. Thought might be given to how the practice of prayer might be implemented with students across the entire campus. This would provide students the opportunity to engage with the process over an extended period of time and in more complex ways, again increasing its power.
Phase Six: Process Review

In this final section it is time to step back and do a final review of the process you have developed.

- Describe in detail the form and content of the process.

Peta’s group decide that they will introduce a simple practice of stillness and silence at the start and end of each day for students in preparatory to year three. It will initially be kept to one minute but the duration will be extended over time. Students will be taught techniques for stilling their bodies and for sitting in silence such as counting breaths and focussing on the sensations in the hands. Once this pattern has been established students will be taught different types of prayer such as prayers of thanksgiving and confession which will always begin with stillness and silence. Information will be sent home to parents encouraging them to have their children teach them the practices of prayer as they learn them and to regularly engage in them at home. A significant campaign will be launched by the school helping students and parents to understand the benefits of prayer. This campaign could include parent-student education evenings, prayer ideas in the weekly newsletter and prayer challenges for the home. The intention is for this process to be continued through the school gradually increasing its complexity for older age groups.

- What personal, contextual and time factors have been taken into consideration in shaping this process?

Personal.

- The daily pattern of prayer takes into account the developmental need of students for structure.
- The duration of the activity will be short in order to not be onerous for young children. This will be offset by frequent repetition.
- Techniques for stillness address the physical needs and abilities of the students by breaking prayer into basic components and helping students to develop abilities that will enable them to pray.
Contextual.

- Implementing stillness may be difficult for students who are used to constant stimulation. Keeping the exercises short enables them to build their capacity for quiet, focussed prayer over time.
- Encouraging parents to engage in the practice at home will increase the significance of the activity in the mind of the student and give them further experience and practice.
- Promoting the positive health attributes of the process to parents and students will help them to see the value of prayer and may overcome some of the apathy connected with a religious activity.
- Starting with young students will ameliorate some of the negative influences felt from wider society.
- Having the activity set in the classroom and led by the classroom teacher places it in a setting with considerable power in the school.
- While prayer can be a personal experience, if it is introduced by a classroom teacher an existing and important relationships may make the process more powerful and introduce reciprocity. Peer lead sessions could also deepen and enhance the power of this process.

Time.

- Maintaining frequent, short experiences of prayer will minimise negative feelings students may feel towards it.
- The frequency of the activity means that occasional interruptions should not detrimental.
- Continuing the process over the whole of a student’s schooling, if it increases with complexity, means it may have long term developmental outcomes.
  - Are there any personal, contextual or time issues that may still impinge on the effectiveness of the process? How might these be addressed?

It is possible that teachers, who will be in control of the process, may undermine its effectiveness by lack of care or enthusiasm. Considerable work might need to be done to help them see the significance of what they are doing and to train them in how to
lead the process. This may include presenting research to them, providing them with personal experiences and allowing a long preparation phase to ensure they feel comfortable.
For Further Study

This thesis has presented a Framework for evaluating the effectiveness of mission actions in ASIA and a Tool for evaluating and shaping mission actions to maximise their effectiveness. It is not within the scope of this work to validate the Framework or Tool. This validation requires further study and experimental research. Bronfenbrenner’s own PPCT research design would be a useful approach to doing this.

The impact of the different systems identified by Bronfenbrenner could be researched in order to validate various aspects of the Tool. This would include researching the impact the microsystems of family, school and church have on the faith development of students in ASIA. Deeper investigation of the macrosystem (i.e. Australian cultural and social influence on young people) as it shapes the worldview of students would be necessary as would a fuller understanding of the way mesosystems (i.e. how the microsystems interact) function in the Australian context.

In Chapter One a range of mission actions used by ASIA were identified. Each of these could be evaluated in the light of Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems model to evaluate the effect they are having as proximal processes. If it is found that their power is weak or their direction is negative then serious consideration should be given to reshaping them or replacing them with more effective processes. If the development of faith remains the desired goal mission actions that are found to be most powerful should be implemented over those that are weak or ambiguous in terms of their direction.

Conclusion

Bronfenbrenner’s model of person, process, context and time provides the basis of a useful framework for evaluating the Christian mission actions of ASIA. In this chapter the final elements of process and time were considered. Specifically the four key mission actions ASIA use for faith development, chapel, chaplain, religious education and service were discussed.

The aim of this work is to develop a framework for assessing the capacity of schools to:

1. fulfil the church’s mission, and
2. facilitate faith development.

This research seeks to answer three cascading questions:

1. Is the approach taken to fulfil the church’s mission by ASIA primarily that of the creation of a plausibility structure in which faith development is an intended outcome?
2. What factors impinge upon the use of a plausibility structure approach within ASIA for the development of faith in students?
3. What is the nature and degree of impact these impinging factors have on a school’s capacity to fulfil the church’s mission and facilitate faith development.

This research concludes that the Anglican Church in Australia hopes that young people will develop faith as a consequence of their attendance and participation in an ASIA. To achieve this the primary, yet largely assumed, approach used is that of the creation of a plausibility structure for faith development. Evidence of this plausibility structure approach was found in the documents produced by ASIA, their governing and affiliate bodies, their conferences and academic literature pertaining to the development of faith in religious schools. This was further supported by the specific mission actions ASIA use to achieve their mission goals.

Systematic analysis of factors internal and external to ASIA revealed a considerable number of elements that are likely to impinge upon the integrity of the plausibility structure they attempt to construct. Internal factors included the open nature of Anglican education, the plurality of worldviews likely to be held by students and staff and the multidimensional nature of a school as a business, educational and faith institution. Externally the wider contexts the students of ASIA find themselves in, including family, peers and wider Australian macrosystem, are likely to provide a discouraging or at least apathetic milieu for faith development.

The weight of evidence supporting a plausibility structure approach presented in this thesis would suggest that it is very unlikely that ASIA can create an effective plausibility structure for faith development. Internal and external impinging factors act in ASIA. Internal factors prevent ASIA from creating a functioning plausibility structure for the
Christian worldview. External factors create a climate in which a weak plausibility structure is ineffective. Even if ASIA were able to create a plausibility structure with integrity the evidence indicates that it is not a particularly effective strategy for the largely secular students who attend their school and live in a largely secular society.

**Future Directions for Christian Mission in ASIA**

A number of possibilities exist for the future mission of ASIA if they seek to continue to use a plausibility structure approach.

**Strengthen the Plausibility Structure.**

One action that ASIA could take is to strengthen the plausibility structure for faith development they seek to develop in their schools. This could be done by addressing some of the factors impinging on schools as social systems.

Some impinging factors are easier to address than others. One critical impinging factor is that of conflicted leadership. To the degree that any diocese or school has freedom and control, the leadership of the school should be overtly Christian. The Anglican Diocese of Brisbane has identified, with others that the Head should be a spiritual leader as they play the key role in shaping the school’s ethos and culture. A leader is required who is unequivocal about placing the Christian mission of the school in a position that allows it to shape all else that is done to the degree that it does not compromise the educational integrity of the institution required. In addition to this all other senior leaders in the school should also be committed Christians (Francis et al., 2014; Uecker, 2009).

A school vision and mission statement that clearly places the Christian worldview in the primary position is similarly important. It is secondary to the appointment of Christian staff because written mission statements can be rendered inoperative under the pressure of operational plans (Beare et al., 1989). It is the leadership of the school who play the key role in implementing any stated objective.

Following committed leadership, the next important element is to have all teachers as committed Christians in the school (Aspinall, 2003, p. 16). The teachers work at the
student and parent interface and therefore play a crucial role in their experience of a Christian worldview as they can link two powerful microsystems.

Structurally, elements such as religious education and chapel must also be given a priority to the extent that they are given sufficient time for students to see their importance. Ultimately all that the school does should be infused with the Christian worldview as opposed to having some elements of the Christian faith shown at particular times. This may even include incorporating Christian elements within aspects of all subjects taught (Collier, 2014).

All of the elements to create an effective plausibility structure described are possible to implement if a school determines to do so. However the ability for the majority of ASIA to take this approach is possibly compromised for a number of reasons. Finding sufficient Christian leaders and teachers may not only be difficult but replacing existing non believing teachers and staff could take a long time. Some ASIA may find this approach is against the Anglican approach of being open and inclusive (Aspinall, 2003).

The most difficult element to engage with in terms of the plausibility structure approach of the school is that of the presence of a large majority of non-Christian students. Their very presence has the potential to undermine the plausibility structure as they are not passive, but rather active participants in shaping the culture of the school. Some schools embrace the idea of being a covenantal enclosure where only Christian student and families may enter (Uecker, 2008). Few ASIA would be able to find sufficient students in their community to do this and even if so, few would believe that this is desirable.

**Strategic Approaches to Strengthen the Plausibility Structure.**

The four key proximal processes (chapel, chaplain, religious education and service) used by ASIA are located within the microsystem of the school. The findings of this research reveal that this microsystem may have a minimal effect as it is one microsystem within many nested contexts. Yet it is also known that family and friends have a significant impact on students through many developmental areas. There are at least

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three ways that ASIA’s microsystem may work with other microsystems to be strengthened by this engagement.

1. **Focus the Christian mission on and through more significant microsystems.**

   Instead of focussing ASIA’s Christian mission on students within the school setting processes and programs could be developed that focus on developing the faith of the family. Some Christian schools, including ASIA, are already doing this by having courses and other activities that seek to engage parents and families with the Christian faith. If parents develop faith, or at least engage with aspects of the Christian faith at home, this interest and activity is more likely to have an impact on the student than what occurs at school. Another approach would be to focus on the friendship microsystem within the school setting. This could be through the establishment of lunch time or out of school youth groups. Some ASIA pursue this focus.

2. **Develop linkages in the mesosystems.**

   Having faith development processes occur across several microsystems will increase the effectiveness of what occurs in the school. If processes could be developed in several of the microsystems such as school, family and peers this would developmentally beneficial.

3. **Maximising existing strong relationships within the school microsystem.**

   The existing faith development processes used by ASIA do not necessarily take advantage of the emotional bond that might exist between students and a classroom teacher. This bond may after all be stronger than that which ties students to the overt faith development processes. Chapel, which may primarily be led by the chaplain, could be enhanced by having the classroom teacher or students lead it. Some schools already do this. Alternatively worship activities such as prayer and scripture reading could be shifted to the classroom setting and led by the teacher on a regular basis. The strength of this approach is also its weakness. If students have a particularly negative relationship with their teacher the faith development process may operate negatively.
Beyond the Plausibility Structure Approach.

The Framework and Tool developed in this thesis provides ASIA with scope for developing more effective approaches to their Christian mission. It enables a thorough analysis of the contexts and personal factors that may impinge on or enhance the effectiveness of any mission action. In doing so it also allows for an analysis of the mission action itself. Grounding the Framework and Tool in Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model means that any mission action acting as a proximal process for faith development can be analysed for its effectiveness. The Framework also assists planning by providing indications about what types of actions may be more effective and promoting a clearer understanding of how to strengthen existing or proposed mission actions.
Summary Chapter Five

Bronfenbrenner provides a framework through which the mission actions of ASIA can be evaluated.

1. The four key mission actions of ASIA are considered as proximal processes.
2. A Framework for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA is developed based on
   • Process
   • Person
   • Context
   • Time
3. A Tool for Evaluating Christian Mission in ASIA is developed from the Framework.
4. Future Directions for Christian Mission in ASIA are outlined. These include:
   a. Strengthening the Plausibility Structure Approach.
   b. Using different strategic approach based on Bronfenbrenner’s model.
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Appendix

List of Anglican Schools in Australia

1. Abbotsleigh, Locked Bag 1666 WAHROONGA
2. All Saints' Anglican School, Highfield Drive MERRIMAC
3. All Saints' College, Bathurst, Locked Bag 9 BATHURST
4. All Saints' College, PO Box 165 WILLETTON
5. Anglican Church Grammar School, Oaklands Parade EAST BRISBANE
6. Arden Anglican School, PO Box 23 BEECROFT
7. Arndell Anglican College, PO Box 4063 PITT TOWN
8. Ballarat & Queen's Anglican Grammar School, 201 Forest Street WENDOUREE
9. Barker College, 91 Pacific Highway HORNSTEY
10. Beaconhills College, PACKENHAM
11. Bishop Druitt College, PO Box 8004 COFFS HARBOUR
12. Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College, PO Box 294, WALLSEND
13. Blue Mountains Grammar School, PMB 6 WENTWORTH FALLS
14. Brighton Grammar School, 90 Outer Crescent BRIGHTON
15. Broughton Anglican College, PO Box 438 CAMPBELLTOWN
16. Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School, PO Box 1198 BUNBURY
17. Burgmann Anglican School, The Valley Avenue, GUNGAHLIN
18. Calrossy Anglican School, 140 Brisbane Street TAMWORTH
19. Camberwell Girls Grammar School, 2 Torrington Street CANTERBURY
20. Camberwell Grammar School, 55 Mont Albert Road CANTERBURY
21. Canberra Girls Grammar School, Melbourne Avenue DEAKIN
22. Canberra Grammar School, Monaro Crescent RED HILL
23. Cannon Hill Anglican College, PO Box 3366 TINGALPA
24. Canterbury College, PO Box 616 BEENLEIGH
25. Cathedral College, PO Box 1086 WANGARATTA
26. Caulfield Grammar School, PO Box 610 ELSTERNWICK

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27. Christ Church Grammar School, PO Box 392 SOUTH YARRA
28. Christ Church Grammar School, Queenslea Drive CLAREMONT
29. Christ the King Anglican College, PO Box 607 COBRAM
30. Claremont College, 30 Coogee Bay Road COOGEE
31. Clarence Valley Anglican School, PO Box 500 GRAFTON
32. Coomera Anglican College, PO Box 457 UPPER COOMERA
33. Cranbrook School, 5 Victoria Road BELLEVUE HILL
34. Danebank Anglican School for Girls, 80-98 Park Road HURSTVILLE
35. Emmanuel Anglican College, 62 Horizon Drive BALLINA
36. Esperance Anglican Community School, Griffin Street, West Beach ESPERANCE
37. Firbank Grammar School, 51 Outer Crescent BRIGHTON
38. Fraser Coast Anglican College, PO Box 1150 HERVEY BAY
39. Frederick Irwin Anglican School, PO Box 687 MANDURAH
40. Geelong Grammar School, 50 Biddlecombe Avenue CORIO
41. Georges River Grammar, PO Box 278 GEORGES HALL
42. Georgiana Molloy Anglican School, PO Box 920 YALYALUP
43. Geraldton Grammar School, PO Box 76 GERALDTON
44. Gippsland Grammar School, PO Box 465 SALE
45. Guildford Grammar School Inc, 11 Terrace Road GUILDFORD
46. Hale School, Hale Road WEMBLEY DOWNS
47. Hillbrook Anglican School, PO Box 469 EVERTON PARK
48. Hume Anglican Grammar, PO Box 338 CRAIGIEBURN
49. Investigator College Goolwa Campus, 2 Glendale Grove GOOLWA, Victor
Harbour Campus, Bacchus Road VICTOR HARBOUR
50. Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, 123 Marshall Street IVANHOE
51. Ivanhoe Grammar School, PO Box 91 IVANHOE
52. John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School, PO Box 41 MIRRABOOKA
53. John Wollaston Anglican Community School, Centre Road KELMSCOTT
54. Kambala, 794 New South Head Road ROSE BAY
55. Kormilda College Ltd, PO Box 241 BERRIMAH
56. Korowa Anglican Girls' School, Ranfurlie Crescent GLEN IRIS

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57. Lakes Grammar - An Anglican School, PO Box 6069 GOROKAN
58. Launceston Church Grammar School, PO Box 136 MOWBRAY HEIGHTS
59. Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School, PO Box 54 TERRANORA
60. Loquat Valley School, 1977 Pittwater Road BAYVIEW
61. Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School, PO Box 178 ESSENDON
62. Macarthur Anglican School, PO Box 555 CAMDEN
63. Macquarie Anglican Grammar School, PO Box 873 DUBBO
64. Manning Valley Anglican College, PO Box 162 CUNDLETOWN
65. Matthew Flinders Anglican College, Stringybark Road BUDERIM
66. Melbourne Girls Grammar School, 86 Anderson Street SOUTH YARRA
67. Melbourne Grammar School, Domain Road SOUTH YARRA
68. Mentone Girls' Grammar School, PO Box 42 MENTONE
69. Mentone Grammar, 63 Venice Street MENTONE
70. Meriden School, PO Box 78 STRATHFIELD
71. Moama Anglican Grammar School, PO Box 786 MOAMA
72. Mosman Church of England Preparatory School, PO Box 950 SPIT JUNCTION
73. New England Girls' School, Uralia Road ARMIDALE
74. Newcastle Grammar School, PO Box 680 NEWCASTLE
75. Orange Anglican Grammar School, PO Box 308 ORANGE
76. Overnewton Anglican Community College, Overnewton Road KEILOR
77. Pedare Christian College, Surrey Farm Drive GOLDEN GROVE
78. Penrith Anglican College, PO Box 636 SOUTH PENRITH
79. Perth College, PO Box 25 MOUNT LAWLEY
80. Peter Carnley Anglican Community School, 386 Wellard Street WELLARD
81. Peter Moyes Anglican Community School, PO Box 240 QUINNS ROCKS
82. Pulteney Grammar School, 190 South Terrace ADELAIDE
83. Radford College, College Street BRUCE
84. Richard Johnson Anglican School, PO Box 143 PLUMPTON
85. Roseville College, 27 Bancroft Avenue ROSEVILLE
86. Rouse Hill Anglican College, PO Box 3296 ROUSE HILL
87. Sapphire Coast Anglican School, 2 Max Slater Drive BEGA
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88. SCECGS - Redlands, 272 Military Road CREMORNE
89. SCEGGS - Darlinghurst, 215 Forbes Street DARLINGHURST
90. Scone Grammar School, PO Box 332 SCONE
91. Shelford Girls' Grammar, 3 Hood Crescent CAULFIELD
92. Shellharbour Anglican College, PO Box 4147, SHELLHARBOUR
93. Shoalhaven Anglican School, PO Box 32 MILTON
94. Somerset College, Somerset Drive MUDGEERABA
95. St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, 11 Ruthuen Street CORINDA
96. St Andrew's Anglican College, 40 Peregian Springs Drive PEREGIAN SPRINGS
97. St Andrew's Cathedral School, Sydney Square SYDNEY
98. St Andrew's School Inc, 22 Smith Street WALKERVILLE
99. St Catherine's School Waverley, 26 Albion Street WAVERLEY
100. St Columba Anglican School, PO Box 5358 PORT MACQUARIE
101. St Columba College, President Avenue ANDREWS FARM
102. St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, PO Box 34 MOSMAN PARK
103. St Hilda's School, PO Box 290 SOUTHPORT
104. St James' Anglican School, PO Box 2015 CLARKSON
105. St John's Anglican College, PO Box 4078 FOREST LAKE
106. St John's Grammar School, PO Box 234 BELAIR
107. St Luke's Anglican School, 4 Mezger Street BUNDABERG
108. St Luke's Grammar School, 210 Headland Road DEE WHY
109. St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School, 11 Petrie Street ASCOT
110. St Mark's Anglican Community School, PO Box 231 HILLARYS
111. St Mary's Anglican Girls' School(Inc), PO Box 105 KARRINYUP
112. St Michael's Collegiate School, 218 Macquarie Street HOBART
113. St Michael's Grammar School, 25 Chapel Street ST KILDA
114. St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, 150 Bowen Street WARRAGUL
115. St Paul's School, 34 Strathpine Road BALD HILLS
116. St Peter's Anglican College, 61 Train Street BROULIEE
117. St Peter's Anglican Primary School, Howe Street CAMPBELLTOWN
118. St Peter's College, Hackney Road ST PETERS
119. St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School, Stonyfell Road STONYFELL
120. St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School, 39 Partridge Street GLENELG
121. Swan Valley Anglican Community School, Locked Bag 2, ELLENBROOK
122. Sydney Church of England Grammar School, PO Box 1221 NORTH SYDNEY
123. Tara Anglican School for Girls, Masons Drive NORTH PARRAMATTA
124. The Anglican School Googong, 7/114 Crawford Street QUEANBEYAN
125. The Armidale School, Douglas Street ARMIDALE
126. The Cathedral School, PO Box 944 AITKENVALE
127. The Glennie School, Herries Street TOOWOOMBA
128. The Hutchins School, 71 Nelson Road SANDY BAY
129. The Illawarra Grammar School, PO Box 225 FIGTREE
130. The King's School, PO Box 1 PARRAMATTA
131. The Peninsula School, Private Bag 3 MT ELIZA
132. The Riverina Anglican College, PO Box 5467 WAGGA WAGGA
133. The Southport School, Winchester Street SOUTHPORT
134. The Springfield Anglican College, PO Box 4180 SPRINGFIELD
135. The Toowoomba Preparatory School, 2 Campbell Street TOOWOOMBA
136. Thomas Hassall Anglican College, PO Box 150 HOXTON PARK
137. Tintern Schools, 90 Alexandra Road RINGWOOD EAST - Tintern Girls, Maidstone Street RINGWOOD - Southwood Boys
138. Trinity Anglican College Albury Campus, 421 Elizabeth Mitchell Drive THURGOONA
139. Trinity Anglican College Wodanga Campus, John Shubert Drive BARANDUDA
140. Trinity Anglican School, PO Box 110E EARLVILLE
141. Trinity College, PO Box 131 GAWLER
142. Trinity Grammar School Kew, 60 Wellington Street KEW
143. Trinity Grammar School, PO Box 174 SUMMER HILL
144. Tudor House School, 6480 Illawarra Highway MOSS VALE
145. Walford Anglican School for Girls, PO Box 430 UNLEY
146. West Moreton Anglican College, Keswick Road KARRABIN
147. Whitsunday Anglican School, PO Box 3390 NORTH MACKAY
148.
148. William Clarke College, PO Box 6010 BAULKHAM HILLS BC
149. Wollondilly Anglican College, Locked Bag 1011 TAHMOOR
150. Woodcroft College, PO Box 48 MORPHETT VALE
151. Yarra Valley Grammar, Kalinda Road RINGWOOD